

AREA FORUM (LISCARD AND SEACOMBE)

Wednesday, 10 February 2010

Present:

Councillor	L Fraser (Chair)
Councillors	K Hayes AER Jones J Keeley D Knowles J Salter
Community Representatives	Ken Harrison, Dianne Ledder, Joseph Lee, Carole Thomas
Lead Officer	Mark Camborne
Area Service Co-ordinator	Michelle Gray
Street Scene Manager	Chris Jones
Faith Rep	Leon Ostaszewski
Older People's Parliament	Stan Thompson
Community Safety	Mike Collins
Wirral NHS	Dr Shymal Mukerjee
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Jo Goodfellow
Merseyside Police	Inspector Justin Diggins
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	Tony Mooney
Council Officers	Ian Brand – Law, HR & Asset Management, Mark Newman – CYP & Carol Sharratt (minute taker)
<u>Apologies</u>	Margi Allen, Christina Jones

- 1 WELCOME**
The Chair, Councillor Leah Fraser, welcomed the forum members and 7 members of the public to the meeting.
- 2 MINUTES (PREVIOUS MEETING - OCTOBER 2009)**
The following points / matters arising were raised from the minutes of last meeting held on 20th October 2009:

Page 7- Mike Collins confirmed that “Community Support Officers” under the Community Safety Section should read “Community Patrol Officers”.

Page 8, item 5, question 3 – Dave Hanlon confirmed that he did not ask this question, and that this was raised by Dave Hale.

Page 8, item 7 – Father Leon Ostaszewski confirmed that the exhibition will be held throughout the month of July 2010, and that there will be a presentation at Wallasey Town Hall on 21st July 2010 for invited people. Further details on this will be advertised in the local press.

Minute Decision:/Resolve that: -

The October minutes be amended as follows:

Page 7- “Community Support Officers” under the Community Safety Section be amended to read: “Community Patrol Officers”.

Page 8, item 5, question 3 – “Dave Hanlon” be amended to read: “Dave Hale”.

Page 8, item 7 – be amended to read: “Father Leon Ostaszewski informed the forum that 1977 was the Centenary of Birkenhead as a borough, next year it will be the centenary of Wallasey as a Municipal borough. There will be an exhibition at Wallasey Central Library throughout July 2010, and there will be a presentation at Wallasey Town Hall on 21st July 2010 for invited people. There will be a book of photos available at Williamson Museum for a cost of about £12-£14. The site of the other Wallasey Town Hall, bombed during World War II, will be included and there will be a vintage fire engine brought over from Waterloo for the event. Further details on this will be advertised in the local press.”

3 STRATEGIC ASSET REVIEW IN RELATION TO LISCARD & SEACOMBE

The Chair welcomed Ian Brand, to give an update on the Strategic Asset Review (SAR) in relation to Liscard and Seacombe.

Ian informed the forum that the SAR was approved in January 2009 and covered the following:

Library closures and creation of Neighbourhood Centres – this decision was revoked, due to national review of libraries and no outcome has been received on this. This led to Seacombe Library remaining open, Seacombe One Stop Shop not being relocated and for maintenance of centres being looked at.

- Community Asset Transfer – this programme of work was still going ahead, and discussions were taking place with the Joint Management Committees for Liscard and Grosvenor. Existing community groups using buildings were being worked with and expressions of interest had been received from over 18 groups, and policies are available on the Council website re: asset transfer. Liscard was identified in a programme called Advancing Assets, as part of a pilot project prior to SAR.

- Disposal of Assets – one property within the forum area, 16/18 Rullerton Road, was included and £1.4m of capital receipts has been raised to date. The depot at Dock Road was no longer used by the Council, but still used by partners so the timing of the disposal of this is still being considered. The Old Court House in Manor Road was still being used as an admin building, and will be subject to a wider office accommodation project.
- Office Rationalisation – the Council was working to develop as comprehensive rationalisation programme and long-term plan, including improvement to Information Technology (IT) provision and infrastructure. A report was submitted to Cabinet in January looking at changes that need to happen re: IT. A business case was to be set up to look at the office rationalisation.

The Chair thanked Ian for his update and the following questions / issues were raised:

1. Dave Hale – what was the last use of 16/18 Rullerton Road and where has the service provision moved to?
A. Father Leon Ostaszewski confirmed that it had been used for the storage of archives and that this has been moved to Cheshire Lines basement.
2. The Chair - what was happening with the Old Court House?
A. Ian confirmed that it had been identified for disposal and that work was taking place to relocate the staff within the building, prior to its disposal.
3. Carole Thomas – where will the staff at the Old Manor House be relocated to, was the building listed and would it be protected from demolition?
A. Ian Brand confirmed that it was not known where the staff will be relocated, but that the Council has no intention to demolish the building, and that it has potential to be converted for a modern use. Father Leon Ostaszewski added that the building was not listed.
The Chair requested that Ian provide a further update on this.
4. Councillor Denis Knowles – are the community centres in limbo re: maintenance work due to SAR, as Seacombe community centre could not run its youth club due to boiler needing repairing?
A. Ian Brand confirmed that there were different arrangements in place for community centres. Health and Safety issues were being addressed to keep the centres healthy, running and safe. Discussions with existing users were in the early stages, and group sustainability needs to be looked at.
Councillor Adrian Jones added that the issue of the boiler had been raised at a meeting of the club and that the Council was looking into this.
5. Wendy Sheen – if the centre was warm enough to hold a meeting in why couldn't the children use it?
A. Councillor Jones - confirmed that there were two boilers at the centre and that only one of them was not working. The use of the centre was down to the management committee, but that the room used to hold the meeting was the luncheon club area whereas the children meet in the large hall.

The Chair added that the boiler was the Council's responsibility as the owner of the building.

Ian Brand agreed to report back on this

Minute Decision:/Resolved that: -

(i) Ian Brand be thanked for his update

(ii) Ian Brand to provide an update to forum on developments re: SAR and look into issue re: boiler at Seacombe CC and report back on this

4 YOUTH PROVISION IN YOUR LOCAL AREA

The Chair welcomed Mark Newman, to give an update on youth provision in the local area.

Mark informed the forum that the service had been asked to make savings of £150,000 and that a report was approved by Cabinet last year on this, recommending the following four centres to be commissioned out:

- Mill Lane Fire Station
- West Kirby Youth Club
- Eastham Youth Club
- Shaftesbury

Mill Lane was currently being prepared using youth capital + funding. On completion the ground floor and outbuilding will be used for provision and the upper floor will be used as offices for the Fire service. There will be a six night a week project for Liscard, including Duke of Edinburgh Award Centre (2 nights); Youth Arts/Theatre; Response (advice, guidance service currently being run from Argyle Street in Birkenhead); Café/bistro/drop-in area. There will be two full-time outreach teams in the Liscard/Seacombe area (there was previously one worker covering the whole of Wallasey).

Contacta Bus – work was taking place with the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Team to go to where issue area and work with young people e.g. young people congregating at Macdonalds were approached and it was explained how they were affecting the area. The young people agreed to move to the seating area nearby and went on to help out at an old people's home – this was a very positive outcome.

Positive activities for young people – the funding targeted for young people with ASB has been top-sliced to improve what is already existing in the area, and partners had been invited to say what improvements they would like to see.

Communications – district provider groups were being developed to help share good practice, talk to each other and identify need.

The Chair thanked Mark Newman for his update and the following questions / issues were raised:

1. Carole Thomas – what was the district providers group?

A. Mark Newman – the Council became the lead agency of a group to put a Wirral wide bid together covering all projects across Wirral.

2. Dave Hanlon – what was happening at youth centres such as Wallasey YMCA and the Allendale?

A. Mark Newman – YMCA was included as part of the district activity and the youth services within the centre are run by the YMCA not the Council -this will continue in the future. He added that the Council had run youth clubs from the YMCA and were striving to build a strong relationship with the association. The Chair confirmed that the YMCA did not fall within the Council's remit and that the Allendale Centre was not owned by the Council.

3. Councillor Karen Hayes – how do the youth clubs find out about available funding?

A. Mark Newman – confirmed that funding was advertised through the Youth Service, in the Wirral Globe and on the Council website. The Youth Opportunity/Capital Fund was still ongoing and the District Fund was granted for two years.

Dave Hale – what amount of funds are available?

A. Mark Newman confirmed the following funding amounts:

- Youth Opportunities Fund, £20,000 maximum could be applied for.
- Youth Capital Fund - no upper limit
- District Fund - £73,000 per district was awarded

4. Wendy Sheen – will a report be produced at the end of the two year project to show how the funding was used and when will this be?

A. Mark Newman – monitoring systems are put in place by the contracts team and a report will be provided to them. Mark Camborne added that some of the projects are time bound, and that the Performance Management section would report on this, and that a written position statement / progress report could be provided to the forum in about six months time.

5. Joseph Lee – when is the youth facility at the Fire Station due to open?

A. Tony Mooney – the building works were due to be completed by the end of March 2010, the rooms were ready and set up and the funding has to be committed and spent by the end of March.

Tony Forder – raised concern that if regular money was not committed to this then the project could fail after several years, and asked if there was any guarantee that the facility would be financed by the Council?

A. Mark Newman - there was funding for three years for the hubs, and will provide better staffed central facilities, as there will be two full-time outreach teams in the Wallasey district – including Leasowe and Moreton Youth Clubs. If can show good provision then we will be in a good position to apply for further funding.

Tony Mooney added that the Fire service are committed to the partnership, and are underwriting the heating / lighting etc., and there is a 20 year lease on the building. The risks would be down to funding salaries, but the Council will be committing to this by pulling things together on site and improving the level of the facility, as well as allowing other providers to use the facility.

Minute Decision:/Resolved that: –

(i) Mark Newman be thanked for his update

(ii) Mark Camborne to arrange for written position statement / progress report on the District Fund be provided for the October 2010 forum

5 GRANDPARENTS CONFERENCE UPDATE

Stan Thomson thanked Joseph Lee for setting up the Grandparents conference held on 10th February 2010 at St Werburgh's Parish Centre and provided the following update:.

There were 48 participants and speakers from six organisations, covering the following issues:

- Child Trauma – including where to go for help, how to identify those that need help, funding and confidentiality
- Social Care – including need for advice on financial benefits, computer literacy
- Grandparent carers – including grandparents website, where to go for advice and assistance, political lobbying, housing, legal rights. He added that Frank Field MP has been championing the agenda for Grandparent carers and that Wirral Council recognises this as a serious issue and has been lobbying central government. There are 200 households with grandparent carers on Wirral.
- Age Concern – including benefits, allowances and assistance. Last year Age Concern helped clients claim £3.5m benefits and allowances

The Chair thanked Stan Thompson for an interesting and entertaining update and Stan received a round of applause.

Joe Lee requested that details of any grandparent carers be passed to him so that they can be invited to the next meeting to be held on 1st March 2010. The Area Co-ordinator asked if grandparent carers from outside Wirral area could attend and Joe confirmed that the meeting were open to everyone.

Minute Decision:/Resolved that Stan Thompson be thanked for his update

6 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT "WHAT BEEN HAPPENING IN YOUR AREA"

Police – Justin Diggins, Acting Neighbourhood Inspector for Liscard and Seacombe informed the forum of the following:

Tackling Knives Week – an initiative raising awareness of knife crimes, which are rare in this area. This will take place between 6-8pm on by the Nat West Bank, and will involve a street projector highlighting key messages.

Love Lane Allotment area - plain clothes officers will be in the area in the evening on Friday 12th and Saturday 13th February 2010, to reduce criminality. AS Drone (unmanned aerial vehicle) will be used.

Operation Leopard - Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) was identified as a problem by within the Seacombe area. People associated with ASB will be approached on the mornings of Friday 12th and Saturday 13th February 2010 and be read a script, followed and tracked. This deterrent has been used effectively elsewhere. In the

evenings we will be out and about in uniform/bright jackets and make a point of confronting people with ASB. If the initiative proves to be a successful deterrent it will be continued on a regular basis. A survey will be conducted after the initiative to monitor its effectiveness.

The Chair requested that results are fed back to the forum and Inspector Diggins agreed to do this.

Community Safety – Mike Collins informed the forum that the ASB team had moved to the Children and Young People's Department, but that there were still close links between the Community Safety and ASB teams.

The Community Patrol had been involved in the following:

- Setting ASB orders (none active in this area at the present time)
- Initiatives around bonfire night, resulting in the lowest number of incidents
- First Aid Training
- Training on equipment for putting out small fires
- Attendance at the Crime Reduction Partnership meetings
- Meet the Public event at West Kirby Concourse

Fire and Rescue Service – Tony Money informed the forum that a full report was included on pages 13-15 of the papers and highlighted the following:

- Partnership working – the Fire Service are committed to working in partnership to achieve strategic objectives within the Local Area Agreement
- Courses for young people – a course for 11/16 year olds was successfully completed by all those who took part and funding has been received to run a further course
- Trailblazers Scheme – work is to be undertaken on this with the Police and the ASB team. Further information on this initiative will be given at the next forum meeting

NHS Wirral - Shymal Mukerjee informed the forum that a full report was included on pages 17-19 of the papers and highlighted the following:

- 2010 was the Year of Health and Wellbeing – commissioned projects working for health and wellbeing are being put into operation, including a focus on mental health, as this is a big issue.
- Wellbeing – evidence has shown that building actions on a daily basis from the following five ways can add seven and a half years to your life – Connect, Be active, Take notice, Keep learning and Give.
- Free Health Checks – these are available to all residents of Wirral and can be booked with your local GP.
- Rethink Drink – this year we are concentrating on alcohol problems and are launching this new initiative on 11th February 2010, but are still working on initiatives to stop smoking.
- Seacombe Children's Centre – this is progressing well, and a dental promotion for children has taken place.
- Voice of Wallasey – the patient group has elected a chair and an executive, enabling the people of Wallasey to have a say on health services.

Wirral University Teaching hospital NHS Foundation Trust – Jo Goodfellow informed the forum of the following:

- Maternity Services – the new in-patient ward had been opened, comprising of single rooms with en-suite facilities. Work on the delivery suite was still continuing and this is to be renamed Wirral Women’s and Children’s Hospital
- Elected Surgery Unit – this has a lounge area where patients can wait prior to going to have an operation, going onto a ward after the operation
- Nora virus – the effects of this very virulent bug are now tailing off

The Chair mentioned an article in the Daily Post stating that nine midwives are not having their contracts renewed as there was no funding available. Jo Goodfellow confirmed that she had not heard anything about this but agreed to look into the issue and report back to the forum.

Streetscene – Chris Jones informed the forum that there was an update available at the meeting and highlighted the following:

Colas Limited, the Council’s Highway Maintenance Partner, was undertaking footway schemes in Clarendon Road and Latham Avenue. Work in Newland Road was due to start in the next quarter.

The Chair thanked the partners for their updates.

Minute Decision:/Resolved that: -

- (i) The partners be thanked for their updates**
- (ii) Inspector Diggins to report back on success of Operation Leopard**
- (iii) Tony Mooney to provide information on Trailblazers Scheme at the June 2010 meeting**
- (iv) Jo Goodfellow to report back on the renewal of midwives contracts**

7 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following questions / issue were raised:

1. Ken Harrison – has a survey been done on potholes?
Chris Jones- Inspectors have carried out visual inspections on all main routes and are devising an action plan on how to catch up following recent severe weather conditions and to prioritise future work. There was a resource available for repairing potholes and the contractor will deal with repairs as soon as possible. Please report potholes to the Streetscene call centre on 0151 606 2004.
2. Councillor Knowles – was there an increase in the number of falls due to the Council’s decision not to grit pavements?
Jo Goodfellow – there was an increase in the number of falls, but it cannot be confirmed that this was due to gritting. Jo agreed to request information on where the trips / falls took place and report back to the forum.
Mark Camborne added that elected members had asked for a review of how this affected the Council Service, and he invited Jo Goodfellow and Shymal Mukerjee to be part of the review. The Council had never gritted pavements, pedestrian areas are treated, but there was a shortage of rock salt and the Council followed instructions issued by Central Government.

3. Tony Forder – people used to clear pavements outside their houses, but this has stopped due myth that they could be sued if someone fell on area that they had cleared, and this should be publicised more.

Mark Camborne – agreed that there should be more publicity in this area and confirmed that this would be considered as part of the review.

4. Dave Hale – Community payback could be used to clear pathways.

Chris Jones – confirmed that Community payback were involved and did a great job, they cleared areas around health centres and communal activity areas.

Mark Camborne confirmed that Community payback were included in the plans and would be covered within the review.

5. Carole Thomas – Sefton Council has a bye-law whereby residents clear the pathway outside their house, does Wirral Council have such a bye-law?

Mark Camborne – no and it would be very difficult to bring in such a bye-law.

6. Dave Hanlon – why isn't sand used?

Mark Camborne – the council has a responsibility to maintain primary and secondary roads, and has been using a mixture of sand / salt and grit due to the shortage of rock salt.

7. Diane Ledger – potholes in Leominster Road had been filled but this has lifted. Has the pothole at the Floral Pavilion been repaired?

Chris Jones – the road surface temperature was too cold causing repairs to fail. Asphalt plants stopped supplying materials because of this. Chris agreed to discuss pothole repairs at the end of the meeting.

8. Stan Thompson – what is happening re: vehicle activated road sign at Mariners Park?

Chair – last October the pedestrian refuge was agreed and residents were consulted. There were complaints re: proposed move of the bus stop on the church side and an objection has been made to the amended proposals. A panel made up of a Councillor from each party will look at the plan and comments received prior to deciding on action to be taken. Residents will be kept informed on this.

9. Carole Thomas – Is Edinburgh Road going to become a one-way Street? If so could Kemlyn Road become an access only street?

Chris Jones – agreed to look into this and report back.

10. Scott Gould – raised issue of lack of representation from young people on the forum. The young people could be invited to speak at the area forums.

Chair – this issue has been discussed previously. Wirral holds a Youth Parliament Conference each year, and is very active re: youth on local politics – the Youth Council meets a few times a year. She agreed to arrange for young people to be invited to future meetings

Area Co-ordinator – Youth forums meet every quarter and there are links between these and the area forums.

Councillor Karen Hayes – young people have chaired some of our meetings.

11. Father Leon Ostaszewski asked about the latest position re: Pagoda Bandstand?

Diane Ledger confirmed that a letter re: this had been sent to Father Leon and agreed to discuss this at the end of the meeting.

12. Dave Hanlon – what is the situation re: expenditure on the parks?

Chair – the amounts listed below are to be put to each park and a survey will be carried out with young people to find out what they want in the area. The survey will be completed in the next few weeks and will then be reported to Cabinet.

- Central Park £60,000, Tower Gardens £60,000, Harrison Park £30,000
- Town Meadow Lane (replacing Lingham Park) £40,000

13. Dave Hanlon – the MUGA in Central Park should be moved, as it is in the wrong place.

Diane Ledder – the seat should be moved to face into the park, but there were no proposals to move the MUGA as it was sited following a massive consultation with users of the park.

The Chair agreed to raise this issue with Roger Calvert.

Minute Decision:/Resolved that: -

- (i) Jo Goodfellow to report back on where trips / falls occurred during the recent severe weather conditions**
- (ii) Mark Camborne to invite Jo Goodfellow and Shymal Mukerjee to the review of policies during severe weather conditions**
- (iii) Chris Jones to look into proposals for one way system in Edinburgh Road and possibility of making Kemlyn Road access only**
- (iv) Michelle Gray to invite young people to future forum meetings**
- (v) Councillor Leah Fraser to raise issue of position of seating and MUGA in Central Park with Roger Calvert**

8 NEXT AREA FORUM MEETING

The Chair asked the forum for feedback on the library as a venue for the meetings and the following points /issues were raised:

- Sound quality was better than the Town Hall (carpet stops echo in the room)
- Numbers attending the meeting was still low
- The venue is difficult to reach via public transport

The Chair added that the numbers in attendance was disappointing, but that there were a few new faces. She added that the forum was looking to host the June 2010 meeting in a venue in Liscard and requested possible venues:

- Grosvenor Ballroom
- Fire Station / new hub – it was mentioned that there could be issue re: public transport to this venue)

The Chair confirmed that the above suggestions would be considered when choosing the venue, which would be well advertised. The Chair thanked the staff at the library for allowing the forum to use this venue. There was no further business and the Chair thanked everyone for attending, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Minute Decision:/Resolved that: -

- (i) the next meeting be held on 10th June 2010 in at venue to be confirmed within the Liscard ward**
- (ii) the Library staff be thanked for the use of the venue**