

AREA FORUM (HESWALL AND PENSBY & THINGWALL)

Wednesday, 16 June 2010

Present:

Councillor	D McCubbin (Chair)
Councillors	P Johnson R Wilkins M Johnston
Faith Representative	Toni Gibbs
Lead Officer	David Armstrong
Area Service Co-ordinator	Tracey Smith
Streetscene Manager	Mark Traynor
NHS Wirral	Russell Favager
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Pippa Roberts
Merseyside Police	Inspector Kate Cunningham
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	Keith Wooden
Apologies	Tony Garrett Community Rep Sandy Cameron Older People's Parliament

1 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

Cllr. Bob Wilkins welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introduced himself, as he had been Chairman last year. He stated that the first item on the Agenda was the election of a new Chairman for this municipal year.

Cllr. Peter Johnson proposed Councillor Don McCubbin to be Chair, and Cllr. Mark Johnston seconded the proposal. A vote was taken, and all were in favour, and Cllr. McCubbin took the chair. Cllr. McCubbin asked whether it was possible to elect a Chair to represent the residents, but it was agreed that this was not the responsibility of this meeting, as each area should select their own.

The Chair then asked those members of the panel to introduce themselves. He added that he felt as though he had been thrown in at the deep end.

2 AREA CO-ORDINATORS REPORT - MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the previous meeting were available for everyone to take a copy, and it was agreed that they were a true record.

Cllr. McCubbin asked that if there were any questions, would people please ask later. The Chair also asked if there were any matters arising, and the answer was that, so far, there were none.

It was noted that in a Yellow Paper from the Integrated Transport Block Fund, £18,200. had been earmarked for dropped kerbs, cycle stands etc. and £5,000. for grit bins for this area – Heswall, Pensby, Thingwall, Barnston. There is a map showing the roads which will be gritted, and where the grit bins are in Wirral, and it has a key on it.

It shows also where dropped kerbs have been requested, and you are asked to fill in the form and hand it back tonight, or take it home for discussion and post it back to the Council.

3 YOU DECIDE - PRESENTATION BY DAVID ARMSTRONG HEAD OF BRANCH - CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT - WIRRAL COUNCIL

The Chair introduced David Armstrong, who said he is one of three Managers in the Children's' Department, but all of them must volunteer to come to the Area Forums to support Tracey and her other colleagues at the Forums, and help her if she requires it.

They are also responsible for the finance and looking after buildings in the Children's' Department. He reported that £20,000. is to be spent locally and we have to decide where the money will go.

We will decide here tonight from the list, and because the forms cost a great deal to produce, we think it will be fairer to decide here tonight. For the past nine years now it has been about £20,000. for a Junior School and considerably more for a Senior School.

You will see a whole range of options to choose from, and we have to choose from this list –

Community Safety Activities.

- a) Alley gates
- b) Household security
- c) Temporary use of CCTV.

Re-deployment of youth
Adult learning course will be put on for older people.
Sporting youth activities.

Addition opportunities for young people, additional to the items already provided. We have recently created four new Hopes – Birkenhead, Wallasey, Eastham all linked up with the Fire Service.

Additional benches, litter bins, additional trees. Benches in the street, benches in the park.
Notice boards, Parking needs signs.
Community support development. Separate Development Officer to try and provide more Encouragement with the community

Tracey Smith reported that for the last three years, the Area Forum has been given £3,000. to spend, and we had questionnaires.

Cllr. McCubbin said that this year you have your chance to choose the five most important items you think are needed in your area from the list on the yellow forms we have produced.

Tracey Smith said that the Project Officers of the Council sat in a group. If there is anything on the questionnaire in the region of £18,000. to £20,000. that you think should be spent, then you should fill it in on the form. This is £20,000. for extra services in your area.

David Armstrong said that this is the third year – the first two years it was done by distributing forms and people filling them in, and the majority were filled in by young people, and this is good, because it shows their interest, but it was not very fair across the community. The bulk of the spend went to young people. In year 2 there was a very poor response. The Council then decided to try this way, as people of all ages come to the Forums. If you think that some are wrong, then take it back to your community and come back to us. Many of the needs on this list have been requested by people in this area, but it is a starting point.

? I thought this was a fresh start, but this is the same thing with a list provided.

Tracey Smith – we can carry on improving it with your input if you let me have it.

Cllr. Don McCubbin – it is for you to decide.

? We are not going to resolve the frailties of the Area Forum, but the names and addresses of the elected representatives here might help. Perhaps it would be useful to divide the people here into Ward groups, and then they may be able to decide with people from the same locality. If there are any Pensby residents here, then please contact me after the meeting to start a Pensby Residents Group. Our power is working as a Group to try and achieve changes and improvements.

Cllr. Don McCubbin – there is a limited amount of funding.

Sue Proudlove said there is a Group at Pensall/Barncroft Residents Association. Anyone who wishes to know, please see me later.

John Pyke – if we have got three different areas represented here tonight, it is not reasonable for us to decide for Pensby, or is it all going to one area, or is it going to be split?

Cllr. McCubbin – if people from Pensby, Heswall and Thingwall group themselves, and any others, and you have discussion among yourselves for approximately half an hour, it may be that you can all fill in forms, and we are beginning to find out what it required, and in which area.

This was agreed and the different groups came together and held approximately 30 minutes discussion.

Results of You Decide.

Tracey reported that the results from the earlier discussions among residents of the different areas was as follows:-

Priority No. 1 Number 22 – Community Sports Development Officer.

Priority No. 2. Number 2 - Household Security.

Priority No. 3. Number 12 - Litter Bins.

Priority No. 4. Number 9 - Adult Learning.

Priority No. 5. Number 10 - Activities for Young People.

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

PART 2

Cllr. McCubbin asked that the meeting continue as the Agenda, and Item 4 Public Question Time is probably what most people came for, and please remember to state your name very clearly.

Ian ? On Page 13 of the Minutes, Sandy Cameron representing the Older Peoples' Parliament said that, in Lancashire, people with bus passes were able to use them before 9.30 a.m. and Alistair Bradley was going to check on this and report back.

Tracey Smith regretted that she had not received a reply, but would chase it up and if he would leave an e-mail after the meeting, she would endeavour to get a reply to him.

-3-

Greg Vogiatzis, Pensby Ward, asked whether the Community Representatives should be on the Area Forum, as he understands that one of the area representatives has gone on to the local Council.

Sue Roberts from Barnston said she did not know what a Community Representative was, and she has lived here for 23 years.

Cllr. Mark Johnston said that he did not feel that he had a massive input into this meeting, but it had been made clear to him that the Area Forum meetings are not political.

Cllr. McCubbin said that Community Representatives represent people in the community as well as having a political belief, but here we are trying to improve communities in all ways, without a political agenda.

June Chadwick, speaking on behalf of the Older Peoples' Parliament and the Transport Users said that this was the case with all the Forums.??

John Hayes asked is the £18,500. will be split between all Wards.

Marilyn Castleton asked what are Vehicle Activity Signs with a solar panel?

Cllr. D.McCubbin asked whether it lights up when you approach it, and explained that they register your speed, or that a car is approaching, and you should slow down, as they are usually near a corner, or a crossing.

Marilyn Castleton asked whether the road deaths notices are to be taken down, as she does not think they fulfil a function.

Inspector Cunningham replied that they would be replaced soon. She said it is extremely difficult to say that they have reduced the number of accidents, but they do make people think, and hopefully reduce their speed.

Paul Sutton – with regard to what has just been said about the solar activity signs at Barnston Dale in the dip, has it been activity calibrated?

Inspector Cunningham – yes it has, and I have a vehicle activity sign, and it will activate at any speed.

John Pyke, Heswall Society asked are we not in danger of getting far too many signs, which clutter the road? They are not attractive and there are so many of them.

Inspector Cunningham – I am always dealing with motorists who say there was no sign, and I know there was. It is really difficult – we get criticized for not doing enough to reduce a really serious problem. There is a theoretical argument for getting rid of signs, and if someone gets killed, we are in serious trouble.

Lady ? – I have also been asked to ask what is the definition of a crash. Is it a head-on collision, or is it a crash?

Inspector Cunningham – it should be collision rather than a crash. It is the terminology.

Lady – a crash sounds like a terrible collision.

OPP – it is about safety – none of us want to end up dead in a collision.

Paddy Benson – if you drive in France, where there has been a fatal accident there is a metal crucifix. The families might actually find that is a memorial.

Lady – why do we not accept this, and I agree with Paddy, and have a simple cross on a sign, but it indicates that it is extremely dangerous, and it has MORT on it. It is short and to the point.

Inspector Cunningham – the signs are set by the Department of Transport design of these.

Greg Vogiatzis – as I understand there is supposed to be an Area Plan for each of the Council areas, they are extremely difficult to get hold of. Do any of you know when we will have an Area Plan, and how we, as residents, will have an input into the making of them?

Tracey Smith – we want to look at the priorities in the area. We have an event called

-4-

“Have Your Say” with a questionnaire to fill saying what you like about your area, what you want in your area, etc., and the next step is to prepare an Area Plan what we provide as a Council, what the NHS provide, what the Police want in, and you will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss what is shown on our Plan.

We will have a Neighbourhood Charter, which will say what we, as a Council, provide and what the gaps are, and what the issues are that we can deal with. I am not able to give you a date, and we will be doing all the ELEVEN Area Forums, and we should have them done by the end of the financial year. The end of our financial year is March. I am not sure whether we will have “a What You Say” for the next Area Forum meeting.

James Allan – where are the Council up to with the 20 mile per hour plans?

Mark Traynor said he was sorry, but he was not aware of where they are at present.

James Allan – there are to be areas locally I understand.

Mark Traynor – The Woodchurch Estate is to be a 20 mile per hour zone.

Inspector Cunningham – I can add to that. It is a political decision from the Local Authority, and they have approved, in principle, a 20 mph scheme for certain residential areas, but they have to fit the criteria, and they are very cautious. This happened before the Election, and I understand they will start with a number of areas around schools this year, but I do not know where they will start.

James Allan – we will be looking for the charges on the rates.

Paddy Benson – and the street lights.

Mark Traynor – I shall pass it on.

Keith Dawson, Heswall. 20mph where there are lots of people and lots of traffic, and this looks as something going in and nothing coming back out. I have been telling Council Officers that there are problems near us. We were asking for a meeting with

Technical Services to talk about the residents meeting with Councillor Johnson. We would like to meet with the Officers to see what their reaction is and give their reasons what they could, or could not, do. We do get the feeling from the Highways and Planning that things go into the Departments, and the e-mails you get back are very defensive. Please would the Council bear that in mind and explain a bit more.

Sue Roberts – we had an issue in Derwent Close, and we felt cars were coming too close, and we did not want to wait until someone was killed. Nothing was done, and we felt it was a waste of time. Gills Lane is also a dangerous road, and whether the landowners could provide a public footpath so that children and people could use that lane to get to the school bus from the kerbed area to somewhere down to the main road. This would be a great benefit.

Mark Traynor – We have had queries in the past, and it is essentially a lane, and the width of the road is not really big enough.

Cllr. McCubbin – we seem to have a great many questions on Street Scene, and I think it would be a good idea if we could keep them brief, and the Officers can investigate, and report back as soon as possible.

PS – the car park in May Road, and the traffic turning into Aldi. It was said that they would make an entrance further down, and there was no way cars could turn into Aldi the wrong way. There will be a crash sometime.

Inspector Cunningham said they would look into that again, as it is very dangerous.

Cllr. McCubbin Partners' Updates.

Mark Traynor – it is all there in the update.

Russell Favager – we have made funding available to your local GP Practice, and this is to set up patients' rights, so please join your Patients' Registration Groups. If your Practice has not given you the information, please let me know. One Practice has two sites.

-5-

Man – you take your life in your hands trying to cross to get there.

Greek gentleman – is there any update on the Pensby/Heswall Practice?

Russell Favager – the original proposal was turned down, but the proposal is still to go ahead.

John Pyke – is there any news about the Emergency Services coming together on the same site?

Russell Favager – numerous discussions with other partners, and I think it is fair to say that if, subsequently, other partners would be willing to fund part of the building it might go ahead. I think it is unlikely that we are going to have a Medical Centre.

John Pyke – it would be sensible to move one of the services from that site, and that might solve their difficulty.

Inspector Cunningham – 189 fewer crimes last year, and it is the fourth year we have had a reduction, and I say that with great satisfaction, as my Staff have worked very hard. The CSO's have made a huge difference. Criminal damage was down again. I am so pleased we have had such reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour. That does not mean it is perfect, there are problems sometimes on Poll Hill and around here. Please let me know if you have any problems and we will try and get there to sort them out. In the past we have had a meeting every couple of months across the neighbourhood, Irby as well as Pensby and Thingwall.

The new Chief Constable wants us to expand on this, and we are holding Ward-based meetings each month, and the people who come to these meetings will help us set our priorities each month.

The people who attend the meetings can submit ideas and any problems, and we will discuss them with the Ward for that month, and our resources will be at your disposal. We will feed back to you every month what we have done, and there will be posters all round the place. There will be a meeting here on 21st June, and in Heswall on 21st June at 6 p.m., plus the CSOs. Derek Murphy will be at Heswall and Mark Joyson at Pensby.

Community Safety is about the welfare of the community. Inspector Cunningham has said about the restrictions, about criminal damage and burglary. A reminder about sheds in the garden, and people who use the tools from the sheds to burgle the house. We intend to increase the type size on the posters, and there is a great deal of information there, and I will speak to anyone who wants advice on safety etc.

Community Patrol - 2951 incidents in the Borough. We have carried out 89 visits to schools, and there have been a number of incidents around 3a.m. We are out day and night. Wallasey area had a water problem, and we were taking water to owners' homes etc.

We are a force for the Council to use – 1800 incidents over the past twelve months, and it was previously double that, so things are improving. We had a high of 178 burglaries in 2004, and last year it was 4. The alarms, the fences etc. and owners' cooperation with the Police have reduced that. They have said it was £87,000. in 2004, and last year it was reduced to £4,000. We are involved with the Fire Brigade, and we deal with small fires if we can get there quickly, and this way we can help the Fire Brigade reduce the damage caused. This one is quite close to my own heart – dog fouling! There will be dog fouling and litter enforcement, and we will train people on litter enforcement. This training will start on Monday, and within two weeks, they will be out on the streets. We have been invited to attend the Street Surgeries.

You just use the others on the street. Does that mean they are walking?

The men in the office do not actually walk round the respective areas, but this team will be.

Pippa Roberts, Wirral University Teaching Hospital.

David Steel is the Public Governor for the local hospital, and the hospital has become a Foundation Trust, which means that you can become a member of the Trust. All you have to do is sign a form, and you can become a member.

Keith Ellsop, Barnston Road, asked whether the Trust was making any attempts in the National Health, particularly in the BCC.

Pippa Roberts – quite a lot of the Report relates to the national and local area, costing about £44 million to improve the services, and save money, without having a negative impact on the service. I am particularly concerned with the prescriptions.

Keith Ellsop – at the entrance to the Arrowe Park site you say it is a NO SMOKING AREA. There are always dozens of people smoking, and no-one seems to be there asking them to stop.

Pippa Roberts – my office is right at the entrance, and from my window I can see all these people.

Caroline ? – could they start confiscating the cigarettes, as they are causing damage to other patients?

PS – surely when you see people in night attire with tubes, wheelchairs etc. and they are going back into the wards, something should be done.

Caroline – the Security people are not doing their jobs by not taking their cigarettes.

Pippa Roberts – they cannot remove them, and have no means of doing this.

Sue Proudlove – it is not just a member of the public, or a patient, it is also the Staff, and they are sitting smoking. May I also ask you while I am speaking, if you can do something about the disabled entrance, so that people who do not need to use it are made aware that it is for the disabled, and they should not use it, but they all walk straight through, and we are often kept waiting, as we need the space to get through.

Pippa Roberts – it is there for the disabled and should not be used.

Sue Proudlove – there are some benches, but if you have two wheelchairs you cannot get in.

? - It is important – what might be useful, could it be fed back and ask the Hospital Lawyers to explain what they feel they can do, but could the Hospital apply under some regulations to say YOU CANNOT SMOKE.

Caroline – the whole of the area is a none-smoking area, right from the road through the building.

Pippa Roberts – inside the public building you cannot smoke, but outside it is possible. We did try an Enforcement Policy, but there does not seem to be a law whereby this can be enforced.

? I did a session in the Citizens' Advice Office. You can get through, and the chairs are put out there for older people to sit on while waiting for a prescription.

Sue Proudlove – if there is anybody sitting there, you cannot get through in a wheelchair.

? - not all disabled people are in wheelchairs, and I cannot use a revolving door, so it is very difficult sometimes.

5 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS:(INCLUDING AOB)**

Tracey thanked everyone for taking part, and these will be published on the website for everyone to see.

Cllr. McCubbin also thanked everyone, and said that he hoped that this would prove a fruitful evening, and the Area Forum Representatives will become involved, and the process can move forward.

Tracey Smith reported that Sandy Cameron (Older Peoples' Parliament) had sent a Report, and copies were available for anyone who wished to read it.

Keith ? – asked whether there will be two Community Representatives for each Ward.

There was discussion, and it was suggested that a Community Representative should represent a Group or a Road, and they will be responsible for reporting back to their Groups in their Area on what has happened at the Forum.

Tracey Smith said there are eleven Area Forums, which cover the whole of Wirral. They began about ten years ago this October, and it is to try and get the Community to be involved in organising public services. They meet three times a year, and presentations can be organised (through Tracey). We have money, £15,000. for small projects (events for you), voluntary and community groups. £4,000. for community health.

Other groups are welcome to come along and challenge the decisions, and we are always open to discussion.

Cllr. McCubbin thanked everyone for coming, and said that the next meeting is scheduled for OCTOBER 7TH 2010 at Heswall. Venue will be notified.