

CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - BIRKENHEAD

Thursday, 30 March 2017

Present:

Councillor G Davies (Chair)

Councillors	M McLaughlin	T Norbury
	A Brighthouse	J Stapleton
	P Davies	P Cleary
	WJ Davies	P Doughty
	S Foulkes	B Kenny
	AR McLachlan	A Davies
	C Meaden	

34 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

35 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor S Kelly
Councillor J McManus
Councillor D Realey

36 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

37 **COMMUNITY CONNECTORS**

The Committee considered a verbal presentation from Ms Justine Molyneux, CEO of 'Connect Us'.

Ms Molyneux stated that 'Connect Us' had been launched to support the work being undertaken by Healthy Wirral and the Health Related Worklessness programme, led by the local aspiration on Wirral to move towards stronger residents and neighbourhoods.

She highlighted their Vision which centred on tackling issues of social isolation and improving people's health and wellbeing.

'Connect Us' worked alongside projects, services and community activities across Wirral and Connectors were building on existing connections to ensure that information was shared and referral pathways strong.

Ms Molyneux explained the process as to how people came into contact with a Connector, which ranged from door knocking, word of mouth, community venues, social media or direct referrals from professionals such as GP's.

Moving forward it was explained that 'Connect us' would be developing structural enablers in the community and look to identify and recruit Volunteer Connectors, Community Navigators and Peer Mentors.

Anyone wishing to refer, request information or to offer support or suggestions, they could do so by Email: Connectus@involvenorthwest.org.uk; Tel: 0151 644 1100 or via the web: <http://www.involvenorthwest.org.uk/index.php/services/community-connectors-service>

Ms Molyneux introduced two community connectors who gave some examples of the kind of help and support they had provided to residents. She reiterated that all connectors worked in pairs and that there was no one who worked alone within the community. She further commented that connectors encouraged people to be better neighbours and as a result had made some referrals to appropriate services.

RESOLVED:

That Ms Molyneux and the representatives from the Community Connectors be thanked for their attendance and informative presentation.

38 BEECHWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE AND BEACONSFIELD CENTRE UPDATES

The Committee considered a presentation from the Mr G Thomas, Director of the Beechwood Centre, formally Beechwood Play & Community Centre.

Mr Thomas indicated that in relation to the refurbishment works, funding had been obtained from Section 106 monies and the Estate Management Board; the Asset Transfer was complete in December 2016 and works would be completed by April 2017.

He highlighted some of the services that would be offered at the centre which included: the Wirral Play & Community Service for children 8yrs plus; Beechwood Food Larder offering food and toiletries and pet food from HIS Church and Fairshare; Pop Up Supermarket; Benefit advice; signposting;

sports hall; children's parties and breakfast and hot meals offered and free after school.

Further to the services provided Mr Thomas detailed new approaches that would be piloted at Beechwood, which included parallel local economies, providing alternatives to payday loans; approaches to collaboration, local businesses and social enterprises, access to food alternative social supermarket roles, community shop and hidden hunger in relation to the vulnerable groups in the community i.e. the elderly.

Mr Thomas in response to Members questions indicated that free school meals would be provided in school holidays and they would continue to work with LHT housing association to get the best for Beechwood.

Highlighting the future developments, Mr Thomas indicated that Beechwood in Bloom had proved very successful in 2016 and there were plans to replicate this for the competition 2017; the skateboard park and playground development would be delivered shortly; work would start on Improving Life Chances pilot scheme; plans to provide food hampers to residents at Christmas 2017 and a creation of the Beechwood Neighbourhood Planning Forum.

Mr Thomas concluded by thanking all those involved in the development of the Beechwood Centre from the residents who volunteered their time to The Big Local, Liverpool Housing Trust and the Constituency Manager and the team and the Community Asset Officer who ensured the transfer of Beechwood went smoothly.

RESOLVED:

That Mr Thomas be thanked for his attendance and informative presentation.

39 **BEE WIRRAL UPDATE**

The Committee welcomed Ms Shaughnessy who gave a presentation on the work undertaken by Bee Wirral.

Ms Shaughnessy indicated that Bee Wirral provided activities for residents from 0-90, in April 2015 there was an asset transfer between Bee Wirral and Wirral Change with Bee Wirral now operating the building.

She indicated that they had themselves carried out all of the renovation and repair work to the building and they also rose the appropriate funding, however, Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority kindly funded a replacement kitchen but there were still a lot of improvements to be made. She praised the

work of the people within the community who had helped with the massive transformation.

Ms Shaughnessy went on to highlight one of the projects undertaken namely 'Beautiful Birkenhead' an art exhibition held in Birkenhead Park which was very well attended..

RESOLVED:

That Ms Shaughnessy be thanked for her attendance and her informative presentation.

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NEO CAFE UPDATE

The Committee welcomed Ms Emma Wilkes from Neo Café who gave an update on the current position.

Ms Wilkes indicated that Neo Café had now transferred in to the Beaconsfield Centre with the asset transfer to take place shortly. Neo was now open 7 days a week and some evenings.

Major repair works to the building had been done with the help of the Council and volunteers along with the Community Payback Team had worked on improving the garden area which had help them to successfully enter the 'in bloom' competition.

Ms Wilkes indicated that she had been working with a Business Connector on a Business Plan and looking into trade services with local businesses. Neo were currently providing food for the HIVE and working alongside Magenta Living.

Ms Wilkes highlighted a showcase event Neo had held for local businesses which had gone really well and received great press coverage and as a result were now working with Camel Lairds providing lunch to their employees. Neo had also received massive support from Tranmere Rovers and had a staff member seconded.

In relation to food supplies, it was explained that there was not much food wastage and supplies were acquired from Food Share and intercepted food from supermarkets and cafes etc.

Ms Wilkes highlighted the work they undertook in training with a view to gaining employment they would shortly be opening a training facility to help others.

Ms Wilkes further informed about the community boutique which would enable people to come and get clothes and household items for a donation rather

than a cost. She went on to highlight some of the activities undertaken and updated on the recent achievement of winning the Wirral Award.

RESOLVED:

That Ms Wilkes be thanked for her attendance and informative presentation.

41 **BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE**

The Birkenhead Constituency Manager introduced the report and updated the Committee on the following:

Keeping Birkenhead Clean

Ms Burrell highlighted some of the up and coming Clean-up days indicating that the YMCA, BID and McDonalds coordinated clean-up was to be done in April 2017.

The 'Community Pay Back' team had been requested to complete jobs for the next quarter these were detailed within the report.

She reported that 26 'Birkenhead In Bloom' 2017 applications were due to be submitted shortly and judging would be undertaken during July and August with the Awards ceremony held in October.

The Hive

Councillor Stapleton reported on the Hive Youth Zone which was opening on the 8th April 2017, she commented that those who had visited the Hive were blown away by the centre which would make a huge difference to the lives of Wirral's young people.

Great British Door Knock – Rock Ferry

The Age UK initiative to combat social isolation took place in March and had proved very successful. Participants included the Birkenhead Constituency Team, Councillors, and representatives from neighbourhood teams, Police, Magenta Living, Fire Service, Community Connectors and others.

Responses to questions were collated and referrals made to Rock Ferry residents regarding a range of activities and services in their area.

Members who took part in the event praised the work undertaken and commented that they felt the event had been very successful and useful.

North Birkenhead Youth Project

Councillors McLachlan and Kenny updated on the progress made date.

A project was launched at Gautby Road Play and Community Centre in February 2017, targeting and engaging with a group of young people causing or at risk of causing ASB in the North End of Birkenhead.

40 young people engaged with the project workers and as a result ASB was reported at its lowest level. Speaking to some of the young people from the project they explained that they would be on the streets engaging ASB if they weren't involved in the project and the activities provided.

In relation to the HIVE it was reiterated that the centre was not trying to replace the community groups already established and there was a formal forum established for all youth services to meet and discuss their service provision as to which service best suits the needs of the young people

Further funding was now being sought to enable the Project to continue its great work.

Litter Issues

Member raised concerns regarding the increased litter outside Wirral's public places and asked if special attention could be given to these areas.

A Member raised further concern regarding the ongoing litter problems in Balls Road in particular, by Turner Street Park and asked if officers could be asked to find a permanent solution to this problem.

RESOLVED:

That the Constituency Managers update report be noted.

42 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Chair referred to the pre-raised questions that had been received by the Committee and invited those present to address the Committee in respect of the questions raised.

Question 11 Mr J Brace

Mr Brace asked a question regarding accessibility issues at Bidston, Birkenhead Park, Upton Rail Stations and asked if information could be given as to who was responsible for ensuring stations made reasonable adjustments for disabled people?

He further asked if the Committee would like to comment on the reasons that had led to the rail strike planned for 8 April 2017.

A written response from Merseytravel had been sought and would be provided to Mr Brace in due course.

Councillor Foulkes in response commented that responsibility for stations laid with the station operators, they were responsible for compliance to the Equality Act and DDA requirements.

He further commented on the proposed strike which was in relation to driver only trains.

Question 12 Mrs L Brace

Mrs Brace raised concerns regarding the increasing incidents of fly tipping around the area of Flaybrick Memorial Gardens.

The Constituency Manager indicated that she would look into this and report back to Mrs Brace.