

# AREA FORUM (BROMBOROUGH AND EASTHAM)

Tuesday, 20 October 2009

## Present:

Councillor	T Harney (Chair)
Councillors	P Gilchrist D Mitchell R Moon, S Niblock A Taylor
Community Representatives	MA Craig (Bromborough), M Hall (Eastham)
Business Representative	Jon Wyles
Older People's Parliament Representative	Ray Johnson
Lead Officer	Mark Parkinson, Head of Learning & Achievement, Children and Young People's Department
Area Co-ordinator	Louise Harland-Davies
Street Scene Manager	Phil Miner
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	John Foster
NHS Wirral	Glen Coleman
Merseyside Police	Inspector Andy Wise
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service	Richie Clark
Council Officers	Jim Thompson, Community Safety
<u>Apologies</u>	A Brocksam, Paula Mansley, Doug Edmondson, Forestry Commission

## 1 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair, Councillor Tom Harney, welcomed Area Forum members and 20 members of the public to the meeting in Bromborough.

The Chair explained that the format for this evening's meeting has been changed. The aim is to complete the formal agenda by 8 pm, and to have a drop in session in the final hour when members of the public can meet and raise issues with their local Councillors and representatives from partner organisations.

Apologies: Mrs A Brocksam, Paula Mansley, Area based Community Sports Development Officer and Doug Edmondson, Forestry Commission: Bromborough Landfill Site.

## 2 **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM JUNE FORUM**

The minutes of the meeting of the Area Forum on 23 June 2009 were included in Section One of the Area Co-ordinator's report.

### Matters arising:

**2.1 Off road biking and quad bikes:** Inspector Wise reported that Operation Longbow, a joint operation between Merseyside and Cheshire Police Forces and the Port of Liverpool Police, had taken place in July in the area alongside the ship canal. The main focus of the operation was to use high visibility policing, stop checking of vehicles with a view to vehicle seizure, prosecution and enforcement action to tackle the problem of anti-social behaviour in relation off road motor cycles and quad bikes. The operation had been reasonably successful, some practical difficulties had been experienced and no vehicles had been seized. The owners of the land, Peel Holdings, have strengthened the fencing to make it difficult for bikes to gain entry. Concerns have been raised about motor bikes and other vehicles using the car park. The owners and managers of the car park have made representations to the Council and discussions have taken place between legal representatives.

Police Officers continue to share information and more joint operations are planned. Merseyside Officers continue to patrol Rivacre Road and West Road, and there has been a marked reduction in the number of calls about vehicle noise and annoyance in that area since January 2009.

**2.2. Area Plan:** The Area Co-ordinator reported that a Community Road Show had been held in Eastham last week. A similar event will be organised in New Ferry in February, and in Bromborough in June.

The Chair added that the area plan lists the priorities for this area and includes the recurring issues raised at the forum meetings. There is need to refresh the plan and to include the actions and outcomes. Members of the public are invited to put forward their suggestions for inclusion in the plan by filling in the survey form available at the meeting.

**2.3 Walk-in Centre in Eastham.** Glen Coleman, Deputy Director of Primary Care, NHS Wirral, stated the planned opening date for the Centre is 30 November. Information on services available in the Centre will be sent to GP practices shortly. Family care services will be available during the day and the walk-in facilities will be offered from 5 to 9 pm, and from 9 am to 6 pm at weekends.

Further development of the facilities will not be considered until the basic service is fully staffed and the provision is considered to be safe and robust.

### 3 **AREA CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT/YOU DECIDE/AREA PLANS**

Section Two of the Area Co-ordinator's report contained local updates on Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, Community Safety Team, Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Wirral Youth Service, NHS Wirral, Streetscene and Equality and Diversity.

In 2008, members of the public had filled in '**You Decide**' surveys to state the additional services they wanted the £20,000 awarded to this Area Forum to be spent on. Based on the responses received, it had been decided to spend £12,000 on sports activities for young people and £7,500 on additional litter bins. Progress has been made on siting the litter bins which have the lettering, 'Sponsored by the Area Forum' on them.

A meeting has been held to look at the results of the **You Decide** Survey 2009. £13,800 has been allocated towards activities for young people, and the remaining £6,200 will be spent on providing more litter bins.

The grant of £18,200 for road safety allocated from the Integrated Transport Block has been allocated this year for dropped kerbs, vehicle-activated road signs and 'Slow' markings on roads. Advice on locations will be sought from surveyors in the Highways Department, and will be decided in February.

Area Forum funding, '**Funds for You**' is available to **voluntary** and community organisations in Wirral who fulfil the criteria. An application pack was available at the area forum meeting. Completed applications should be received by the Community Engagement Team by noon on Friday, 23 October 2009.

**RESOLVED: To thank the Area Co-ordinator for the report.**

### 4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**Q Road Humps: Resident of Cambridge Road: The traffic, including boy racers, passes through the traffic lights at the top of the road very quickly, and it is a matter of time before a child is killed. Raised this with Councillor Gilchrist about humps on the road, but he has been informed this is not a high priority area. What do we have to go through to make something happen?**

A [Cllr Gilchrist]: It is not only about road humps. Another resident raised the issue of yellow lines on that road. When the traffic lights were installed, I asked the Council to do a traffic survey, but I didn't get far with that request. A survey on the top road was carried out about three years ago and some residents had argued that it was in the wrong place. A complaint was made to me about Police and vehicle users driving at speed along that road. When I asked about yellow lines, I was advised against it. The residents who don't want yellow lines would oppose it because they and visitors would be prevented from parking outside their houses.

On the matter of the road humps, I looked at Neville Road and Cambridge Road together. Humps are part of the traffic scheme for Bromborough Village. The issue of humps has been raised before and it probably needs an engineer to explain it better than I can. The Council went off the idea of humps because they don't want to divert traffic into other roads. The other issue was that there were 180 roads which had put in petitions asking for humps and the engineers are looking at accidents to assess if humps would reduce accidents.

Our experience of humps in Dawpool Drive was that Greenfields and Dawpool have to be done together. People complained that people raced between the humps. There is mixed experience about humps, you join a process of survey, going through the Scrutiny Committee to decide whether it is a sufficiently serious road to get done. In recent times the Council has only done a couple of roads because of the expense of erecting signs etc.

**Q What about speed activated signs? They seem to work and they are not as unsightly.**

A [Phil Miner]. The flashing signs can cause annoyance to houses nearby. There is a trailer system. We can look into the possibility of locating a trailer in that location in the future.

[Chair] We need a policy on this in the sense that we need to include it in our area plan it seems that anything above 20 on these roads is dangerous, and the speed limit is 30. We should be enforcing a 20, not a 30. We will aim to identify roads which are a priority

**Q Trees have been chopped own. Does the Council have a policy to replace trees that they remove?**

A The Council has a policy of tree replacement, but not necessarily in the places that they have been removed from. Some people prefer trees not to be replaced in certain locations because of leaf fall etc.

**Q Road safety. Last year, I asked whether you were going to do anything about potholes on the A41. Every night, heavy goods vehicles go round the bend, hit a pothole and bounce, and the noise in the houses is awful. If certain people who are responsible for this road lived there, something would be done quicker.**

**Q There was a serious accident some time ago and a 40 mph triggered sign was put up. It would have been more sensible to put a sign from Birkenhead to Eastham, just before the bend.**

A [Cllr Mitchell] Opposite where the computer shop is near the bend?

We are paying for more activated signs to be sited. Why put on that side and not on the side that is more important? That is part of the Highways Speed audit. It would be a good idea to talk to the residents who have lived there for 30 years and have had to put up with these problems. Residents who have had to fight to get the bend sorted out to stop accidents and people getting hurt have not even been asked.

[Cllr. Gilchrist] Manhole covers. There are a number of drains on New Chester Road that are not taking the water away and causing puddles. There are a lot of things to do with drainage on the A41.

Activated signs. I have been talking to an officer in traffic control looking for the best place to put that on the A41. Looking at re-locating on the straight stretch somewhere on Plymyard Avenue. The sign is not working properly.

**Q [M Hall]: Are there any further developments in terms of Peel. They are promoting their plans in other areas but are reluctant to discuss the plans for Eastham. I consider that further pressure is needed. Are there any further developments on that?**

**A [Cllr. Gilchrist].**The answer is 'no'. They have made promises at public meetings round about Eastham, but they seem to have problems of an unspecified nature. They are keen to promote Birkenhead and Liverpool because they are seeking planning permission, but they are not seeking planning permission in Eastham at the moment.

Ellesmere Port welcomed the idea of removing the docks from Ellesmere Port to Eastham.

[Chair]:I propose that we approach Peel Holdings as an Area Forum, and invite them to come and tell us what they are doing.

**Q Is there any possibility of opening up the estate, possibly by knocking down some garages on Bridle Road and improving access to Bridle Road to take the pressure off the back of Heygarth and Bridle Road, and allow more access into the estate?**

**A [Chair]** The Council don't own the garages. Is anyone available to answer the question? [There was no response]

**A [Cllr. Mitchell]** I suggest you fill in one of the forms at the back of the room, making all those points.

**Q What does the plan of schools entail? I have been told there is a survey being done. What does that involve?**

**A [Cllr Mitchell]:** Every school should have a plan to make sure the children and staff can get to school safely and easily. It is called Safer Routes to Schools and is funded by the Government, through the Local Authority. It is also about allowing children to cycle safely to school. If there are any issues in relation to highways they need to be addressed to make safer and money is allocated to do that. Every school should have a safety plan, every school in the country should have one by the end of next year according to the government.

**Q What do local residents have to do to get a copy of the plan? We see a lot of parents doing the walking bus, and other people park outside the shops and bring the children to school but there are still problems. Children are being encouraged to cycle and quite a lot would be cycling on the pavement and that causes a lot of problems.**

**A [Cllr Mitchell]:** The children are trained on Bikeability to assist them to travel safely on the highways. The school plan has to be approved by the Governing Body. Minutes of meetings are available to anyone who wants to look at them, and they can be copied at a small charge. We can approach local schools and ask if copies of their travel plan can be provided for you.

[Chair] Useful to have copies at the next Area Forum.

**Minute Decision: Resolved: The Area Co-ordinator to –**

- i. **invite Peel Holdings to send a representative to the next area forum meeting to discuss their plans for Eastham;**
- ii. **ask local schools to supply a copy of their travel plan and to have copies available at the next area forum meeting.**

## 5 PARTNER INFORMATION

Partner representatives updated the forum on the issues:-

**Community Safety:** [Jim Thompson]: **Fireworks and bonfires.** Operation Banger started on Monday. A Freephone number 0800 731 5958 is available to report concerns about the build up of bonfire materials, or the illegal selling of fireworks. Bonfire materials that are considered to be a hazard will be removed. Trading Standards staff are working with partners and agencies to stop the illegal sale of fireworks.

Overall crime is down, on average there are about three burglaries per day across the whole of the Borough.

**Merseyside Police:** [Insp. Wise] 3,000 people in the area we cover, when measured in terms of crime statistics, crime per thousand population nationally is 27% and in this Borough it is 19.3%. The figures for anti-social behaviour in Wirral are exceptionally low, and in Bromborough, they are better than in Wirral overall. When you balance that against what is happening in Merseyside and other places, in Wirral, we are not in a bad place for anti-social behaviour.

Merseyside is one of the best performing forces in the country. The aim of the former Chief Constable was to be the best. We have a joint responsibility with the Council to improve customer satisfaction. We on the way towards achieving that target: Measured against 15 other forces and out of that 15 the position we are in for crime, violence, theft, burglary, criminal damage etc. is either first, second or third. Working with our partners and agencies, we are working to reduce those crimes as much as possible.

**Q Security in Port Sunlight.** There is a perception that there is no crime in Port Sunlight and this leads to uncertainty that issues reported to the Trust are not being passed on to the appropriate authorities. When we report things to the Trust, do they pass it on to you?

**A** [Insp. Wise]. I am not in favour of third party reports if it is an emergency we need to know straight away. We need to have a realistic view of what is going on. There have been numerous incidents in Port Sunlight which makes people more inclined to ring us direct. If you call us for a service the way we respond is to meet all emergency calls within ten minutes, and we achieve that for 90% of the time. Our target is 95% of the time.. Some calls are responded to within a minute or two minutes. We can only do that if we know where the incident is and we need to receive calls directly, not from a third party. If it is a Police issue, ring the Police; similarly if there is a fire, ring the Fire Service

**The Older People's Parliament** representative drew attention to Wirral Older People's Parliament Newsletter. He reported on a successful Away Day on Crime & Respect, which was attended by a local Member of Parliament, Community Safety and the Police. Wirral Grandparents Active Partnership is a voluntary group of

grandparents who are responsible for the full time care of grandchildren. The Parliament is hoping to offer a framework for grandparents to receive the advice and support, particularly legal and financial support, on all the problems and barriers they face in bringing up their grandchildren. The Parliament held a Listening Day when people had put forward their responses to changes in Adult Social Care. The responses will go forward to the Council and the Government.

The OPP received funding from the **You Decide** initiative. A decision was made to split the money into the four parliamentary constituencies to deal with environment issues. Each constituency received £10,000 to fund a general tidy up and to provide benches and litter bins. Suggestions on how the funding should be spent would be welcome and should be forwarded to Brian Christian on 666 2220.

The Parliament would welcome more Associate Members. Membership is open to anyone aged 50 and over who lives in Wirral. Application forms were available at the Area Forum.

**Q I am a carer, and my experience of the Home Help system in Social Services has been one of utter disappointment.**

A [OPP representative]: If you want to influence anyone, you have to do it as a group; a single person does not have the same opportunity. As a group, the OPP has an opportunity to put reports in and have the ears of officers in the Council and the Government. It is better to work as a group rather than work alone. It is important that you join a group - as a group can apply pressure to achieve things. The experience so far shows that the Council do listen.

**Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service.** The statistics for deliberate fires for Wirral make interesting reading. The figures show that deliberate fires in Wirral fell by 20% last year, indicating that community safety events in Wirral and across Merseyside are making a difference to safer communities.

The service is working successfully with the Road Safety Partnership. Staff have been trained to check child car seat fitting for safety and to give advice on type and legal requirements. Two events were held in September and further events are scheduled on 14 and 21 November in car parks outside major supermarkets in Heswall and West Kirby.

The focus for fire safety checks in dwellings is on vulnerable people who have not allowed access to their properties. Property assessments are being carried out and residents are offered appropriate advice and fire safety equipment.

**Q I am pleased that the libraries are safe. Thank you very much to all those who responded.**

**Q Is there any chance of the report on the libraries being divulged to the public?**

A [Chair]: Sue Charteris has sent a draft report to the Council and to the Government Department concerned and she has asked for factual amendments, which she will consider. The report will then be sent to the Secretary of State and he will decide whether or not to publish it. The Head of Legal Services is obliged to ensure confidentiality until the Secretary of State decides what to do.

**Q Has any progress been made on the car park at Asda?**

A [Chair] Two diagrams are available at the back of the room depicting the indicative footway/cycleway proposal for the Croft Retail Park, Bromborough. The agents are working with the owners to reach agreement between Asda and the people who own the rest of the estate. Any comments from members of the public should be sent direct to the agents.

[Insp. Wise]. The Police have met with the management and with the stores. Strong recommendations have been made to manage the traffic on and off the retail park but there is only so much that the Police can do. We relayed all the concerns and the management are taking our advice. We do have some plans and hope to see an improvement on the situation which prevailed last year. We are meeting on 3 November to progress that. A lot of work needs to be done there. Local Councillors have an involvement and I hope we have plans that will make things a lot better this Christmas.

A lengthy discussion ensued during which Councillors and members of the public described their personal experiences when trying to exit from the car park outside Asda.

**Q Why don't you split the car park and have one entrance and two exits?**

A [Chair] It would be helpful if anyone who is interested in this issue, could fill in a form and we will make sure that everyone involved is aware of the issues.

**6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - WEDNESDAY 24 FEBRUARY VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED**

**RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Area Forum be held on Wednesday, 24 February 2010 at a venue in New Ferry [to be confirmed.]**

In concluding the main business of the meeting, the Chair invited members of the public to approach and discuss any issues they may have [including how Area Forums work and how they might be improved] with local Councillors and Partner representatives

**7 REFRESHMENTS AND DROP IN SESSION, MEET YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLORS AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM:**

- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Community Safety
- Older People's Parliament
- Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Merseyside Police
- Streetscene
- Forestry Commission update on Bromborough Landfill Site