

AREA FORUM (BIRKENHEAD & TRANMERE AND ROCK FERRY)

Thursday, 11 February 2010

Present:

Councillor P Davies (Chair)

In attendance:

Councillors B Kenny
C Meaden
WJ Davies
M McLaughlin

Community Representatives: Peter Exley

Lead Officer: David Ball

Area Service Co-ordinator: Andy Brannan

Wirral NHS: Tina Long

Wirral University Teaching Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust Pat Higgins

Merseyside Police: Inspector Mick Blease

Merseyside Fire and Rescue
service: Ian Maxwell

Streetscene Manager: Garry Cummings

Community Safety: Ian Lowrie

In Attendance: Ema Boddison (minute taker)
Hazel Roberts (Together Board)

Apologies

Councillors J Stapleton

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

The Chair, Councillor P Davies, welcomed forum members and 50 members of the public to the public forum meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Jean Stapleton. The Chair informed the forum of a change in format – there will be a funding roadshow with exhibition stands at the end and a drumming demonstration from a group funded through the area forum. Partners will not be giving a verbal update and have also been asked to bring along exhibition stands so

people will have an opportunity to visit their stands at the end. He invited the forum members to introduce themselves.

2 **AREA CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING)**

Area Service Co-ordinator, Andy Brannan thanked everyone for attending and informed them that copies of the report were available which included minutes from previous meeting starting on page 4 which were very detailed and matters arising from the previous meeting start on page 13. He added that he would be happy to deal with any queries at the end of the meeting or alternatively his contact details are included on the report.

Minute Decision update: Lead Officer, David Ball reported that the update on disabled access at Hamilton Square and Rock Ferry train station is in the process of being completed and it would be brought to the next meeting. This also applies to the Carbon reduction update will be circulated within the next few weeks.

3 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chair asked if people could say their name before asking a question.

3.1) – Pauline Kirwan – the proposal to merge Park High and Rock Ferry high school is giving people concerns on accessibility?

Chair – the formal process of establishing an Academy is at the feasibility stage. There will be an opportunity to express concerns as there will be a meeting at the schools and everyone is welcome. There has been no final decision made yet.

Peter Exley – Can we have it dated in the minutes when we know then?

3.2) - Martin Hesketh (Chair of Viking Youth Club) – we have a building that facilitates office space and tea and coffee area and it is not being used. Developers are going to Byrne Avenue to duplicate what we have already. I would just like it minuted what we have to offer.

3.3) – Hugh Langford – With regards to the disabled access at Hamilton Square station the Tranmere access to the Train Station in Green Lane is worse in my opinion. There are no lifts and no disabled access.

Chair – We also need to add Green Lane as a concern.

David Ball – we have a meeting with Merseytravel in the next few weeks so I will mention it.

3.4) - Dave Pearson (Honorary Treasurer for Jo Jo's club) - I would like to thank everyone who helped us with funding. Our 'Love to Learn' programme received funding and the kids have done an awful lot. The funding is much appreciated however, what can be done to increase funding?

Chair – funding is never easy. We are coming into difficult times at the moment but we are lobbying hard to try and increase funding. Testimonials like yours do help.

3.5) – Becky (Forum Housing) – Can we secure any funding to assist with anti social behaviour and educational needs for our tenants to further their future. People think we are a nuisance but there a lot of our tenants who actually want to learn.

Andy Brannan – we will speak at the end as I need to know what you are doing. A meeting has been arranged, any progress on this issue will be fed back to the forum.

Ian Lowrie – This is also an issue that the Community Safety Team could assist with.

3.6) – Peter Barnett – The pot holes around Clifton Road and Clifton Park are terrible and not due to the bad weather, they have been there for years. I have tripped over them before now. – Roads have been getting fixed for 10 years. People will end up suing the Council.

Gary Cummings – I will get an Inspector out tomorrow to have a look. The problem is when a pothole is repaired it doesn't always to alleviate the problem as the whole road needs to be repaired.

Peter Barnett – Can we look into a different venue for the forum as well?

Chair – we will look into the roads as the Council has agreed additional funding of £250k. We do try and alternate venues and we are hoping to look for another.

3.7) – Addie – accessibility of transport in Wirral has always been bad. There are always buses that can't get a wheelchair on.

Chair – it is difficult as bus companies are private businesses so it is hard to control them. They are not actually controlled by the council.

David Ball – I will be meeting with Merseytravel so this issue can be raised with them.

3.8) – Sue Tomlinson (Bebington Road Allotment Society) – Over the last few months there have been a lot of thefts and vandalism at the site. People have no faith in the Police so they don't call them. Where can we get advice on how to get security?

Insp Mick Blease – I am aware of this and 6 months ago we recovered a lot of property that had been stolen. You can talk to my CPOs and set up a group. Keith Winstanly, Crime Prevention Officer in the Community Safety Team, can help you.

Ian Lowrie – Roger Calvert , within the Council's Leisure Department is setting 'Allotment Watch' which will hopefully lead to better security at all allotment sites.

Sue Tomlinson – why don't we know about this?

Ian Lowrie – I will take your details back to Roger Calvert and ask him to get in touch. We have been providing smart water and the custody suite have a lamp so they can identify stolen goods.

3.9) – Brenda – Tenants from the Bridge in Birkenhead is getting moved to a block of flats here. We feel that Mick Blease has improved the area and we are bothered that if we bring people here of 'lower behaviour' we will go back down again. Can the Councillors get involved and can we get more PCOs.

Cllr Meaden – I have had a meeting with Forum Housing and Wirral Partnership Homes – it did raise concerns and Forum are still awaiting funding so we don't know what is to happen yet.

Insp Mick Blease – I became aware that they will move to Thorseway because the Bridge needs renovating. Wirral Partnership Homes have been asked to assist and came up with Thorseway. There were concerns and I have spoken to Forum. Hopefully it will work and can benefit the area as there are a lot of good people in the Bridge – trust me and it will only be for 8 – 12 months with approximately 25 people. There will be increased security, support for the young people and PCOs will stay in place but we don't have more funding.

Cllr Meaden – There are 12 floors in Thorseway and only 2 in the Bridge so only the lower levels will be getting used anyway.

Forum Housing Representative – The Bridge is supported accommodation for 16 – 25 year olds, not a hostel. When they are there, there is support and advice given to the young people who want it.

Forum Housing Tenants – Not all of the tenants in the Bridge cause anti social behaviour, and sometimes we are discriminated against as most people believe we all do. I have just moved out of the Bridge last week and I work and I am in college. It is not always a bad place and people need to change their perspective of young people. Without places like this a lot of young people would not even have GCSEs.

3.10) – Public Member – My project received funding 2 years ago to do competitions in memory of my father Charles Skarrett. It was the centenary of his birth and we wanted to do something. We got enough money raised for a competition whereby any youngster under 20 can apply as long as they are musical in some way. I would just like to say a big thank you to everybody

3.11) – Graham – did they decide to put a cap of funding at the Participatory Budgeting events to limit the amount so one group didn't get lots more funding than another?

Andy Brannan – Last year instead of the usual funding panels made of councillors and community representatives to allocate area forum funding, each group voted on each other rather than have a panel. Unfortunately because there was underspend every group received the money they asked for.

3.12) Chair thanked everybody for attending and informs public that everything will be recorded in the minutes and will be followed up. Encourages people to look at the display stands and speak to Andy with regards to funding. And Introduces Peter Crawford from Rock Ferry Partnership for drumming demonstration.

Peter Crawford – Rock Ferry Partnership – thanked the forum for all the support he has received. They have a lovely new van. Thanked Insp Mick Blease and PCOs as Anti Social Behaviour has gone down. Explained he started at Townfield School teaching deaf people how to play drums and we have now talked to hospitals to see if can go there. Introduced Eastham Adult Centre playing drums. He informed the forum that he goes there every Thursday and some people are unable to hear, see or speak and would like to thank everybody again for their support.