

**OXTON / PRENTON  
AREA FORUM**

**Co-ordinator's report**

**15 June 2005**

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## SECTION ONE

### LOCAL ISSUES

Townfield Lane – raised by Cllr Williams – passed to Mike Walker 7 February. The situation has since improved however, up to 30 youths appear to be congregating at the rear of Townfield Lane shops. This same group also gather around Woodchurch Road (Sainsbury's car park). Inspector Mark Smith has met with Cllrs Anderson, Williams and Bridson, Gail Jordan (Community Safety), Sgt Garthwaite and Tim Hassle (manager of Sainsbury's) to discuss in more detail. Cllr Williams has also had a meeting with local residents. Gail Jordan and Lucy Pritchard are going to ensure this is raised at their next Tasking and Co-ordination meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> April to monitor the situation further. It may be possible to use the Kontactabus in the car park.

Unsafe walls – opposite St Joseph's school/Willan Street – raised by Mr Dowling – passed to Ian Bell 7 Feb. There does not appear to be a school called St Josephs in Oxton, the nearest is in Upton. *'I can only assume the school in Fairview Road may have changed its name as there is no school in Willan Street. If this is the case then we arranged for a section of wall opposite this school to be rebuilt recently. Meanwhile walls in Willan Street are being monitored'*.

Waterpark Road/Storeton Road – raised by Mr Neale – difficulty of getting out of Waterpark into Storeton Road – Derwent Derbyshire dealing with this. Received email from Ian Ramsden on 8 February stating *'this junction has been considered when the flats on the corner were proposed. Shaun Brady has negotiated with the landowner an area to help improve radii in the future. There are considerable costs associated with diverting services in the footway however, and I cannot foresee an improvement taking place unless there is a way of resolving the service issue. The land will be secure should this situation change'*.

Replacement and redevelopment of traditional and good residential properties – Mr Neale. Richard Lewis reported that his department are currently preparing 2 documents, one is a intermediate statement of housing over the next 6 months. Richard Lewis to respond directly to Mr Neale.

Former Wirral Met College – raised by Mr Eric Dade – liaising with Ray Jones (Building Control) Derek Howard (Environmental Health), Lee Walsh (Planning Officer) and Simon Jones (Contracts Manager ENCIA Demolition). Meeting with relevant individuals took place on Wednesday 6 April and is ongoing (please see notes of this meeting as an appendix). Wimpey have taken over the site with effect from Friday 15 April until such time that Encia can commence the demolition of the Glenda Jackson theatre which could take up to 6 months.

Prenton Conservation Society – raised by Cllr Bridson – Richard Lewis to follow up with Conservation Officer upon his return who will liaise directly with Cllr Bridson.

Palmwood Close – raised by Alan Dollery – being used as a turning point and also enquired about signage for exit to Asda. Tony Lungley from Traffic responded with:

*"Further to our recent telephone conversations, in response to the Palmwood Close enquiry I can confirm that I will explore the possibilities of providing advance signing for motorists exiting Asda onto Woodchurch Road. The signing would advise motorists that should they need to access the Woodchurch Road / M53 roundabout they need to use the left hand lane. As discussed with Councillor Bridson and yourself, I propose to try this measure to discourage vehicles from making u-turns in Palmwood Close ahead of introducing any physical measures such as road narrowing etc, which I believe has received a mixed response from the residents of Palmwood Close. I have spoken to one of my colleagues in the UTC Section who advises me that the issue of vehicles turning right out of Asda was looked into at the planning application stage for the superstore. This proposal was turned down on the grounds of safety, too many potential vehicle conflicts and delays in traffic flows"*

**SECTION TWO**  
**LOCAL UPDATES**

**Wirral Metropolitan College, Wirral Lifelong Learning Service, Birkenhead 6th Form College and the Worker’s Educational Association**

**Working in Partnership - Developing Skills for Neighbourhood Renewal**

Wirral Metropolitan College, Wirral Lifelong Learning, Birkenhead 6th Form College and the Worker’s Educational Association are working together in five Wirral wards; Leasowe, Seacombe, Bidston, Birkenhead and Tranmere to provide a range of opportunities in community settings for individuals who wish to improve skills in literacy, numeracy and communication.

Three development workers have been engaged and work as an impartial team in community locations across the Wirral. They work with individuals on one to one basis providing information on opportunities offered by all the partner organisations and helping to overcome individual barriers. They can provide guidance with financial assistance to help with childcare, travel and books. They also work collaboratively with other community based organisations and groups to provide customised provision in community locations.

By working collaboratively, using the expertise of each provider, the project aims to provide information about local English and Maths courses to individuals and respond to community needs with innovative ways of encouraging adults to participate in courses in the community.

If you would like to talk to a development worker about English, Maths and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses in your area, please contact

Carole Wilshaw at St James ’ s Centre, Birkenhead or Beechwood Neighbourhood College	670 0359 677 9211
Anna Douglas at Leasowe Early Years & Adult Learning Centre or Rock Ferry Adult Learning Centre	630 5069 645 9182
Janet Castle at South Wallasey Neighbourhood College	691 2640

# **REASSURANCE PROJECT - PRENTON**

## **AUGUST 2004 TO APRIL 2005**

### **ORIGINATOR SGT 6946 GARTHWAITE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Reassurance pilot project went live in August 2004 with the Prenton Ward representing the Wirral BCU. The two wards of Prenton and West Kirby are the live sites and have a different make up, community cohesion, residential or transient population and economical status. Therefore the approach in relation to consultation, intervention, activity, enforcement and feedback required for this style of policing and partner activity has had to be tailored to support the individual ward qualities, whilst remaining focused on achievements, goals and objectives of the pilot project.

#### **SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

The primary aim of this report is to evaluate in the Prenton ward – Impact on signal crimes and events Level of community engagement and involvement including feedback measures. Comparison of priorities identified in the RDS survey. Utilisation of extended police family and volunteer services. Examine and evaluate partnership activity including tasking and involvement. Effectiveness of problem solving policing measures. Evaluate feedback measures. The secondary aim of this report will be an attempt to assess the wider impacts of the success of this operation.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The comparable impact of crime and disorder incidents in the Prenton ward will be Examined and the Reassurance project folder will also be critically analysed to identify measures as identified in scope and purpose. Due to the additional volume of Information flow in regard to the public priorities, other additional information flow sources will be utilised to evaluate and evidence feedback.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Policing of communities and areas within Merseyside adhere to priorities set under Performance measurement indicators as set by the home office and consequently integrated into policing plans normally focusing on volume crime issues. The Reassurance policing project aims to narrow or close the gap between falling levels of crime and the increased fear of crime from the general public currently being seen. Prior to going live with the project an Environmental visual audit of the area was completed.

#### **FRAMEWORK ISSUES**

The next phase involved consultation with the identified communities and the setting of joint goals and objectives for the crime and disorder partnership family including the police, council, health, and housing to be set for the next three months. Four public meetings with specific representation were held and the following problems were identified:

Youth disorder

Graffiti

Speeding and illegal parking.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVMENT**

High levels of community engagement have occurred and are planned for the future of the project. Community engagement schedules have been produced which set goals and objectives with partner activities. Leaflet drops relating to youth disorder were distributed throughout the area. Business community engagement Neighbourhood Activity groups established involving tasking and problem solving with community advocates and partners. Partner contacts established for activity and intervention measures. Homewatch meetings, a school presentation and vulnerable elderly residents presentation. Area surgery opened in local one stop shop.

## **FEEDBACK**

The feedback received has been mainly positive . This has been collected from key Individuals, public meetings and Neighbourhood Action Groups. In addition to this further evidence has come from e mails, letters, verbal and telephone correspondence. In total over 70 percent of those asked felt safer regarding the issue of youth disorder and acknowledged that the situation had improved.

## **EXTENDED POLICE FAMILY**

Community advocates and key people within the community are beginning to develop and offer support to other members of the community. Seven volunteer community support officers were recruited. Eight additional homewatch groups were set up in the area. Members of the youth forum were engaged in a graffiti busters exercise.

## **PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY**

Media marketing has been an effective tool in delivering reassurance and outcomes of Activities have appeared as good news stories. we have developed electronic communication to capture all community groups. Youth services have made a positive contribution to the youth disorder and alcohol problem. Health services are involved with a walking bus scheme in the local school which will have a direct impact on the worst parking issue. Extended police family and volunteers have been the key success in this project. They have contributed to closing the gap in communication and fear levels. All feedback has evidenced the positive impact on community feelings of safety and satisfaction.

## **COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE VACANCY – OXTON WARD**

An advert was placed in the Wirral Globe on 19 January 2005 to promote this vacancy. If you are interested or know of anyone who may be interested in representing the Oxtton area at the area forum, please contact the Community Planning Team on 0151 691-8069

## **LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2 CONSULTATION**

Forums were held at;

Bebington Civic Centre - Wednesday 23rd Feb and was attended by 19 people  
Birkenhead Museum - Thursday 24th Feb and was attended by 8 people  
Westbourne Hall – Tuesday 8th March and was attended by 24 people  
Wallasey Town Hall – Thursday 10th March and was attended by 10 people

The feedback is divided under the four headings of accessibility, congestion, air quality and road safety as these are the themes that the government have told us to work to as part of LTP2.

### **Accessibility**

- ◆ Free travel scheme for pensioners is good however the passes should be valid pre 0930hrs
- ◆ Access to work - public transport does not cater for the needs of shift workers.
- ◆ Reliability of buses – cannot rely on them for journeys to work therefore limits opportunities.
- ◆ Bus Networks – distribution of services is not balanced – some areas have lots of buses and others have none.
- ◆ Access to hospitals difficult by public transport but also need to ensure that access to GPs is not overlooked. Shuttle buses from the villages and/or stations to the hospitals would benefit visitors and staff.
- ◆ Need more evening bus services and Sunday services as accessibility to leisure and retail is limited (social inclusion issues). Train services also stop too early. As more people are now employed in leisure and retail this needs to be addressed.
- ◆ Cost - Services are too costly – need more discounted tickets. Suggestion made to have tickets valid on all services for 60 or 90 minutes to make interchange between operators and modes easier. General comments regarding introducing standard fares and more integrated tickets.
- ◆ Safety and Security issues affect accessibility as services are withdrawn due to vandalism. Buses and trains need to have conductors on and more visible staff. Need more CCTV
- ◆ Customer care – inconsiderate attitudes of, and erratic driving by, bus drivers puts people off using the services. (Similar comments regarding private hire vehicles also made).
- ◆ Bus operators/Merseytravel should be providing local services eg. Circulars around housing estates etc that feed into more strategic services along main routes.
- ◆ We should all be looking at bringing services etc back to the communities so that we reduce the need to travel
- ◆ Information – there is still a need for more public transport information and a need to publicise its availability as a lot of people are not aware of where to get leaflets etc from. Also trains and buses need better information e.g. service numbers and destinations on buses. Need to be aware of information on train fronts not being easily read by partially sighted/elderly people due to “orange dot” format. Bus companies should not be allowed to handwrite their service number and

destination on a piece of paper and stick it in the window. Buses should also have service number at the rear so you know if you have just missed it.

- ◆ Pedestrians - Need more road crossing facilities. Footpaths which need to be in better condition. Crossings need to have clear visible indicators to show when safe to cross (some crossings don't have visible 'green man')
- ◆ Bus shelters and bus timetables are much improved in recent years although timetables not always reflecting what the service actually does! – i.e. need speedier responses after changes to services.
- ◆ Employers should be playing a bigger role in subsidising services in order to get people to their place of work.
- ◆ Joblink – service is good but would it be better utilised and more time efficient taking people to the stations instead of direct to work – may reduce long journey times as rail journey often quicker.
- ◆ Access to stations for disabled and parents with prams needs to be improved.
- ◆ Need to consider accessibility to areas outside Merseyside – particular support for electrification of Bidston to Wrexham rail line.
- ◆ Interchange facilities at Liverpool for buses from Wirral need to be improved - buses through the tunnel do not go to the Coach Station or to Bus station. In particular problematic for the elderly or people with cases who have to walk up quite a distance after alighting from the bus.
- ◆ Should try to increase role of ferries

## **Congestion**

- ◆ Congestion only occurs at peak times however it is unacceptable. Mixed views over the definition of congestion from 5 minutes to 30 minutes. General agreement that it has got worse in recent years.
- ◆ Greatest problems outside schools, at the Tunnels, the A41, the Hospitals and the Motorway roundabouts. Main cause is school and work travel.
- ◆ Congestion also caused by more localised issues such as road works – need better co-ordination of road works to reduce disruptions.
- ◆ Park and Ride is key to reducing congestion however many stations need extensions to the car parks as it is pointless trying to encourage people to use the trains if no parking is available.
- ◆ Shuttle buses to key locations such as the Hospitals – would benefit visitors and staff.
- ◆ Rail – rail is crucial in tackling congestion. Car drivers more likely to change to rail than to bus (social class issues). Strong support for the electrification of the Wrexham – Bidston line: would remove some cars off the road and increase accessibility to jobs
- ◆ Could old railway track-beds be better utilised either through re-opening of rail services or making them available for walking/cycling routes?



- ◆ Enforcement issues - specifically taxis and cars double parking needs to be enforced as this causes congestion.
- ◆ Deterioration of bus services has led to increased congestion as more people won't use them. Therefore need to improve reliability and improvement of bus services – strong support that we should be looking at Quality Contracts/more public control of the bus network and more bus lanes (if properly enforced). However, acknowledgement that bus lanes can increase congestion if car drivers unwilling to make shift to bus.
- ◆ Improvement and expansion of Community Transport and Demand Responsive Services. We should also be looking at car clubs. Could the planning system play more of a role with regard to car free developments, or developments where facilities for a car club are designed in from new.
- ◆ Traffic Management – signage needs to be clearer to avoid drivers getting lost and clogging up the towns. Signage painted on the roads is more useful than the signs on posts especially where several lanes of traffic. Improvements needed to traffic lights so that they do not stop cars and buses when there is no other traffic.
- ◆ Need better integration between operators of buses and also better integration between buses and trains.
- ◆ Walking and Cycling – need better facilities to attract people to cycling and walking e.g. storage facilities and changing facilities. Particularly to schools.
- ◆ Mixed views on “stick” approach of reducing congestion, i.e. road tolling and car parking charges, however, agreement that can't build more roads. Some feeling that Wirral residents are already tolled because of the tunnel.
- ◆ Requests for Merseytram be extended to Wirral in the future.
- ◆ Anti- social behaviour needs to be tackled if people are to be encouraged to get back on to public transport.
- ◆ Flexible working/staggered school times – should be encouraging more companies/schools etc to allow flexible working/staggered school times.
- ◆ Young people at the Youth Forum had not realised the link between congestion, air quality and cars - and their main desire was to own cars at age 17.

## **Road Safety**

- ◆ Speed limits – differing views obtained; Some people thought speed limits should be more consistent (less changing of speed limits along routes) however others considered that variable speed limits at different times of day would work better. General support for lower speed limits in residential areas and more speed signs generally. View was that speed cameras work but traffic calming is less effective. Support for Homezones.
- ◆ Enforcement – Residents should be trained to operate speed guns to warn drivers of speed? Should have cameras on buses to photograph cars in bus lanes. People should be more pro-active in reporting bad driving and reporting offenders (police systems would need evidence). General support for enforcement cameras however need for consistency, (not all functional) and their use

needs to be further extended. Location of cameras should not be publicised but visibility of boxes could be improved - in Scotland, cameras are striped and were viewed as more visible. Incorrect parking should be more widely enforced.

- ◆ Cameras – strong support, but preference was for speed/distance cameras as opposed to spot speeds which encourage people to slow down and speed up again once drivers have passed the camera. Mobile cameras keep people alert. Support for use of mobile speed warning signs to provide ‘surprise’ factor on roads.
- ◆ Education – drivers need to be educated more – signage alone is not effective enough. Education should be more generally targeted and not just at the young – elderly people were mentioned in particular. Mobile speed warning signs to raise drivers’ awareness of their speeds are effective. “Gateway“ markings were also seen as effective, as were the use of variable speed warning signs on approaches to known black spots.
- ◆ Pedestrians and Cyclists - more roads to be pedestrianised to make it pleasant for walking and there is also the need to promote the health benefits of walking and cycling more. “Walking Bus” idea is excellent.
- ◆ Rat running is a problem at peak times - need to address this.
- ◆ Cycle lanes need to be continuous. Cycling on pavements needs to be addressed. Traffic calming measures need to take cyclists and motorcyclists into account as some speed ramps are too steep at slow speeds.
- ◆ Driving standards – drivers should be re-tested periodically.
- ◆ School buses – more enforcement required on vehicles - drivers cannot/will not control the children. Problem of unruly behaviour by school children also applies on public services.

Ideas -

- ◆ Introduction of ‘countdown system’ at pedestrian crossings (like in Dublin) to indicate to waiting pedestrians how long they have to wait to cross.
- ◆ Buses stop in roads rather than in laybys like in Leeds – cheap and effective traffic calming on busy routes.

## **Air Quality/Environment**

- ◆ Strong agreement that transport is a significant contributor to poor air quality, however, apart from at specific spots, air quality was felt to be quite good on Wirral - however noticeably worse during peak periods.
- ◆ Main offenders were felt to be buses as they are usually from old inefficient fleets. As well as air pollution this also creates noise pollution. Air quality and noise issue also raised in regard to Liverpool John Lennon airport and increasing numbers of flights over Wirral.
- ◆ Taxis were deemed to contribute to air pollution by leaving engines running
- ◆ Alternative fuels should be investigated and encouraged - Buses should be gas/electric/hydrogen cell powered and trains can also be dual fuel or solar powered.

- ◆ More control needed on HGVs with regard to parking, driving through centres, noise and fumes
- ◆ More freight to be carried by rail to reduce the number of HGVs on the roads.
- ◆ Support for park and ride to reduce cars on the road.
- ◆ Mixed views on “stick” approach of reducing congestion, i.e. road tolling and car parking charges
- ◆ Suggestions for specified ‘drop-off’ locations near schools to avoid poor air quality at schools due to the numbers of waiting cars.
- ◆ American yellow buses should be used for transporting children to school.
- ◆ Higher taxes for 4x 4’s and sports cars.
- ◆ Need enforcement of parking on verges and pavements as these damage the streetscene.
- ◆ Young people at the Youth Forum had not realised the link between congestion, air quality and cars - and their main desire was to own cars at age 17.

## **PLAY AREA**

35 responses were received over the 2 day consultation events that took place in Kwik Save and Sainsbury’s. The results were not conclusive and therefore a further meeting with ward Councillors, Parks & Open Spaces, Victoria Brawn and Toni Bosworth has been arranged for 12 May to discuss further prior to any applications being made. Please see below for further details.

### **CONSULTATION RESULTS ON A NEW PLAY AREA FOR STORETON ROAD PLAYING FIELDS**

35 Responses received from neighbours, (130 hand delivered to residents bordering the site), and those distributed at the Local Area Forum and Supermarket drop in sessions.

- 1 Do you have a preferred location ? **(3 had no preferred location)**
- 2 What sort of play equipment should be provided? **(9 No response given)**

**The most popular request was for a variety of equipment such as climbing frames, swings, slides and roundabouts etc.**

**Adventure type equipment.**

**Some also requested facilities for older children e.g. a skatepark, and football facilities /goal posts.**

- 3 Are there any general comments you would like to make?

**Delighted, long needed facility.**

## Concerns about vandalism and possible gathering point.

What about older children?

**Planting to shelter site.**

**Easy access and clearly visible from the road and not too close to houses**

**Site away from road**

**Parking issues – Storeton road**

**Enclosed grass area for picnics/football**

**Litter bins and dog bins**

**No lighting**

NAME: **4 did not give details**

ADDRESS: **5 did not give details**

AGE: Under 12 : **1** Under 18: **0** 18 – 25: **0**

25+: **13** Over 50: **21**

## **HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2005/06**

A report went to Cabinet on 12 April 2005 outlining the programme of Highways Maintenance and Structural repairs for 2005/06.

Overall 30% of schemes approved are as a direct result of consultation with forum members. These are marked 'F' in the attached appendix.

## **HANDYPERSON SCHEME**

WIRRAL Council's new Handyperson Scheme has already proved a huge success, cutting waiting times for minor home improvements from several months to a week.

The Scheme is funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and the Housing Market Renewal Initiative and charges just £3.50 for the first hour and £7 per hour after that. Most of the calls only take one to two hours with the payment going directly back into the service. The team also fit Carbon Monoxide Alarms and Smoke Detectors without charge.

**Tony Watkin, Handyperson Supervisor, said: "The scheme was launched in February with three of us attending calls each day in the renewal areas of Birkenhead, Seacombe, Tranmere, Bidston and Liscard. The service is open to over 55s with a lot of people being referred by Social Services' Occupational Therapy Team."**

**Margaret Campbell, Occupational Therapy Assistant, added: "It's a brilliant service. Grab rails could take months to be fixed up. Now our Handypersons do them and clients are getting their jobs done within a week of their assessment. "**

All the team are time served so customers are confident to have them in their homes and know the work will be to an excellent standard. Mrs Jacqueline Wilson used the service and was very impressed:

“I wanted some pictures and mirrors putting on the wall and couldn’t do it myself so the Social Services OT gave me a leaflet about the scheme. I was so pleased to have someone do the job who was trustworthy, reliable, friendly and caring. The fact that they were recommended by Social Services gave me extra peace of mind but I think the service is too cheap!”

If you are over 55, live in the eligible areas and have a job that the Handyperson Scheme can help with, please call Joanne on 691 8371.

## **ABC TOGETHER**

ABC Together is in the process of setting up a scheme to recycle previously unrecycled cardboard from WBC into hypo-allergenic horse bedding. This bedding will be sold and then picked up when soiled and recycled into high quality compost. The Company is a social firm whose foremost goal will be to assist people with mental health problems reintegrate into mainstream employment. There are few therapeutic facilities for people with mental health problems extant on the Wirral and Merseyside at present especially those which lead to real job opportunities. We will be creating a vibrant social network and have several schemes we are hoping to set up in the first two years of our operation such as a therapeutic garden and a community kitchen. We have forged links with many other environmental and mental health action groups and have attracted substantial funding already from CRED and MSEI.. We intend to also provide an educational and information service to local schools and businesses to increase awareness of environmental and mental health issues. Initially we will be benefiting around 30 people but as we have just mentioned our project will eventually be of benefit to a much wider section of the community

ABC Together aim to create varied and therapeutic work opportunities for people who are presently excluded from society, especially those with mental health problems. By integrating people into the mainstream we will be reconnecting people into society and enhancing their prospects of real recovery. By offering contact to carers, who also find themselves isolated, we aim to encourage active involvement and respite for this previously marginalised group. We aim to do this by creating an essentially crucial environmental project that will considerably improve existing recycling objectives on Wirral and Merseyside. Our project is being developed by current carers and service users with a committee including key members of relevant organisations. We have been working towards this aim for the last 3 years.

## **OXTON WALKS**

On the 19th of May 2001 the Oxton Society held the first Secret Gardens of Oxton event. The primary purpose of this event was to help raise money to fund an appeal for Christmas Lights in the village centre. Since that time it has become an annual event in the village calendar. For more information about the Society please log on to [www.oxtonvillage.com](http://www.oxtonvillage.com)

## SECTION THREE

# COMMUNITY INITIATIVE'S FUNDING

For the 2005/06 financial year, each area forum will be responsible for allocating the following specific funding streams:

**Community Initiatives Fund** - small grants available for voluntary and community groups to support local projects and initiatives in line with area forum agreed priorities (£11,000 per forum);

**Community Safety** - specific funding ringfenced for initiatives dedicated to tackling crime and nuisance (£3,000 per forum);

**Environmental Funding** - specific funding, provided through Local Agenda 21, for community based projects aimed at improving or maintaining the local environment (£1,500 per forum).

As in previous years, each area forum will be responsible for setting their own priorities and processes for agreeing and allocating funds.

### **2004/2005**

The forum had funding of £10,879.66 in 2004/05 (including sum carried forward from 2003/04) and awarded grants totalling £8,997.00 for ten projects (detailed overleaf) at the panel meeting in January 2005, which were approved at Cabinet on 16th February.

### **2005/2006**

The forum has a carry forward of £1,882.66 and allocation of £11,000.00 from the Community Initiatives Fund; and allocations of £3,000.00 from the Community Safety Fund (for community safety projects) and £1,500.00 from the LA21 Fund (for environmental projects). This gives the forum a total of £17,382.66.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Project / Service</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Stanley Special School PTA	To raise funds for the replacement of the school minibus. The bus is used to take the children to therapeutic activities such as horse riding and swimming.	<b>£1,000.00</b>
Mount Estate Woodland Trust Fund	To continue with the refurbishment of the woodland.	<b>£750.00</b>
Shaftesbury Youth Club	To fund a youth worker and materials/consumables in order to provide an opportunity for young people to participate in sporting/recreational activities on Friday evenings.	<b>£1,000.00</b>
Wirral Tuesday Club	To help cover costs associated with running the club, including transport costs, hall hire, and trips etc.	<b>£1,000.00</b>
Wirral Information Resource for Equality & Disability (WIRED)	To purchase two manual wheelchairs due to increased demand for Birkenhead shopmobility service, and funding for scooter and powerchair parts.	<b>£872.00</b>
Wirral Women & Childrens Aid	To provide training for staff and volunteers and educational and development courses for women, to help them break the cycle of domestic violence.	<b>£1,000.00</b>
Prenton Pre-School Playgroup Association	To improve the outdoor learning facilities by purchasing new outdoor play equipment and a secure storage facility.	<b>£750.00</b>
Youth Federation	To fund additional training for young people aged 14-16 undertaking voluntary work within youth organisations on Wirral, specifically Oxton and Prenton.	<b>£625.00</b>
Hillside Christian Fellowship	To upgrade and improve the security of the building to allow the expansion of our youth project.	<b>£1,000.00</b>
Glenavon Junior Football Club	To contribute towards providing secure storage containers.	<b>£1,000.00</b>

# SECTION FOUR

## DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A LOCAL AREA PLAN

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to provide forum members with an update of progress made in relation to the development of area plans and to suggest possible next steps for the forum to implement which will support the achievement of priorities identified locally for action.

### **Background**

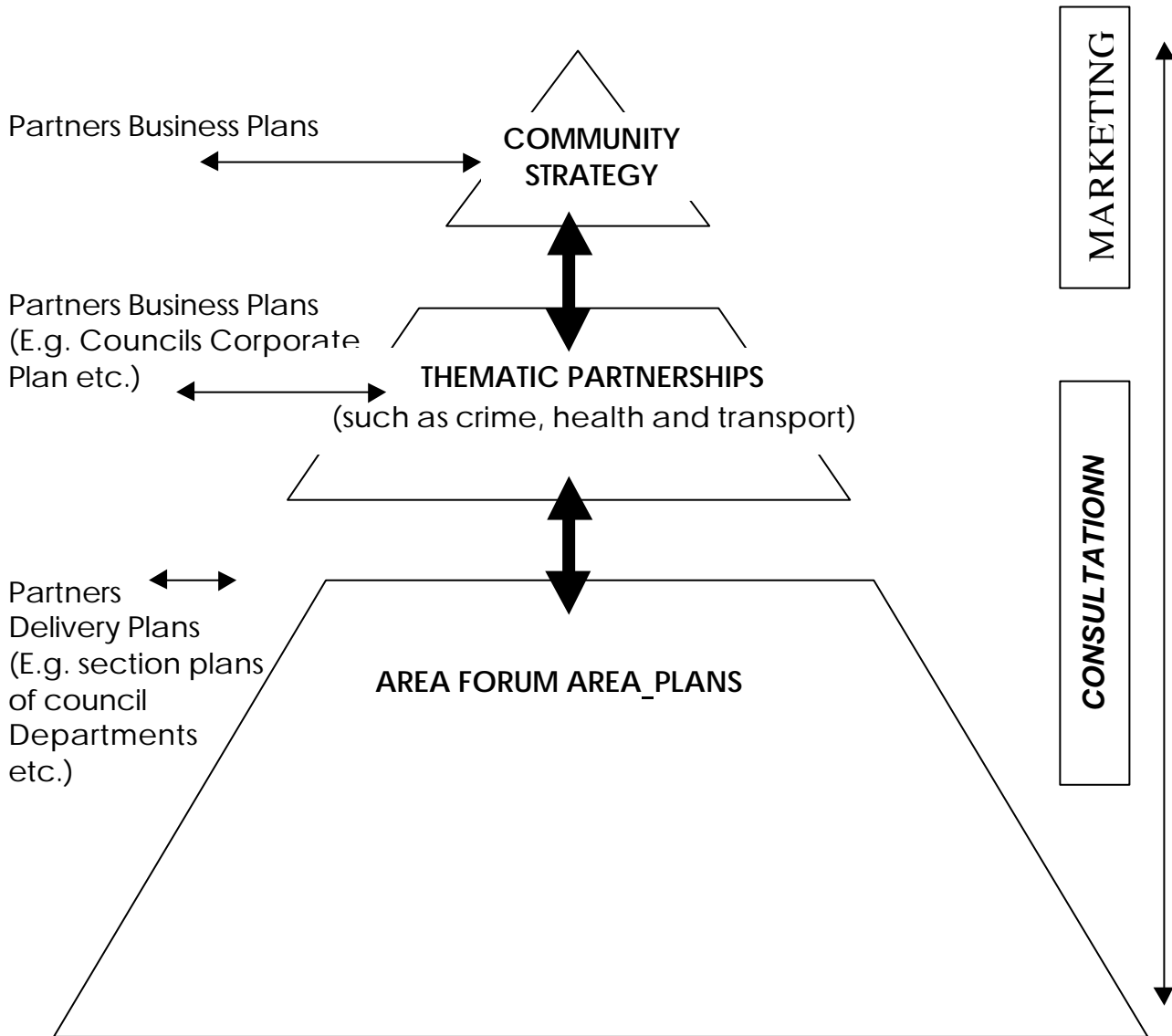
One of the key tasks envisaged for all area forums since their introduction in 2001 was the development of specific local area plans which reflected the needs and priorities of the area forum. The area plans form a key element of the overarching community strategy – developed through Wirral’s Local Strategic Partnership – which sets out how the council and its partners will work towards improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of all communities in Wirral.

Area plans are designed to:

- Identify the needs and aspirations of the local community;
- Identify significant social, economic and environmental trends through establishing an overall demographic picture of the area;
- Promote initiatives that will address the identified local needs and priorities;
- Provide a work plan for the area forum;
- Provide a more local perspective to the overarching community strategy through identifying ‘common’ issues and needs across the area forums;
- Feed into the service planning cycles of the council and its partners to ensure that the identified local needs are influencing business plans and strategies.

The diagram below shows how the area plans developed by local area forums feeds into, and influences, the business plans and overarching community strategy for Wirral.





The development of area plans has been ongoing for the last 18 months. The work carried out by the area forum has also been informed by Quality of life surveys, Wirral's Citizen Panel, specific information drawn from area forums and existing consultation results.

## Next Steps

The development of the area plans has been further protracted by the recent changes to ward boundaries and the increase in the number of area forums, which has delayed the production of the plans.

It is proposed that the area forum:

- Approves the attached area plan, developing a work programme to support forum activities in meeting issues identified within the plan as being a priority for local people;
- Refreshes the existing plan (to be completed by December 2005 to allow for the plans to inform service planning cycles);

Undertake further consultation with local communities – through specific mechanisms identified by the forum – to identify specific local needs and priorities around the new community strategy themes.

## SECTION FIVE

# YOUTH FORUMS & UPDATE

### Up 2 U Awards

Wirral won the award for best Council on 27th April 2005. Weston Spirit runs the awards and there are a number of categories including Youth Service, which was won by St Helens Council. Young people judge all the awards. And they felt that in relation to Wirral it was improving and offering young people better services across the Council.

#### **Area Youth forums**

February 28<sup>th</sup>-March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2005 – provided by Debbie Dawson

#### Agenda

Consultation with transport dept and Police

Allocation of forum money

The first half of the forum involved young people in a large group discussing transport issues as part of a wider consultation on Wirral. The police were consulting with young people on the best way to present information to young people.

For the second part of the forum the young people present were divided into groups. Each group had a set of application forms (designed and filled in by young people). The groups spent about 20 mins discussing whom they would allocate funding to and why. We reformed into one big group and went through the process of negotiating and allocating the funding.

Some of the unintended outcomes included: user groups sharing some resources as they were doing a similar project, freeing up money to be allocated elsewhere. Offering to fund raise for a particular group if it was unsuccessful in getting funding and putting prejudice aside to allocate money to a rival group.

#### Funding allocated

Greasby Outreach project	£250
Pensby barge trip	£250
Jigsaw video work	£100
Beaconsfield skills project	£100
Beaconsfield craft project	£100
Beaconsfield/Fender cultural project	£50
Powerhouse newspaper	£90
Fender YAP health project	£100
North end YPP Homelessness project	£110
Eastham YC D of E resources	£100
Eastham YC Drama activities	£100
Bromborough YC cooking project	£100
Bromborough YC Southport trip	£100
Bromborough YC Card Making	£100
YMCA senior member training	£100
Belvidere YC quiet room project	£100
WYPP social event	£100
Skateboard group / skating trip	£100
Leasowe health project	£100
Moreton senior club training	£100

## SECTION SIX

# STREETSCENE

### PLANS TO SPRUCE UP WIRRAL FOR THE OPEN

WIRRAL Council has announced plans to invest £300,000 on the biggest clean up operation the borough has ever seen – so as the region shines for The Open golf championship in 2006.

The eyes of the world will fall upon Hoylake in July next year, when an estimated 40,000 visitors per day descend upon the area and the event is watched on television by 350 million people around the globe.

The authority is enlisting help from public sector colleagues, local businesses, landowners, schools and community groups to spruce up the region and guarantee a warm welcome for visitors.

Director David Green said: “The Open presents us with a fantastic opportunity to showcase Wirral to the rest of the world. We will be embarking on a mammoth tidy up campaign - spanning a huge area and involving people from a wide range of backgrounds. The Council can’t do this on its own. We will be relying on the efforts of everyone in Wirral to get behind us, show their pride in the local area and get involved.”

Wirral Council already has a good reputation for its cleanliness - as recognised our recent inspection by the audit commission, and for its work developing innovative anti-litter campaigns that have been short-listed for national awards. This project builds on these successes and aims to ensure that Wirral looks its best for the Open.

The Council has been gathering intelligence from other host Councils to maximise opportunities created by the event and regeneration plans for the Hoylake and West Kirby area are now being implemented. Many of us are aware that work has already begun brightening up the street scene in West Wirral. More than 70 trees have been planted along Meols Drive, and roundabouts and shrub beds have been given a thorough revamp. A litter blitz is set to target key transport routes in and out of Wirral, together with Hoylake, West Kirby and neighbouring town centres. Land owners Network Rail have pledged to tackle waste issues along the Liverpool to West Kirby railway line. As the golf championship approaches, the Highways Agency and Mersey Tunnels will also be working tirelessly to clear their land of any illegally dumped rubbish.

Much work is being done by the local authority to catch the criminals responsible for fly-tipping in these areas and in other parts of Wirral. Every effort is being made to trace those responsible and take action against them. To help the Council with these investigations officers have the use of covert surveillance equipment that is sited in known hotspots. Further educational work will be taking place in Wirral’s schools. The Council’s award winning ‘anti-litter’ roadshow that encourages secondary school children to take more pride in their local environment, will be embarking on a new series of tours. Primary School litter clubs are also being asked to get involved in organising community clean-ups.

During the tournament community volunteers will be enlisted to serve as uniformed town guides. These guides, and additional volunteers from the business community, will be encouraged to report any environmental issues to our Streetscene contact centre for immediate action during the Championship. We will have an increased presence in terms of street cleaning staff, for the duration of the event.

## SUPPORT FOR RECYCLING

WIRRAL residents have expressed overwhelming support for changes to rubbish collections, according to a recent survey.

More than 75% of householders responding to a waste questionnaire have said that they would like an additional bin or container for storing recyclable waste at home.

The Council's recycling team has been consulting with residents about how it can encourage more people to recycle. This recent survey is one of a series planned for the coming months. Results will be used to inform the Council of key issues to consider when planning the new kerbside collection arrangements.

Wirral Council's Director of Technical Services David Green said: "The reality is that less than 12% of waste is being recycled in Wirral while the rest of our rubbish is being sent to landfill. Changes to waste collections are essential if we are to boost this figure, meet government requirements and more importantly protect our local environment.

"We want to make it even easier for the people of Wirral to recycle. With the results from this recent survey, it is reassuring to see that residents are supportive of all recyclable rubbish being collected from outside their front door."

The local authority is about to embark on a major re-organisation of waste services that will see recycling rates soar - with paper, cardboard, glass, can, garden waste and clear plastic collections likely to come into effect in Spring next year.

These recyclables will be taken to a new Material Recycling Facility, which, after several years of negotiation, is currently being built in Bidston. The site will be managed and owned by Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority. Here Wirral's waste will be sorted out and sent on to recycling companies for transforming into new materials.

## LITTER PROSECUTIONS

ENFORCEMENT officers are continuing in their fight against litter louts. Thoughtless residents are being warned that illegal dumping could cost them dearly – as two women were heavily fined by the courts this week.

Kelly Cole from New Ferry Road, New Ferry was fined £150 plus costs at a hearing before Birkenhead Magistrates on Tuesday, April 5. The court heard how Miss Cole had dumped bags of rubbish less than 100 yards from her home in Salisbury Avenue last November 18, 2004.

Emma Lyon from Newling Street in Birkenhead was also fined £150 plus costs after leaving household waste in an entry between Newling Street and Prince Edward Street last October 29, 2004.

The women were caught by Wirral Council's environmental enforcement team, responding to fly-tipping reports from local residents. After searching through bags, the officers were able to trace the rubbish back to the owners.

After failing to pay a fixed penalty, both cases were taken to court by Wirral Council and Miss Cole and Miss Lyon were found guilty of the offences in their absence.

## ROAD SAFETY UPDATES

ROAD safety officers have been out and about visiting Wirral schools to promote sensible driving.

Pre-driver training has been given to pupils at West Kirby Grammar school. Students were offered advice on selecting a driving school, learning about attitudes, risk and behaviour. They were also given an overview of the demands of both the Theory Test and the Practical Driving Test, taught practical checks (oil, water, brake fluid etc) and even changed a wheel!

Meanwhile students taking part in the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award scheme at Pensby High School for Boys welcomed road safety officers and two police motorcyclists to school for a talk this term as part of a traffic education training programme. The police officers took their bikes to the school and engaged the boys in the positive and negative points of being both a police officer and a motorcyclist. Students at the school have one more lesson learning about the physical damage caused by road traffic collisions and then they have to take an examination.

## SWITCH OFF AND BELT UP

ROAD safety officers and Merseyside Police have launched a 'Switch off and belt up!' driver safety campaign.

Throughout April, Merseyside Police were cracking down on motorists they saw using a mobile phone whilst driving, and stopping drivers and passengers who were not wearing their seatbelts.

The police enforcement campaign was supported by an educational 'push' from regional road safety officers. They targeted local communities with publicity reminding motorists to switch off their mobile phones before starting the engine, and reiterating the message that seatbelts save lives. The initiative is in support of the ongoing Department for Transport 'Think!' road safety campaign.

Merseyside Police and road safety officers gathered at Tranmere Rovers Football Club at the launch of the road safety campaign. Young drivers who recently passed their test attended to take part in an off-road cone slalom - while using a mobile phone. Anna Cope from Support and Information Services was among those taking part. For safety reasons this was done using dual control cars, with assistance from local driving instructors. It proved the point that it is not possible to control a car with the distraction of a mobile phone.

David Midmer, the bereaved father of road traffic collision victim Nathan, also spoke at the launch to talk about his loss and the impact that careless driving can have on a family.

Wirral Council's road safety officer Dave Watson said: "We want to remind motorists that mobile phone and seatbelt laws are in place to protect people. People are still too complacent about using handheld mobiles whilst driving. Throughout the launch demonstration our young drivers have had great difficulty controlling the car while they had a mobile phone clamped to their ear. We've proved this in a safe environment, but how many people are out there on our roads, still ignoring the law? Anyone using a mobile phone while driving is not in full control of their car - it is a dangerous distraction. If you are setting out on a journey, please be careful and take a moment to carry out your in-car safety checks. Don't forget to switch off your phone and belt up."

## SUCCESS IN FIGHTING CLAIMS

THE number of claims being made against Wirral Council has fallen dramatically – as the local authority is establishing a winning reputation for itself in the court room.

Improved systems and procedures have brought about a staggering 66% drop in the number of claims pursued against the Council. Whereas two years ago the Council was receiving up to 180 claims a month, the authority now receives less than 60 claims each month. And of 41 cases taken to court in 2003/04, Wirral Council officers successfully defended 35, making for a win rate of 83%.

Recent years have seen local authorities up and down the country facing growing numbers of highway claims made against them. However, officers in Wirral have been working hard to counter this trend as part of its Streetscene overhaul of services.

Highway inspectors have been undergoing specialist training to give them more confidence in the court room. They have taken part in one-day intensive workshops which cover everything from preparations before going into court, dealing with cross examination, developing confidence in giving effective evidence and a mock trial.

Wirral Council has also enlisted the help of specialist risk advisors in a bid to make the borough's roads and pavements safer. Insurance giant Zurich Municipal has been assisting the local authority with implementing current industry 'best practice' for maintaining roads and pavements.

Inspection regimes have been re-organised, priorities for road repairs are now assessed differently, and there is a new Council policy for replacing paving flags with Bitmac. This has proven to be a much safer and cost effective alternative, particularly in areas where flags are repeatedly broken or lifted because of inconsiderate motorists parking on the pavement. Claims 'hotspot' areas are also mapped and closely monitored by inspectors.

As a result of all these changes the Council is now in a better position to prove that it fulfils its legal obligations for highway maintenance. Wirral will continue to work with industry experts to improve both the condition of roads and pavements and its claims record.

Director of Technical Services at Wirral Council David Green said: "We are striving to make roads and pavements even safer for the Wirral public. Much work has been done to re-organise the way in which we carry out highway inspections in line with national recommendations.

"We've also rolled out an extensive training programme to familiarise our highway inspectors with the court room environment and give them the confidence to provide good evidence. It is now reassuring to see our efforts are paying off with this massive reduction in claims being made against the Council."

## AWARD WINNING LITTER CAMPAIGNING

WIRRAL COUNCIL has been shortlisted for a prestigious national environmental award – in recognition of its achievements with anti-litter campaigning to teenagers.

The X:CELL4WIRRAL campaign has seen innovative partnership working between the Council, secondary schools, Radio City and Tranmere Rovers FC. Over the last year all have been involved the co-ordinated targeting of anti-litter messages at school children using the web, radio advertising, live stage shows, text messaging and community litter picks.

The X:CELL4Wirral initiative has already received regional recognition – winning the category for Innovation and Technology at the Merseyside 21 Awards earlier this month). The campaign has been

deemed so impressive that it was also shortlisted for the annual ENCAMS ‘People and Places’ awards that took place in Birmingham this month, hosted by comedian Jasper Carrott. The environmental charity, which manages the ‘Keep Britain Tidy’ campaign, organises the awards to highlight work local authorities are doing to tackle local environmental quality issues that blight neighbourhoods.

## NEW £1.3m BYPASS opens in SAUGHALL MASSIE

### **At a glance...**

- ❑ New £1.3m road scheme provides better transport links between West Wirral and the motorway network in readiness for The Open in 2006.
- ❑ Improved and safer facilities for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.
- ❑ **Partially opens** to traffic this weekend after eight months of engineering and construction work.

**Director of Technical Services at Wirral Council, David Green, said: “Wirral Council is committed to improving transport facilities across the region. This is a route of major strategic importance and the new road will provide better links between North West Wirral and the motorway network.**

**“Not only will it reduce journey times for motorists, this road has also been designed to take into account the needs and safety of pedestrians, cyclists and even horse riders.”**



## SECTION SEVEN

# FUTURE PRESENTATIONS

At the forum meeting held on 5 October, it was decided to invite someone from Merseytravel, preferably Neil Scales, to give a presentation on Public Transport. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to arrange it for this meeting. John Smith from Merseytravel is happy to attend the June meeting to give a presentation on the Local Transport Plan 2.

The DAAT presentation was particularly interesting although only a few minutes were allowed for this. The Chair thought it would be a good idea to invite them back to a future meeting to give a more detailed, local update.

Cathy McNulty has contacted the Community Planning Team and would like to give a presentation at the next area forum, details as follows;

### **Development of Cycle Networks in Wirral**

Proposals are currently being developed for the implementation of cycle networks in Wirral. A working group formed of council officers, local users, local and national cycle groups and Members have developed a quantitative process to determine where best to focus resources to build cycle networks. In the past, the council has delivered some excellent cycle routes, but have failed to create urban networks allowing people to make local journeys by bicycle. Almost 50% of all car journeys are less than 2 miles – the equivalent of a 10 minute bike ride.

The presentation will cover current cycle policies, dispel myths about cycling and explain the process which has been developed to deliver cycle networks. Officers will also be seeking local and Member views on the proposals.

## SECTION EIGHT

# DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of the next meetings the Oxton & Prenton area forum are Wednesday 12 October and Wednesday 15 February 2006. It is anticipated that all meetings will be held at Woodchurch Road Primary School.

# APPENDICES

Minutes of the last Oxton/Prenton Area Forum  
 Highways Maintenance programme 2005/06  
 Notes of site meeting re: Borough Road

## Minutes - Area Forum (Oxton and Prenton) Meeting - 3 February 2005

Present	
Chair	FM Doyle
Ward Councillors	Mrs F E F Anderson , A Bridson , SA Holbrook , Mrs P M Williams
Community Representatives	Alan Dollery (Prenton Tenants & Residents Assoc.) , June Foster (Wirral Fed. of Tenants & Residents Assocs.) , Patrick Toosey
Lead Officer	Bob Beresford (Deputy Director of Housing & Environmental Protection)
Area Service Co-ordinator	Maxine Joynson
Bebington & West Wirral PCT	Katy Kidd (Exec. Board Member) , Dr Abhi Mantgani
Merseyside Police	Sgt J Garthwaite , Inspector Mark Smith
Council Officers	Gary Cummings (Area Streetscene Manager) , Derwent Derbyshire (Deputy Director of Technical Services) , Lance Farlam (Parks and Open Spaces) , Richard Lewis (Principal Forward Planning Officer) , Mike Walker (Community Safety Officer)
Apologies	Cllr Stuart Kelly (Leader, Liberal Democrats, Wirral MBC) , Alan Stennard (Director of Regeneration)

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- Minute 6 - Play area update
- Minute 7 - Primary Care Trust update
- Minute 8 - Future meetings/Presentations

### Minute 1 - Welcome, introductions and apologies

Cllr Frank Doyle (Chair) welcomed everybody to the second meeting of the Oxton and Prenton Area Forum. There were approximately 32 members of the public present.

### Minute 2 - Minutes of the last meeting/matters arising

Cllr Doyle explained that the matters arising from the previous meeting were dealt with in the Area Co-Ordinator's Report under Section 1 Local Issues. He explained that if any members of the public were dissatisfied with the explanations provided, they would have an opportunity later in the evening

under Item 6 of the Agenda Public Question Time to request further clarification.

### **Minute 3 - Area Co-ordinators Report**

Maxine Joynson, Area Co-Ordinator explained that people attending this Area Forum had received a letter informing them that the next Area Forum would be held on the 21 June when, in fact, it was to be held on 15 June. She also informed the Forum that there was still a vacancy for an Oxton Ward Community Representative. An advert had been placed in the Wirral Globe on 19 January to promote this vacancy.

Her report contained information on the current 'Reassurance' Police project being run in part of the Prenton Ward, feedback from consultation on the Licensing Act 2003, the Local Transport Plan 2 and the Community Initiative Funding 2004/2005. With regard to the Community Initiative Funding, a report was due to go to Cabinet on 10 February, this had now been put back to 16 February. Cllr Doyle explained that the Sub-Committee set up to discuss the applications had met on Tuesday, 11 January 2005. The Oxton and Prenton Forum had an allocation of £10,879.66 and had received applications bidding for a total of £17,550. Their recommendations would be passed to Cabinet for final approval. Hopefully everyone who had successfully applied for funding should receive their money by 31 March 2005.

### **Minute 4 - Public question time**

Cllr Doyle explained that there had been three questions received in advance of the meeting but that one of those had only been received in the afternoon prior to the meeting.

The first question was from Mr. Neale regarding parking and planning issues. He explained he was satisfied with the information provided to date but he went on to explain that residents were still dissatisfied with the ongoing problem of parking. He mentioned in particular Tranmere Rovers match day parking which was over spilling into Elm Road and St Stephen's Road and wondered whether the current scheme could be extended into that area. He also raised the problem of getting out of Waterpark Road into Storeton Road; he had asked if that entrance could be widened but had been informed by Council officials that it could not. Derwent Derbyshire from Technical Services replied that he would be happy to take this issue on board and would let him know the conclusion.

The second part of his question concerned the replacement and redevelopment of traditional and good residential properties with flats in both wards. Richard Lewis from Corporate Services Department explained that officials were aware of this and it stemmed from the decision to restrict development in West Wirral. His Department are currently preparing two documents, one an intermediate statement of housing supply to restrict the amount of new houses built and specific policy on flats over the next six months and would be liaising with the Oxton Conservation Society. He indicated that he would be happy to discuss this separately at any time.

Cllr Bridson said that whilst this topic was being discussed, she wondered whether there was any news on the Prenton Conservation Society as she had hoped that this had been decided before the Oriel Court development had gone to Planning. Richard Lewis explained that the Conservation Officer was currently absent from work but he would be following this up.

The second question which had been received in advance of the meeting was from Andrew Taylor who represented the Tranmere Hall Estate Residents

Association. He was satisfied with the responses he had received from Maxine but further wished to explore the costing and provision of speed guns as a way of monitoring the amount of cars speeding on Ingleborough Road. He explained that speed guns could only be provided by the Council during normal office hours but that the speeding problem occurred outside these hours and at weekends. He explained that speed guns could now be purchased for as little as £270 and that communities could buy them and use them to gather data. His research suggested that the guns could be used to provide the Police with enough evidence to prosecute speeding offenders. Inspector Mark Smith from the Police described to the Forum a scheme in St Helens which was being piloted whereby members of the public monitor speeding and how it worked. This scheme was leading to prosecutions. Following a question from Cllr Freda Anderson, Inspector Smith explained that there were varying quality of guns and that they had been in use for a number of years.

Cllr Doyle explained that the third question had only been received that afternoon and concerned the bringing up to standard of certain pathways in the Oxton area. This information had been requested using the Freedom of Information Act and had been tabled by Mr Leonard. Mr Leonard went on to explain that his concerns were that Council Tax funds were being used to bring up to standard unadopted pathways which were the responsibility of the householders. He said this had been at a cost to Council Tax Payers of £4000. Cllr Doyle said that because of the late arrival of the question, he was unable to confirm or deny the figure of £4000. Cllr Bridson asked Derwent Derbyshire about the footpath in question and he clarified that the funding was Capital Funding rather than Revenue Funding, i.e. it is money from the Government that is given for the upkeep of highways rather than from Council Tax.

Cllr Pat Williams said that she welcomed the bringing up to standard of the footpath because it was well used and she was pleased that it had been carried out as it increased the safe use of the footpath.

Cllr Doyle concluded the prepared questions and invited further questions from the public.

Eric Dade brought up the issue of the demolition of the former Technical College on Borough Road. He explained that local residents received no notification of when the work was due to start, how it would be done and that as a result of the demolition work, their houses have suffered from large amounts of dust. He wanted to know whether there would be any financial compensation for the people in the area for damage caused to property. Cllr Williams reported that she had received numerous complaints following the start of the demolition work and has asked for a statement from the Environmental Health Department. Bob Beresford felt unable to comment on specific matters and said that the demolition would be supervised by Building Control, taking into account the safety of the local population. He was unable to comment on compensation and this will have to be discussed with the demolition company and Building Control. Cllr Williams explained that prior to demolition taking place that she had sought reassurances that the work would be done in a safe manner, following concerns from local residents over fears about asbestos. There were also concerns expressed regarding the overall safety of the site following a fire. Mr Dade explained that on a regular basis materials were being removed illegally from the site and damage had been done to local residents' properties. He reported that there had been an assault on a security officer and in his opinion one security guard was not enough. Cllr Williams said that a letter had been received from the demolition company to say that these problems were being addressed.

Cllr Holbrook stated that a demolition project of this size should come under the CDM Regulations of the Health and Safety Executive and Rob Beresford

confirmed this. Mr Dade voiced concerns over the new building phase and wondered whether there would be access through Oakdene Road to any new houses built. Cllr Holbrook confirmed that there was no planned access.

The next question from the floor was from Mr Patrick Dowling and concerned the current policy for foot patrols in the Oxton area by the Police. Inspector Smith confirmed that there were five priority beats for foot patrol, with Oxton being one of these and that his Beat Manager, John Goodwin, could be seen patrolling the Oxton area on a daily basis. Mr Dowling stated that he had not seen a foot patrol for a long time but Inspector Smith confirmed that an officer was present every day. Cllr Doyle also reported that he had noticed an increase in foot patrols in this area.

Mr Dowling went on to express his concerns about a number of bulging and unsafe walls in the Oxton area, in particular a wall opposite St Joseph's Primary School and a wall in Willan Street. In his opinion someone from the Police or the Council should be doing something about this in order to prevent an accident. Cllr Doyle explained that there was a pilot currently being run in Prenton in which Community Support Officers who were under the jurisdiction of the Police will report incidents of this nature through to the relevant department for action. Sergeant Garthwaite then gave a brief explanation of the role of the Community Support Officers in the pilot, expressing his hope that this would be expanded into other areas. Inspector Smith asked Mr Dowling to provide details of the walls following the meeting and he would ensure action would be taken.

Alan Dollery raised the question of vehicles using Palmwood Close as a turning point. He and the residents felt that narrowing of the entrance to the road would not solve the problem. He felt that much of the traffic using the road to perform a U-turn emanated from the ASDA store; there is currently no right turn out of ASDA and there is no signpost directing people to get in the left-hand lane to access the roundabout. If traffic doesn't get into the left-hand lane, it misses the roundabout and continues over the flyover. Palmwood Close is the first junction on the right and drivers then use this to turn round to go in the opposite direction. Cllr Holbrook explained that the narrowing of the junction would make the opening into Palmwood Close less inviting; he did, however, accept that this in turn may cause problems at the far end of the close by cars attempting to turn round, finding they can't and then having to drive all the way down the Close. He was interested in the proposals to put signs in the ASDA car park and that ASDA would probably pay for this. He also felt that the local Councillors should explore the possibility of the traffic lights being altered to allow for a right turn. However, he was unsure of the technical implications and asked Derwent Derbyshire for his opinion. Derwent said these concerns have been taken on board and will report back at the next meeting. He is not familiar with all the details but feels that a sign in the ASDA car park to get in the left-hand lane would be beneficial. He felt that a right turn out of ASDA would inhibit traffic flow in Woodchurch Road. Alan Dollery felt that it was too long a time to wait till the next Area Forum for an update and that the residents were already annoyed with the situation. Even if the road was narrowed, cars would use the first driveway in the road to turn round which in turn would cause damage to the driveways of the residents concerned. Cllr Doyle said that the three local councillors would take matters up with both local residents and Council officials following tonight's meeting.

#### **Minute 5 - Presentation on Community Safety**

Mike Walker gave a presentation on community safety and presented figures for Oxton and Prenton for burglaries and car theft. He reported that burglaries were down, theft from vehicles was below the national average. Some of the theft from vehicles was seasonal and the incidence of theft from vehicles was

higher in Oxtan than in Prenton. He explained that there was not much theft of newer vehicles as they were difficult to drive off because of all the security devices now in place. The thefts which do occur were usually of personal belongings and the public should be careful to take with them items of value before leaving their vehicles. There was then a general discussion about the safety of Birkenhead Town Centre. Both Inspector Smith and Sergeant Garthwaite explained that incidents were now reported differently from the past resulting in an increase in recorded crime which can create a false picture. He also explained that violent attacks usually take place amongst people who know each other and that attacks by strangers were rare. Overall, Birkenhead was not that dangerous a place to live and compared well with similar towns in the league tables shown in the presentation. Inspector Smith explained that they look at how other areas are policed, at what other areas are doing to reduce crime and look at evidence-based practice.

### **Minute 6 - Play area update**

Cllr Doyle moved the meeting on to an update on the play area for which funds had been made available. Cllr Doyle and Cllr Kelly met with Officers and two members of the public, Toni Bosworth and Victoria Brawn on 15 November 2004. At that meeting Officers provided plans for a small five-piece play area and the general consensus was that this should be sited on the Storeton Road/Holm Lane fields. The next process was to go out to consultation and he asked Lance Farlam to provide an update. Lance reported that over the last fifteen years the Council's aim was to upgrade existing play areas but there have been no funds available for new ones. Money had been diverted to this new provision and they had been working with local groups – it was difficult to find areas of open space but they had chosen the Storeton Road/Holm Lane playing fields. He would like to discuss options with the community and residents to see how best they can make the provision to meet everyone's needs. He was aware that play areas can often cause problems for adjoining properties and residents. A play area needs to be in an area which is overlooked by local people who can monitor any abuse of the area. He quoted a sum of £70,000 with about five items of equipment, safety surfacing around them and a fence to keep out dogs. He envisaged a good value play area to cater for an age group of 2 – 12 years.

Maxine Joynson has organised two drop-in sessions where people could talk through ideas and concerns. Times and dates were as follows:

Sainsbury's Foyer 1.00 – 6.00 pm Friday, 18th February  
Kwik-Save Foyer 1.00 – 6.00 pm Friday, 25th February

This should give an idea of local peoples' reactions to the proposals.

Lance then invited comments from the floor. A member of the public commented that there is already a bike area so maybe the play area could be a continuation of this. Andrew Taylor raised the question of problems after dark and if there were any plans to lock it up after sunset. Lance said there are no plans to lock it up and they do not want a high fence as this would be intimidating to young children. They want it to be a pleasant environment to play. Cllr Doyle explained that one of the benefits of the proposed site was that the CCTV cameras at the traffic lights on Woodchurch Road at the Sainsbury's junction were able to be used to monitor the proposed play area. He also explained that the long term plans for the area were to fundraise to hopefully provide some form of skateboard/BMX area for older children. Lance explained that once the consultation process had taken place, the interested parties would again meet to consider the views of the public and decide on the site for the play area. Once this has been agreed, Planning Permission would be sought and hopefully work will commence. A member of the public

commented that it should be sited in an area where people do not have gardens.

Cllr Pat Williams said she welcomed this development for Oxton and Prenton. Ever since she has been elected as a Councillor, she has been pressing for a play area and agreed that the area was under-resourced in play areas.

A member of the public asked how the consultation process would be advertised and Lance explained that local schools and shops would be issued flyers and posters. In addition all the surrounding properties which back onto the area would be issued with a letter of explanation and previous experience shows that this is the best approach. Maxine Joynson explained that as a forum she would write to all forum members and interested people to inform them of the forthcoming consultation events. Cllr Williams said that there had been problems on the Storeton Road playing fields with youths in the past which had caused annoyance with the neighbours but overall she still wanted the scheme to go ahead.

### **Minute 7 - Primary Care Trust update**

Dr Katy Kidd said that the most time-consuming issue lately had been improving the care for older people in Wirral. The twelve week consultation period ended in January and proposals discussed at their recent Board Meeting; she reported a huge amount of interest from individuals and bodies, e.g. charities. Most of the proposals were agreed with two particular points: (i) the closure of Wards 6 and 7 with 70% of people against; and (ii) the staff who work for the Total Care and Relief of Carers Team being transferred from the NHS to Social Services – there were objections to this. The decision for closure of the wards has been deferred until June following comments from Angela Eagle M.P. as the PCT has demonstrated that the number of discharges has gone down sufficiently. It has been decided to continue to employ the Total Care Team staff by the NHS and work would be commissioned by Social Services.

Dr Kidd reported on the recent White Paper Choosing Health which focuses on the Government's aims for reducing obesity, smoking, drinking, exercise, diet, nutrition and sexual health and the local delivery plan for 2005 – 2008 which PCT's have to draw up to look at how services can be developed, how money is to be spent and how the NHS targets are to be met over the next three years, with particular regard to the following four points:

- (i) reducing the growth in unscheduled admissions to acute settings;
- (ii) increasing the pro-active management of chronic diseases outside acute settings;
- (iii) increasing the ability of the PCT to redesign pathways and protocols;
- (iv) reducing health inequalities and preventing ill health.

Dr Kidd spoke about the service redesign and increasing intermediate service, for example, G.P.s running gynaecology clinics and clinics being held at other sites, e.g. St. Catherine's, thereby reducing the traffic problems at Arrowe Park Hospital.

Cllr Holbrook asked about the new system for booking same day appointments with G.P. surgeries and Dr Kidd explained the Government's national target that no-one should have to wait longer than 24 hours to see a doctor and that most practices also operate an advance booking system. There also exists a team who help practices analyse their booking systems and although it is not always possible to see a particular doctor, the new system has reduced the number of wasted appointments and practices are asked to be flexible.



Cllr Anderson asked whether or not the various initiatives in the White Paper were being phased in gradually or introduced at once. Dr Kidd reported that Wirral is already undertaking many of the recommendations, for example, with diabetes, obesity and alcohol clinics, increased use of sporting facilities and prevention services for smoking and that we are probably the best in the country with others copying our ideas. She feels that more work needs to be in relation to young people and childhood obesity.

A member of the public then asked if rumours of a cut in the opening hours of local swimming pools were true and Cllr Bridson, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, reported that the local Labour Group had suggested this as one of the ways for keeping Council Tax down; however, this is to be examined in more depth. She confirmed that her Party would be opposing this proposal on the basis that this a rather short-sighted policy in terms of health to save a relatively small amount of Council Tax. She also confirmed a proposal to close the libraries on Saturday afternoons and Andrew Taylor voiced his worries about this as library hours have already been cut. Cllr Williams suggested that people write to the three Party Leaders with their views on these proposals and invited members of the public to attend the Council Meeting on Monday, 7th February.

#### **Minute 8 - Future meetings/Presentations**

Cllr Doyle explained that at the previous meeting there had been a request for a presentation from Mersey Travel. Unfortunately, it was not possible to arrange that presentation for this meeting. However, John Smith from Mersey Travel is willing to give a presentation at the next meeting. He also went on to explain that there were several presentations still outstanding from when Oxton was combined with Bidston and Claughton, namely:

Fire Service Community Safety Programme  
Health Through Warmth  
Stay Warm  
Lottery Funding  
Overview – Authorities Emergency Planning.

**STRUCTURAL MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2005/2006**

Name of Road	Limits	Ward	UKPMS Ranking	Other Priorities	Estimate	Category	Description of Works
Bidston Road	Part	Oxton	100		£30,000	Structural carriageway	Resurface carriageway
Bidston Road	Part	Oxton	100		£2,500	Surface Treatment to footway	
Prestbury Avenue (Phase 2)	Part	Oxton	83	*	£75,000	Structural footway & Carriageway	P/L kerbs as required. Remove flags & construct flexible footway. Resurface carriageway
Byrom Close	All	Prenton	83	F	£27,500	Structural footway & carriageway	P/L kerbs as required. Remove flags & construct flexible footway Resurface carriageway
Waterpark Road	Part	Prenton	83		£20,000	Structural carriageway	Resurface carriageway
Waterpark Road	Part	Prenton	83		£8,500	Surface Treatment to footway	
Devonshire Road	Part	Oxton	50	*	£15,000	Structural Carriageway	Resurface carriageway
Dickens Avenue	Part	Prenton	--	F *	£22,500	Structural footway	P/L kerbs as required. Remove flags & construct flexible footway

Ingleborough Road	All	Prenton	--	To complete scheme	£9,000	Surface Treatment to carriageway	
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SURFACE TREATMENT PROCESSES TO BE USED

- ( 1 ) SLURRY SEAL                      THIN VENEER BITUMINOUS OVERLAY THAT FOLLOWS EXISTING PROFILE OF SURFACE
- ( 2 ) MICRO ASPHALT                A SURFACING MATERIAL THAT CAN REGULATE SMALL DEPRESSIONS
- ( 3 ) SCHEMES IDENTIFIED WITH AN ASTERISK \* HAVE BEEN ASSESSED FOR EARLY ATTENTION.

# FORMER WIRRAL COLLEGE SITE MEETING

## SUMMARY OF NOTES

**Date:** 06/04/05      **Time:** 11.00am      **Venue:** Oakdene Road

**Subject:** Difficulties encountered by local residents

**Present:** Derek Howard (WBC – Environmental Health), Ray Jones (WBC – Building Control), Lee Walsh (WBC – Planning), Maxine Joynson (WBC – Community Planning), Simon Jones (Contracts Manager – Encia), Eric Dade, Violet Dade, Yvonne Brizell, Mrs Bannon, Katie Bannon, Mr & Mrs Southall (local residents)

**Apologies:** Cllr Pat Williams

HEADING/SUB HEADING	NOTES	ACTION BY
<b>Access:</b>	<p>Residents are concerned that the wall and gates that run across the bottom of Oakdene Road may be opened up to vehicles or as a short cut from Woodchurch Road to Borough Road for pedestrians.</p> <p>LW confirmed there would be no vehicular access and that the layout has been approved. He agreed to send the most recent plan to Mr Dade.</p>	LW
<b>Boundary issues/Security:</b>	<p>In order to deter trespassers, SJ agreed to look into the boundaries to see what can reasonably be done to secure them further.</p> <p>With regard to residents concerns about how the boundaries of the new development will integrate with existing houses, LW explained that this would appear on the approved plan he will be sending Mr Dade shortly.</p> <p>Residents were advised that they could contact the developer directly before the commencement of new build and request such information also.</p> <p>SJ stated that the rubble currently on site may be used as general fill for re-grading purposes, removing some of the current level differences.</p> <p>It is anticipated that once Wimpey commence development, security will be much greater than it currently is due to the nature of expensive material on site.</p>	SJ
<b>Noise &amp; dust pollution:</b>	<p>Residents are concerned that they were not provided with a method statement. They also feel that the amount of dust pollution in particular should entitle them to some sort of compensation.</p> <p>RJ reported that a Council notice was issued to all adjoining residents and in addition to this, Encia distributed letters to individual households giving details and numbers of relevant contacts. A method statement does not have to be provided only advice of the date of commencement of demolition.</p>	

HEADING/SUB HEADING	NOTES	ACTION BY
	<p>SJ stated that no financial compensation will be offered as Encia do not consider themselves to have been negligent in any way. In addition, whilst not ruling out making a gesture of goodwill, SJ could make no guarantee of this either. SJ advised that any issues residents face on a daily basis should be made in writing directly to him to ensure appropriate action could be taken. His company is based in Yorkshire and therefore do not have the benefit of seeing potential problems faced by local residents on a regular basis.</p>	
<p><b>Structural surveys:</b></p>	<p>SJ reported that it is too late to undertake structural surveys at this stage in the demolition. The matter could be brought up at the Planning stage to re-develop the site and residents could take non digital pictures themselves.</p> <p>DH reported that usually these surveys are undertaken prior to work commencing. He advised that residents could take pictures of their properties and compare them to others taken at the end of the scheme to ascertain if there is any visible cracks etc. However, it may be difficult to determine if these are as a direct result of works carried out on/to the site.</p>	
<p><b>Glenda Jackson theatre:</b></p>	<p>SJ will include all points raised to date in his 'handover' notes to George Wimpey when Encia leave site shortly. This is expected to be within the next 2 weeks and they may not return for up to 6 months to demolish the Glenda Jackson theatre due to the problems encountered to relocate the substation beneath the building.</p> <p>RJ offered to accompany SJ or a representative of his company to undertake a joint inspection to identify potential building control issues of the Glenda Jackson theatre in particular, prior to Encia leaving the site in the interim period. SJ has already put measures in place to ensure the perimeter of the theatre is secure as a physical barrier to unwelcome 'users'. It is also hoped to brick up the doorways to the building.</p>	<p><b>SJ</b></p> <p><b>RJ/SJ</b></p>