

# AREA FORUM (LISCARD AND SEACOMBE)

Thursday, 10 June 2010

## Present:

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| Councillor  | AER Jones (Chair)   |
| Councillors   | K Hayes<br>J Keeley<br>D Knowles, J Salter<br>D Dodd        |
| Community Representatives                                   | Dianne Ledder, Joseph Lee, Carole Thomas                    |
| Faith Representative  | Father Leon Ostaszewski                                     |
| Older People's Parliament Representative                    | Stan Thompson   |
| Lead Officer  | Mark Smith  |
| Area Service Co-ordinator                                   | Michelle Gray   |
| Street Scene Manager  | Chris Jones   |
| Community Safety  | Jim Thompson  |
| Wirral NHS  | Andrew Cooper   |
| Wirral University Teaching Hospital<br>NHS Foundation Trust | Jo Goodfellow   |
| Merseyside Police   | Inspector Dave Bird<br>CSOs: Ruth Siding and Julie Metcalfe |
| Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service                          | Tony Mooney   |
| Council Officers  | Carol Sharratt (minute taker), Louise Harland-Davies        |
| <u>Apologies</u>  | Margi Allen, Ken Harrison,                                  |

## 1 **WELCOME**

The Chair, Councillor Adrian Jones, welcomed the forum members and 22 members of the public, particularly the three young people in attendance, to the meeting, and informed the forum that the next meeting was to be chaired by Councillor Karen Hayes.

He thanked the staff at the Allandale for hosting the meeting and Michelle Gray, the Area Co-ordinator, for the excellent work she and her team always put in to make the meetings a success. He informed the forum that the meeting would be separated into two parts:

- Community Engagement and Public Question Time
- Funding

## 2 **MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING (PREVIOUS MEETING - FEBRUARY 2010)**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record and the following matters arising were raised:

Dianne Ledder – asked if any arrangements had been made to secure a Liscard venue for the next meeting, as it had been agreed that the Fire Station would be considered and if that was not suitable another venue in Liscard would be looked at. The Area Co-ordinator confirmed that the Fire Station was not suitable and that she had tried two other venues in Liscard, but had been unsuccessful in booking these due to the time available.

Marlow Road Church, Liscard Primary School and the Memorial Church Hall in Manor Road were put forward for consideration. The Chair requested that any further suggestions be passed to the Area Co-ordinator at the end of the meeting but that reasonably central locations, convenient to public transport, would be particularly welcome.

ASB - Councillor John Salter informed the forum that three brothers had been sentenced to in excess of 11 years each for anti-social behaviour in the area.

**Minute Decision - It was resolved that:**

- (i) the minutes of the last meeting be confirmed as a true record**
- (ii) the Area Co-ordinator to look into possible alternative venues for the forum meeting put forward for the Liscard area**

## 3 **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT "WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN YOUR AREA"**

The Lead Officer, Mark Smith, informed the forum that there were details on what had been happening in the area starting on page nine of the forum papers that were available at the meeting and invited the partners to raise any further issues / updates

Jim Thompson, Community Safety, mentioned that many burglaries are walk-in / sneak thefts and stressed that doors and windows should be locked when leaving the home during the warmer weather.

Carole Thomas asked if there was any representation from Merseytravel at the meeting as she wished to raise the following points:

- 433 and 413 service – what was happening re: new bus provision and changes to routes?
- Passenger safety – the bus drivers need to take more care as the busses jerk when stopping, causing passengers to stagger. Dianne Ledder added that a colleague had been thrown about recently on the 410 bus, and that on the 410 passengers are not issued with a ticket, when showing travel passes. The ticket is the only proof of travelling on the bus and can be used by the bus company to monitor bus usage.

John Drew – the bus to Arrowe Park Hospital in the evening (403) stops running along Poulton Road at 6pm, this is a big issue for people with no transport.

Member of the Public – asked if there were still bus inspectors monitoring bus travel.

Mark Smith confirmed that the buses were not a direct Council service, but that all Merseyside councils fund Merseytravel who operate the franchise. He agreed to forward the issues to Merseytravel and report their response back to the forum.

Dave Hanlon added that the 433 Sunday service was to increase to a 30 minute service from September 2010.

Father Ostaszewski confirmed that Arriva was the only company that issued concessionary tickets and that Avon, First and Stagecoach do not. He added that the following changes to the bus provision were planned to come into effect from September 2010:

- 413 – there will be four buses an hour instead of two and will start from Seacombe.
- 433 – will run on bank holidays and an evening service will be considered.
- 403 – no evening service is planned.

**Minute Decision – it was resolved that Mark Smith to raise issues re: bus services with Merseytravel and to report back to the forum.**

#### 4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following questions / issues were raised:

1. David Hale – welcomed Councillor Darren Dodd to his first forum meeting and asked if he would consider attending constituted tenants and residents group meetings within his constituency.

Councillor Dodd agreed that he would be willing to attend such meetings and that he would discuss this further at the end of the meeting.

2. Member of the public – raised issues at Forum Housing flats, Ash Villas, Gorsedale Park; including youths sitting on fence and bragging about drugs, and rubbish being thrown out of flats. There were 40 youths there one evening at 7pm openly dealing drugs. The local residents were told that there would be wardens at the flats, when they were built.

Inspector Bird confirmed that he was aware of the problems at Ash Villas / Gorsedale Park / Pits and confirmed that this was policed until midnight, but requested that the

residents report any issues. He added that people do have to sign in and out of the flats.

The Chair confirmed that Mark Smith and Inspector Bird had made a note of the problems and requested that further details be given to Inspector Bird at the end of the meeting.

3. Dr McWatt – asked why old lampposts were being replaced with new lampposts in Wallasey and Liscard when there were budget issues, as he felt that this was not a good use of limited resources.

Mark Smith – the Council has a budget from the Department of Transport for capital schemes for street improvements. The Council has a large lighting improvement programme to install new lighting where it is required, and still has a healthy allocation and ongoing programme for street lighting improvements for 2010/11, and that as many schemes as possible will be completed.

4. Joan Hislop (resident of Hampstead Road) asked why there were no 20mph signs in Hampstead Road and Park Drive. The one-way street has caused more speeding traffic along the road used by young people on cycles coming from the park. The Council painted 20mph on the road, but this is ignored.

Mark Smith – the temporary 20mph signs were introduced 18 months ago as part of a scheme called “Accident to Zero”. Residential areas were chosen following assessment of sites suggested by the public. The scheme included signage, posters and community speed watch. He requested that suggestions be included on the forms available at the meeting so that these can be considered under the Council Funding Programme and the Integrated Transport Funding.

The Chair requested that Mark Smith make a note of this issue.

5. Member of the public – asked if there were any plans for the buildings in Central Park, as there was a lack of venues available in Liscard for community arts performances to be held.

Dianne Ledder – advised that the stable block and former stewards building were occupied by park staff. The walled garden houses the visitor centre and Everyone’s Café and the toilet block is used for storage. She confirmed that the St Johns Church was not connected to the park and that it had been decommissioned five years ago.

Carole Thomas added that the St John’s Church was being re-commissioned as the diocese had decided to take back ownership of the building, which has a listed interior, and that it would be a fantastic music venue.

Member of the public advised that the church organ had been re-located to St James Church.

The Chair agreed to discuss this in more detail at the end of the meeting.

6. Father Ostaszewski – asked if the lampposts in Central Park could be renovated, and added that Belvidere Road still needed resurfacing work carried out.

Mark Smith agreed to look into issue of lampposts in Park and report back on this.

Chris Jones confirmed that a gas trench had failed at Belvidere Road and that some remedial work had been carried out, but this was being done in stages as need to ensure that the structure is sound before tarmac is laid.

The Chair added that the severe winter weather had affected road repair programmes.

7. Carol McWatt – asked if there could be adequate lighting installed in Bluebell Wood as this was a health and safety issue.

Mark Smith – this could be included as a suggestion for the Your Wirral fund.

8. Dave Hanlon – felt that the Allandale Centre should have been open for youth activities rather than being used to host the area forum meeting, and that Councillors should be trying to provide services for young people five nights a week.

The Chair pointed out that the Allandale is an independent charitable trust and the Council does not direct its activity.

9. John Drew, Seacombe Partnership, requested that information be provided on the Objective One funding programme and how this benefited people through different forms of funding.

Mark Smith agreed to look into this and report back to the forum.

10. Carole Thomas, on behalf of the Central Park and Liscard / Seacombe Partnership, raised concerns over the toilet facilities at Central Park. These are not open long enough and the provision is not adequate for the young people and the anglers who use the park.

Member of the public added - that the toilets had been painted and toilet seats replaced about five years ago, but were in need of refurbishment, and asked what had happened to the £60,000 funding allocated to Central Park.

Mark Smith agreed to raise this with Jim Lester.

11. Dave Hanlon – asked if Central Park could be an agenda item at the next forum meeting.

Chair agreed this.

**Minute decision - Resolved that:**

**(i) Mark Smith to**

- note issues re: speeding traffic at Hampstead Road and Park Drive.
- report back on results of the Objective One funding programme.
- raise query re: allocation of £60,000 funding with Jim Lester.

**(ii) Michelle Gray to arrange for Central Park to be included as an agenda item on the next forum agenda.**

## 5 FUNDING FOR 2010/2011

### You Decide Scheme

Mark Smith informed the forum that the scheme gave local people the opportunity to make a difference in how council funding was spent in this area. Each area forum has £20,000 to spend on additional wide-ranging council services that could be delivered in it's own area, from a list handed out at the meeting.

The members of the public at the meeting were invited to vote for their top 5 choices from the list of activities available and preferred locations.

The results were collected at the end of the meeting to be collated so that the most popular activities can be considered for funding. The results of the vote will be given to the relevant council departments who will look at the information they already have to assess where the biggest priority is for a particular activity in the ward area.

The results from the evening will be published on the internet for each area forum and feedback on progress will be presented at the next round of area forums in October 2010. Anyone who would like to be kept up to date on this should pass their contact details to Michelle Gray at the end of the meeting.

Dianne Ledder informed the forum that funding had been secured, through Your Wirral, for notice boards at Wallasey Central Park and requested that this not be included as one of the choices.

Mark Smith added that the requests were for additional Council activity / service and that mainstream funding / programmes would be checked before any allocations.

David Hale asked who would be making the decision and if cards would be issued more widely and what was the closing date for returns.

Mark Smith confirmed that cards had been placed in lots of community sites and that cards could be taken on the evening to be distributed within the local area, to be returned by the end of June for collation during the first week in July.

Stan Thompson asked if the fund had been advertised in the local media.

Michelle Gray confirmed that the fund had been advertised on the Internet, Seven Waves Radio and in the Wirral Globe.

A Member of the Public asked if this was a one-off grant or if the funding would be available each year, as maintenance of the schemes could be an issue or was there other funding available for maintenance.

Mark Smith confirmed that there was no guarantee that the funding would be available in future years, as this would be dependant on the new budgets set, but added that this was a well liked programme. He added that the Council would advise on maintenance issues, as part of the detail of proposed schemes, to ensure that they were viable.

Councillor James Keeley added that a clean up project that was funded through this programme last year led to the on-going maintenance problem being raised with Jim Lester to see if there was funding available to continue with maintenance.

Mark Smith confirmed that council officers would be working with the area forums to make the projects chosen a success.

Mark Smith also informed the forum of the following:

- **Winter Resilience** – following the severe winter weather the Cabinet passed a resolution to give an additional £5,000 per forum area for winter resilience measures, such as grit bins. Details of the locations of the grit bins were available at the meeting, and suggestions for locations for further bins were requested.
- **Integrated Transport Block Funding / Road Safety** – for the last 2/3 years funding has been allocated to the area forums (£18,200 per forum per financial year) for road improvement, such as dropped kerbs, cycle stands, and road safety schemes. Details of problem areas and possible schemes were requested so that these could be accommodated.

Mark received a round of applause.

**Allandale Youth Works** – Joseph Lee thanked both parties for supporting the management committee with the work required to keep the centre open; David Ball for advice and attendance at meetings; Mike Raworth from Wirral Biz for assistance with drawing up a business plan; Adam Woodcock from Wirral CVS; the Volunteers who have worked hard to secure funding; and the CSOs. He informed the forum that it cost £4,000 to keep the club open, with £1,500 running costs per month - that were presently covered through rental paid to the centre from Centrum Training. £7,000 of funding was secured from Horizons for music projects for young people (such as DJ'ing). The centre also hosts computer courses, through St James's Centre in Birkenhead and was planning to run ECDL courses but that funding was still awaited for this. He also confirmed that the centre was only open on Monday / Wednesday / Friday and that holding the area forum meeting here did not take away provision for the young people.

Dave Hanlon – asked what was available for 14-16 year olds.

Joseph Lee – we want these young people to use the club, but can't maintain the damage they cause (£200 per week). Now that the fire Station has opened this will relieve a lot of the pressure on the streets and provide more activities for 14-16 year olds.

Sarah, a volunteer at the Allandale, asked what initiatives were being planned for the centre and about its long-term plan.

Joseph Lee – the funds raised through training has helped to keep the centre open and the management committee and volunteers continue to work on raising funds to increase the activities available at the centre.

John Drew, Seacombe Area Partnership representative, confirmed that he had been invited to the first meeting of the management committee, but was concerned that no further invites had been extended to meetings / committees that were agreed to be set up to apply for additional funding.

Chair – added that he had also not been invited to any meetings after the meeting he had initiated in January, and he urged the management committee to hold regular meetings. He said that the January meeting had agreed to establish a working party, together with Council Officers and Wirral Biz, to produce a business plan. He asked for a report on its progress.

Joseph Lee – confirmed that council officers did attend the initial meeting and helped to put plans into place, and he agreed that he would take the comments raised on board.

Members of the Public – added that:

- The centre would close down without the hard work of the volunteers, such as Shirley and Tracey.
- Community groups have to actively search for funding to deliver projects – which was difficult and tireless work.

The Chair added that the volunteers at the centre which had existed since 1953 only through the hard work of volunteers, were doing a marvellous job.

John Drew added that the Allandale “Youth” Works should be changed to “Youth and Community” so that it can attract more of the community and open it up for older people to use.

The Chair thanked Joseph Lee for the update and the public for their comments.

Father Leon Ostaszewski reminded the forum that the plaque to celebrate the centenary of the borough will be unveiled at the site of the original town hall and that there will be a presentation at Wallasey Town Hall on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010 for invited people. There will also be a film from the 1960s showing at Wallasey Town Hall in the afternoon. Further details on this will be advertised in the local press.

The formal section of the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

## **6 NEXT AREA FORUM MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2010 at a venue to be confirmed.