

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET : 20TH SEPTEMBER 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

WIRRAL OLDER PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT

Executive Summary

This report updates Cabinet with the development of Wirral Older People's Parliament – (WOPP) and recommends actions to advance the original intention of connecting developments in Wirral.

1 Background

- 1.1 On 10th April 2006, Council passed a motion which called upon the Chief Executive to establish an Older People's Parliament for Wirral. In passing the motion by 65:0, Council recognised the significance of engaging with older people, promoting social inclusion and connecting developments.
- 1.2 Informal papers confirmed the intention of the initiative was to support Older People in creating their own parliament, recognising the considerable contribution that older people make in Wirral.
- 1.3 The Parliament was brought together for the first time on 23rd January 2007, at an introductory session attended by the Leader and Chief Executive.
- 1.4 Appendix 1 gives an account of the broad process of establishing the parliament, details of the parliament executive members and the current organisational arrangement. The support of officers from the council, specifically, Tracey Smith, Andrea Grant and John Webb during this period of development has been noted.
- 1.5 Wirral has joined Better Government for Older People and links at regional and national levels are being developed.

2 Developing Links

- 2.1 The Council, in supporting the initiative stated that the Parliament should connect developments in Wirral, in particular Local Area Forums.
- 2.2 The 44 members of Wirral Older People's Parliament are drawn from each of the Local Area Forums. Representatives joined others from Local Area Forums at the Training Event on 9th July and discussions continue about the best way of promoting the place of WOPP at area level.

- 2.3 Informal links have been made with the Young People's Parliament; the agenda for both groups having a considerable similarity. Representatives from WOPP attended the Young People's Parliament event on 9th July and on-going links are being developed
- 2.4 Membership of Better Government for Older People (BGOP) has enabled regional and national contacts to be made. WOPP will nominate two people to represent Wirral on the North West Older People's Advisory Group. Appendix 2 gives some fuller details of BGOP. There are also opportunities for elected members of Council and Officers to be involved in the broader BGOP network.
- 2.5 One intention is to support the establishment of the Parliament to create links to all Departments and Cabinet Member portfolios; the recommendation being that Chief Officers nominate a senior manager to link with the WOPP member holding responsibility for their area of service. These links now need to be confirmed.

3 Wirral Older People's Parliament – The Citizen's Voice

- 3.1 WOPP is established to work with the Council and its partner organisations to offer comment, advice, to raise concerns and to be a place where public services can be shaped by citizen involvement. Future assessment of our services will make this an essential element.
- 3.2 The WOPP provides the Authority with a real opportunity to develop links, hear the voice of older citizens and engage in an even more constructive dialogue to shape future services.
- 3.3 The links originally intended should, therefore, be confirmed and form part of our overall strategic approach.
- 3.4 Within the Department of Adult Social Services, one Divisional Management Team intends to go further; WOPP being asked to nominate a representative to become part of the Divisional Leadership Team. This is likely to be the WOPP Executive Member who has responsibility for the Health and Social Care portfolio.

4 Research into the work of the Parliament

- 4.1 WOPP are keen to have a research project undertaken which would 'tell the story' of the WOPP, as it unfolds, such that the learning could be used as a 'model' or case study for other Local Authorities who may embark on a similar strategy with its senior citizens.
- 4.2 The Centre for Local Governance had scoped the research and indicated that the cost would be £15,000 to £20,000 pa.

- 4.3 A joint approach for funding has been made with Knowsley Council to the North West Improvement Network as they hold a research budget for collaborative projects in the North West.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Department of Adult Social Services (DASS) have agreed an annual grant of £15,000 to support the Parliament. WOPP is “fund raising” and have already secured £5,000 grant funding from Wirral Partnership Homes.
- 5.2 Officers from Democratic Services provide administration support for parliament meetings.
- 5.3 Officers from DASS and corporate Services have provided advice and support to establish the parliament.

6 Staffing Implications

No specific issues

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

WOPP provides equality of opportunity

8 Community Safety Implications

No specific issues from this report.

9 Local Agenda 21 Implications

No specific issues from this report.

10 Planning Implications

No specific issues from this report

11 Anti Poverty Implications

No specific issues from this report

12 Social Inclusion Implications

The Older People’s Parliament represents an important opportunity to promote the social inclusion agenda.

13 Local Member Support Implications

- 13.1 All Council Members are encouraged to make links with their WOPP representatives.

13.2 It should be noted that WOPP is still seeking representation from Eastham; support to encourage nominations is appropriate.

14 Background Papers

Minutes of Council Meeting 10th April 2006
Informal discussion paper 22nd August 2006

15 Recommendations

That:

- (1) the report and progress made be noted; and
- (2) Chief Officers and Cabinet Members develop the links set down in paragraph 2.5.

KEVIN MILLER
Director of Adult Social Services

John Webb
Head of Service, Referral, Assessment & Care Management
666 4761

Date 2.7.07