

# AREA FORUM (LEASOWE, MORETON AND SAUGHALL MASSIE)

Wednesday, 2 February 2011

Present:

Councillors	RL Abbey C Blakeley I Lewis S Williams A McArdle
Streetscene Manager	David Green
Area Service Co-ordinator	Tracey Smith
Merseyside Police	Inspector Peter Kolokotroni
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	Ian Maxwell
NHS Wirral	Martin McEwan
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Pat Higgins
Council Officers	Steve Preston (Community Safety), Sarah Risnes (Minute Taker)
Apologies	Cllr Simon Mountney, David Armstrong

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

The chair opened the meeting and welcomed approximately 12 members of the public to the meeting.

The chair announced that Jane McLearn the community representative for the area forum had given her resignation to the forum. This has been accepted and a thank you card should be sent on behalf of the forum to thank Jane for all her hard work and support over the last few years.

## 2 **AREA CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT:**

Tracey Smith discussed the minutes of the last meeting, no amendments were made by the forum and the minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting.

Tracey introduced the area-coordinator's report provided in the forum pack. Tracey drew particular attention to the additional 5,000 each forum has to spend on winter grit-bins for their area, there is a form which can be filled in at the front of the room giving suggestions on areas where the grit bins should be placed.

Tracey also introduced Peter Cummins from United Utilities to give an update on some work in the forum area. Peter Cummins explained there will be some road works commencing in May 11 on Hoylake Road, Moreton and will last for 3 months. This work is part of a 5 year project which is ongoing to install 2 new pipelines.

**Cllr Blakeley:** Wasn't this work part of the original project started last year?

**Peter Cummins:** No, that was part of the Grange Reservoir project.

**Cllr Blakeley:** It would be really useful if we could have a detailed plan showing the actual areas affected and how this will disrupt traffic in the area emailed to us.

**Peter Cummins:** Yes this will be done, and also it will be updated on the website.

**Minute Action:** United Utilities to send details to forum and update the website.

3 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:**

There were no questions from the public in public question time.

4 **STATEMENT ON BURTONS:**

Cllr Ian Lewis gave an update on the current position at Burtons Foods due to his involvement alongside the leader of the council Jeff Green. Cllr Lewis explained that the leader met with Burtons before Christmas along with the Chief Executive of Wirral Council, to see the results of Burtons Supply Chain Review. As part of this review Burtons announced that after 60 years at the Moreton site it was to be closed, resulting in the loss of 342 jobs as it was no longer feasible to keep the site open due to high running costs and this was the only site which is making a loss.

Previously, the council already has contributed 1million pounds as part of a programme to keep the Moreton site until 2012 and help it become a centre of excellence. There was also a meeting with UNITE to talk through how the council could help further, even though There is going to be another meeting soon with bosses to see what possible options there are for the future of the site. Cllr Lewis wanted to re-assure the forum that under no circumstances will this land be released for housing purposes.

Cllr Ann McArdle explained to the forum her personal views on the current situation at Burtons Foods? Cllr McArdle is extremely worried about the devastating affect this could have on the local economy of this forum area and the wider borough. MP Angela Eagle has raised this in Parliament last week so this is on the national agenda and we will be fighting this decision as the workers of Moreton have pulled all the stops out for a number of years now and this is like a slap in the face to them. There have been warning signs that this might happen, and I am glad to see the unions and the council working together to try and resolve this positively.

**Minute Action:** A further updates to be brought back to the next forum.

5 **PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE:**

The Director of Technical Services Dave Green introduced the parks and countryside services procurement exercise to the forum.

In 2008, there was a review of the parks and countryside services, the decision has now been taken to externalise these services so it can be delivered cheaper. Currently it costs the council £14 million a year to run all of Parks & Countryside Services.

The council has put 5million aside to invest in the infrastructure of the parks and countryside over the next 2 years as part of the Capital Programme.

If all goes to plan this could potentially be the same approach as for Roads and Waste Services in the long term. All existing staff will go to the contractor and they will have to put in a bid for the service, using the external support and guidance a new partner will be chosen by December 2011. They will still be held to account by Wirral Council and quality of the services will still be monitored, this will ensure the service is better than previously provided.

There will be a communication plan at the design contact stage to involve ideas from the public about improvements which can be made to our parks and outdoor spaces.

There are workshops for the public to get involved in, these will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> – March 2011

**Clare Sanderson:** Will the Ranger service remain in operation as the service they provide in schools is really good?

**Dave Green:** Yes, they will be moved over to the partner as part of the contract and we have no plans to start charging for this ranger service.

**Cllr Lewis:** As we know a lot of these areas have 'Friend groups' which are engaged in initiatives involving the parks and countryside. How will you engage with people/areas who are not in or do not have a friends group?

**Dave Green:** The long term aim is to have a friends group in every area, however in the meantime we are doing everything we can via many different channels such as this Area Forum, newspapers, leisure services and the community engagement database to invite people to the workshop sessions and have their say.

## 6 **CENSUS 2011:**

Deborah Morgan Census Manager for Wirral gave a 5 minute presentation outlining the importance of the upcoming census. Key Features of the presentation included:

- Sunday 27th March 2011 is Census Day
- It is a snapshot in time of the whole population on that day, asking questions such as; how many people live in the household and do they have a car etc.
- Personal information is never shared with other government departments
- The census is compulsory and you could be fined up to £1,000 if you don't take part.
- Posted out to each address in early March, with a pre-paid envelope or can be filled in online.

**Anne-marie Jones:** With regards to the fines given to people who do not complete the census, what measures have been taken to support the elderly and those unable to fill it out for themselves?

**Deborah Morgan:** National Government Policy is to try and prosecute as many people as possible however it has been recognised that not everyone either can or fill out or understand the census. Carers and Census Collectors have been specially trained to deal with such matters and are working with partners to identify people in areas who need extra support with the census.

**Cllr McArdle:** The Census team should link up to Council and Health Partners databases to help inform them of those people and areas which will need further support completing the census.

**Deborah Morgan:** This is a good idea and she will ensure Census Collectors do this.

**Cllr Blakeley:** How much does the census cost?

**Deborah Morgan:** It costs £45million nationally. In the last Census, it was estimated that every person in Wirral is worth 50,000 over 10 years.

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## **PARTNER UPDATES:**

### **NHS Wirral**

Martin McEwan NHS Wirral explained that currently there are significant changes to the NHS going through Parliament and a general consultation on Public Health Services moving over to Local Authority responsibility from 2013. This consultation will help to see how Local Authorities can fulfill the duties placed on public health as they are currently quite complex. There is more information on the Department for Health Website if anyone wishes to express their views or concerns on this matter.

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

Pat Higgins from the Hospital Trust explained that there are more details in Area coordinators report but the main headlines this time is that there was no MRSA found at all within Quarter 3 of this year. This is due to the significant reduction in bacteria in the hospital thanks to the promotion of hand washing and actively challenging people who do not do so.

There is to be a new opening of the Maternity Unit by the Countess of Wessex on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March, this unit has been refurbished and has a new scanner to reduce waiting times.

Unfortunately, car parking charges have gone up to £2.50 however there are more free spaces for the 20 minutes free parking. This charge is one of the lowest in the country and is unfortunate but the costs of maintaining the car park have increased.

**Member of the public:** Glad to see visiting time was stopped to allow for the outbreak of swine-flu over the festive period, but do they have more disabled car parking spaces or better patrols of these areas as people are parking there without a blue badge and nothing is done?

**Pat Higgins:** Yes, the caretakers have been asked to be vigilant over this issue however sometimes they do not spot it as it is only a small part of their job but it has been raised.

### **Merseyside Police**

Inspector Peter Kolokotroni showed this quarter's newsletter to the forum showing all the year to date figures of crime for this area. All crimes are down this quarter with a particular reduction in vehicle crime by 35. However, burglary has gone from 69 to 78 which is due to two spikes over the summer one in the Sandbourne area, and one in Wallasey Village where 5 arrests were made with 2 charges.

The police are continuing to work with partners over many initiatives such as, Environmental Walks, knocking on doors to gather information about crime in the area and also Youth Working through the school holidays. There are two chances to come and Have Your Say over the next few weeks the meetings are: 17<sup>th</sup> February at Yew Tree for the Leasowe wards and the 24<sup>th</sup> February at Maryland Community Centre for the Saughall Massie wards.

If you have any information to pass on please call the local number of 709 6010 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

### **Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service**

Ian Maxwell explained that pages 13-14 in the area coordinators report have a full report from MFRS. As part of the Bonfire Strategy MFRS removed over 250 tonnes of rubbish which could have been used for illegal bonfires; this is extremely good and thank you to everyone who provided information in this search.

Ian also explained that some of the diversionary activities done by MFRS include a cadet scheme which helps young people aged 17-18 who have maybe had some problems with crime or in the past. This is based at Wallasey Fire Station.

**Anne Gibbons:** How do you select these youth cadets as people in the Moreton area may not be able to access it if it is based in Wallasey?

**Ian Maxwell:** They are a mixture of youths involved in the scheme, this round is just a pilot and is being led by Mike Ratty however it is being developed and we are looking to expand the scheme through different areas and involve more people.

MFRS are still doing the Home Fire Safety checks and if anyone would like one please call 08007315958 for free.

### **Older Peoples Parliament**

Terry Sullivan from the Older People's Parliament advised the forum to read pages 15-19 of the area forum pack for full details of the report.

Currently the OPP is seeking funding to set up a project working with all the GP practices in Wirral to identify people who are looking after people (usually family members) with a progressive condition to enable them to access help and support.

**Cllr McArdle:** I support this project and would like to get involved as we need to take the pressure of older people looking after their friends and family. I think a first point of call to help with this project is NHS Wirral as they have a Carer's Strategy.

**Terry Sullivan:** Thank you. This is a great suggestion and contact details with Martin McEwan of NHS Wirral have been exchanged.

Also Terry explained that's some complaints had come through about the wind at the bus shelter in Arrowe Park as it is too open and some older people find it difficult to shelter there.

**Chair:** please speak to me about this and I will contact Neil Scales from Merseytravel about this issue.

**8 DATE OF FUTURE MEETING:**

The chair closed the meeting and announced the next meeting would take place on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2011, Venue TBC.