

# AREA FORUM (GREASBY/FRANKBY/IRBY, UPTON, WOODCHURCH)

Wednesday, 13 October 2010

## Present:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Chair   | T Smith (Chair)   |
| Councillors   | P Reisdorf<br>W Clements<br>S Whittingham   |
| Community Representatives                                   | Ron Green (Greasby Community Association),<br>Jean Robinson (Overchurch Residents<br>Association), John Smith (Greasby Community<br>Association), Bert Grunnill (Upton Churches<br>Association) |
| Lead Officer  | David Smith (Deputy Director of Finance)  |
| Area Service Co-ordinator                                   | Andy Brannan  |
| Community Safety Officer                                    | Mike Collins  |
| Wirral University Teaching<br>Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | Amanda Farrell  |
| NHS Wirral  | Paul Edwards  |
| Merseyside Police   | Inspector Brian Griffiths   |
| Merseyside Fire and Rescue<br>Service                       | Sarah Patterson   |
| In Attendance   | Jane Elliott (Minute Taker)   |
| <u>Apologies</u>  | Councillors Tom Anderson & Gill Gardiner  |

## 1 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair, Councillor Tony Smith welcomed the Forum members and 30 members of the public to the Greasby, Frankby, Irby & Woodchurch Area Forum meeting held at Overton Community Centre.

**Apologies:** Councillor Tom Anderson & Councillor Gill Gardiner

## 2 **MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (JUNE 2010)**

2.1 (4.10) The Girl Guides from Frankby have been re-housed in Greasby Infant School.

2.2 Andy Brannan reported that there is funding available for Community Voluntary Groups. If there are any groups that require funding, application forms are available.

2.2 Andy Brannan introduced the Energy Project Plus Information Stand. This is "working towards a sustainable future" The Officer from Energy Project Plus will answer any questions at the end of the meeting.

## 3 **WIRRAL'S FUTURE - BE A PART OF IT**

David Smith explained to the Forum Members the Council's Consultation Process which is taking place across the borough. The idea of the process is to ask Wirral residents "How to spend future resources". The Council has estimated to find savings of £108 million over the next 4 years.

4 Task Groups have been set up:

Children's Services  
Adult Services  
Economy  
Living Environment

A questionnaire has been set up and they will be available at various locations around the borough for Wirral residents to complete. All forms are to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2010. They will be analysed and sent back to the Task groups to prepare a final paper ready for the Council's Cabinet Meeting at the end of November. This meeting will also have the Budget proposals for the next financial year.

3.1 Q. Have answered the questionnaire on line, but couldn't print off a copy.

A. Will take this issue back to the Website Organisers and apologise for this error.

3.2 Q. B Moore received a questionnaire but was unsure where it came from. She felt that it was not publicised and was full of loaded questions which were not objective, just subjective.

A. The questionnaire was sent to all who has registered for the Area Forums. Everyone's views are valid; the questions are not intended to be loaded. Jean Robinson from Overchurch Residents Association has been involved with the process and informed the forum that the Task Force Committee is independently chaired.

3.3 Q. A questionnaire had been received, but it was not the same as the Wirral's Future questionnaire.

A. Andy Brannan reported that the questionnaire received was for the Localism Consultation.

3.4 Q. How many people have received the questionnaire?

A. Council Officers have been at various locations around the Wirral, e.g.: Major shops – ASDA, Sainsbury's, Morrison's – The questionnaires are available from the Libraries and other public buildings around Wirral. They are available to take away this evening. Encourage everyone, friends, neighbours and relatives to complete and return the questionnaires.

#### 4 **PARKS & OPEN COUNTRYSIDE INFORMATION**

David Green explained to the Forum members about why Parks & Open Countryside will be taken over by a private company.

The section in the department is quite disjointed and is a massive service and it needs to improve the level of its service. Consultants have been engaged and looked at the various options and the decision was to opt for a Single Service Provider.

The option to put it in one package and offer it to an external contractor can save the Council approx £1.5 million per year.

The tender will be a European advert, looking to get the contractor approx September 2011 and start mobilising around December 2011 – January 2012.

An external contractor can provide a better service.

There will be public consultations in November

3<sup>rd</sup> November - Sports

8<sup>th</sup> November - Golf

10<sup>th</sup> November - Bereavement Services

11<sup>th</sup> November - Parks & Heritage Groups

Q. All staff are accountable and managers are accountable. If the Golf Courses and Beach Patrol were costed properly, there would not be a need to sell off. The services this section provides are specialist.

A. Dave Green: Lots of contractors can provide this service. We are confident that this can be done. There has been extensive research with 5 other councils, who have done this. The option of the external contractor is £1.5 cheaper than it would be with the existing staff. An advantage of a private contractor is that they can invest in the service, whereby the council has not got the money to invest.

Q. Where is the £1.5 million saving coming from?

A. An external contractor is better a managing staff and can react to changes in services than it is sometimes possible for a Local Authority.

Q. Will the staff be sacked and they bring in new people? Working on a Golf Course is specialised.

A. 200 members of staff will be transferred over. The new contractor does not have to keep the staff and they can change their conditions of service. The bins were transferred over to BIFFA. They have invested in plant machinery, staff have retained their jobs and had pay rises and they are happy. Their work practices have changed. One contractor will provide the specialist service and will be better at managing staff.

Q. Is it possible to block pave around the roundabout at Ackers Road as it gets flooded and muddy? Also could the grass be cut at the football pitches at Arrowe Park as it is so long?

A. Yes, this will be looked at.

Q. Parks and Gardens stores equipment at Woodchurch Leisure Centre – Could this be moved as it will free up the stores for the Boxing Club

A. This will be looked at.

Q. Beach Patrol and the Rangers do an excellent job, will the staff be looked after.

A. Staff will be transferred over to the new contractor.

Q. Why were the Managers not allowed to submit a tender?

A. They do not have the knowledge to construct a bid and would have cost them £200k more than other tenders. A private contractor will save £1.5million per year.

Q. When it goes over to a single contractor, could it be noted that they don't damage the trees with the strimmers. It is putting the trees at risk.

A. Will put this in the tender.

Q. Would it be possible to take note that along the Wirral Way and in Arrowe Park, the wooden posts are too narrow and make it inaccessible for wheelchair users?

A. This will be looked at.

Q. How can one company run all this section as it is so varied and specific? Would it be better to sub-divide?

A. It is impossible to talk about this, it will be a single provider and this will have greater savings.

Q. Work has taken place on Pemberton Road, Woodchurch by COLAS on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010. It has been 11 weeks and the road has still not been finished off. What is going to be done about this?

A. Brian Smith, Street scene apologised for the delay in the completion of the road. The road needs to be planed and the areas to be repaired marked out. The repairs will be done and then re-surfaced. The work will commence 8<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

Q. Are there plans to do Hoole Road?

A. Due to a bad winter the roads have deteriorated. This road is not included in the maintenance programme. It will need to be planed, repaired and re-surfaced.

Q. At a Public Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> October it was announced that the work on Pemberton Road would be completed.

A. Apologies were given for the delay in completion; the delays were due to previous jobs running over.

Q. On Moreton Road, the barriers on the paths are too close together and cause a problem for bikes with trailers and tandems. This is also the case on the Wirral Way.

A. This will be brought to the attention of the Cycle Forum.

Q. Due to the recent road works and new traffic lights on Woodchurch Road by ASDA, cars are now avoiding the lights and driving through Woodchurch Estate. This is causing a problem of increased traffic on the estate.

A. Investment has been made in this area due to the number of accidents in the past few years. ASDA asked and paid for the traffic lights outside the shop to be changed so traffic could turn right after leaving the store, reducing the amount off traffic on the roundabout.

Q. With the additional lights on Woodchurch road and cars now cutting through the estate, this will cause more accidents on the Estate.

A. The road works have caused people to divert onto the estate, but this should cease when the road works have been completed.

Q. How much did it cost for the appointment of the Consultancy Agency that looked into the options for Parks and Open Countryside?

A. £130k – netted off as it has been built into the savings that will be achieved

Councillors should take a 5% cut in pay.

## 5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

4.1 Q. As a resident of Warwick Road, there is an increasing problem of parents parking on double yellow lines outside the school. A police officer should have booked the cars parked on the yellow lines, but did not. This problem is getting reported at least four times a week and it is not getting sorted. The road is narrow and if the problem is not addressed it will cause an accident.

A. The police cannot give out tickets for parking on double yellow lines, but they can issue a penalty notice for causing an unnecessary obstruction. This problem will be passed onto the Council Enforcement Officers. Letters have also been sent out to parents at the school of the problem they are causing.

4.2 Q. Mark Stevenson asked why there was no representation on the Forum for Woodchurch estate. The board is not up to scratch on Diversity and Equality and who do we address with issues relating to Woodchurch?

A. The Community Representatives are designated on a ward basis – 2 Community Reps per ward. As Woodchurch is in the Upton ward, the Upton Representatives cover the Woodchurch area. Any issues relating to Woodchurch can be forwarded to Jean Robinson and Bert Grunnill who are more than happy to feed issues into the forum.

- 4.3 Q. The United States have a good system when dropping children off at school. They have a one-way system for cars, so not causing the problem of cars parking everywhere. Could this be done at Warwick Road School?  
A. Andy Brannan to look at this system and report back.
- 4.4 Q. It states in the local paper that the Council is getting rid of 50% of the workforce. So this will have an impact on Council Services, so are the residents getting a 50% reduction in the Council Tax?  
A. Letters have gone out to 6,000 white collar staff in the Council, offering them the opportunity to take Early Voluntary Retirement or a Severance payment or for staff to reduce their working week. The 50% figure stated is incorrect. Service Continuity will be maintained, the idea of the saving is through natural wastage and not all applications will be accepted.
- 4.5 Q. Some of the roads in Woodchurch, particularly Hoole Road have worn out double yellow lines. Could they be re-painted?  
A. Yes, this will be arranged.
- 4.6 Q. Parking on Saughall Massie Lane, by the school is causing a problem for people getting out of their drive way.  
A. The police can only issue a penalty if the car is causing an obstruction. Parking outside your own house is not a given right – anyone can park.
- 4.7 Q. The impression this Forum gives is that Woodchurch is difficult to deal with. The Neighbourhood Management Team is finished and now there is no representative for Woodchurch. We want our own representative for Woodchurch to deal with the issues ourselves and feel that the equality on the board is not right.  
A. Andy Brannan explained that every Forum is set up the same. There are 2 representatives covering ward areas. The representation for this period is up in January 2011. Anyone can apply for the 3 year tenure for the Forums Representation.
- 4.8 Q. The lines of communication through the Neighbourhood Management Team have now finished, and we want to be able to represent ourselves.  
A. The issues are understood and we will talk to officers about the composition of the group. Again, representation can be applied for in January 2011. The present 2 representatives are willing to take up any issues anyone has regarding Woodchurch.
- 4.9 Q. Where does Tom Anderson hold his surgeries?  
A. Andy Brannan will find out and report back. Tony Smith and Peter Reisdorf hold their surgeries at Meadowside. The details of the councillor's surgeries can be found on the council website.

#### **GENERAL**

Q. The fire at the Pavilion in Coronation Park was caused by an electrical fault. Mr R Green (Community representative) regularly clears up bottles and beer cans around the Pavilion. Would it be possible to make this area an Alcohol Free Area? Would it be possible to put signs up?

Q. Warwick Park is an alcohol free area and the youths still drink there. They need to be encouraged to use the bins.

A. Brian Griffiths: There is a maximum fine of £500 – These are rarely enforced. Agreed that the signs don't often work. Police Officers will speak to the youths and will take the alcohol off the young people.

There is a picture on the newsletter of the amount of alcohol taken off people. Shops are much better now at not selling alcohol to children.

- John Smith: There are some Greasby Messenger Booklets available for people to take away. Negotiations are taking place over the Greasby Community Centre
- Jean Robinson thanked people for their donations to the Woodland Fund – It is ready for completion next Thursday (21.10.10) The asset transfer of Overton Community Centre will be completed by March/April 2011.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS** None.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING** 17<sup>th</sup> February 2010. Venue: Greasby, Frankby Irby ward. Venue to be agreed.

## 6 **AREA FORUM PARTNER UPDATES**

### **Merseyside Police**

Newsletters are available with details of recent court results. Updates are regularly updated.

### **Community Safety Team**

See pages 11 and 12 for a more comprehensive report. There are forms to complete for a consultation with local residents, asking for their priorities. Take a form and please complete. There are 6 Dog Fouling Officers on patrol around Wirral.

Q. Is there any way that a barrier could be placed on the Alleyway in Coombe Road as there is a problem of nuisance youths.

A. This area is the responsibility of Wirral Partnership Homes. This information will be taken away and Andy Brannan will report back. The information will also be passed onto the Police, so they can patrol this area.

Q. There has been a problem of numerous break-ins in the area (Coombe Road)

A. The police are aware of the situation.

Q. The Community Patrol Officer was praised for his great work around this area.

### **Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**

There have been a few changes to Arrowe Park Hospital –

The following have recently opened:

Children's Ward, Maternity Ward, Children's Theatre, 2<sup>nd</sup> MRI scanner

Q. With the proposed cuts, will it be possible to run the 2<sup>nd</sup> MRI scanner

A. There are no cuts proposed with the MRI.

Q. The Walk In Centre was complimented for their service.

**Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service**

See pages 18 – 22 for a more comprehensive report. Leaflets are available on keeping safe on Bon Fire Night. There is a new campaign to be more kitchen safe, called “Watch what you heat” Adverts will be running for 12 weeks on Radio City and leaflets have been given out to landlords.

**NHS Wirral**

See pages 23 & 24 for a more comprehensive report. A new Lifestyle Service is available on a Saturday morning at 30 Argyle Street, Birkenhead. It is an opportunity to drop in and meet with a Health Trainer to offer support to develop a personalised action plan for better health and well-being.

Q. Would it be possible to alter the parking at Arrowe Park Hospital by building a multi-storey car park?

A. This will be looked at, but don't think this is feasible.

**7 ENERGY PROJECT PLUS**

Energy Projects Plus (EPP) – “working towards a sustainable future”

Were in attendance at the forum to promote the Warmer Wirral project that is managed by EPP and funded by Wirral Council, she was available at the end of the meeting for anyone who wanted any advice on this project.