

# AREA FORUM (WEST WIRRAL)

Wednesday, 9 February 2011

Present:

Councillor G Ellis (Chair)

In attendance:

Councillors D Elderton  
J Hale  
E Boulton

Community Representatives Gary Evans, Cynthia Radford

Lead Officer Kevin Adderley (Director of Corporate Services)

Area Service Co-ordinator Tracey Smith

Community Safety Mike Collins

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Glen Coleman

NHS Wirral Sue Green

Merseyside Fire Service Myles Platt

Merseyside Police Inspector Mike Blease

Older People's Parliament Sandra Wall

Council Officers David Green (Director of Technical Services), Michelle Gray (Community Engagement), John MyCock (WPH) Claire Moore (WPH), Deborah Morgan (Census), Peter Cummings (United Utilities)

Apologies Councillors Jeff Green, Geoffrey Watt

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

- Minutes are a summary of the meeting, issues raised with individual officers after the main meeting are actioned separately.

The Chair, Councillor Gerry Ellis, welcomed forum members and 60 members of the public to the West Wirral Area Forum meeting being held at Melrose Hall, Hoylake.

He explained to forum and members of the public that they were welcome to raise questions throughout the meeting.

Changes have been made to structure of agenda from previous meeting, partner updates earlier on agenda, fewer items on agenda and time dedicated to public question time.

**Amendments:**

- Item 4 in minutes title should read: Regeneration of West Kirby
- Item 6 in minutes last paragraph should read Rubbish and not rubbles
- Item 6 further information on Bulky Bobs: This is a social enterprise which specialises in working in partnership with local authorities throughout the UK, they operate contracts to collect, reuse, refurbish and recycle bulky waste, primarily furniture and white goods.

**Life Boat Museum:** Chair Councillor Gerry Ellis welcomed John Parr to give an update on the success story for the “Life Boat Museum”

John Parr explained the old life boat station was bought by Tony Crane who is local to the area and committed to the development of the station. It will be a museum and will have a heritage them. It will have charitable status and be run as a non for profit organisation, with a long term lease. This is a success story for the area.

John thanked those who have been involved in the process, Peel Holdings did listen and took on board the tremendous support for this development and for the station to be run locally, thanks to Councillors John Hale and Gerry Ellis for their commitment and extended thanks to John Whittaker and his staff. John also informed the forum that there will be a meeting taking place on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2011, and was open to anyone to attend.

**Welcome:** Chair Councillor Gerry Ellis welcomed Kevin Adderley Interim Director of Corporate Services to his 1<sup>st</sup> meeting as lead officer and also welcomes Inspector Mike Blease from Merseyside Police.

2 **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING INCLUDING AREA CO-ORDINATORS REPORT:**

Tracey Smith, presented her report containing the minutes from the previous meeting held in October 2010 included was local updates from our partners.

**Matters arising:**

- Minutes to record a Question/Answer style format and to include any action points.

**Grit Bins:** Tracey Smith also informed the area forum that funding of £5,000 is available for additional grit bins in the local area for 2011/2012, anyone can make a suggestion using the grit bin suggestion cards that were made available at the meeting.

**Costal Town Funding:** In March 2010 the previous Government launched its latest strategy for seaside towns – Strategy for Seaside Success: Securing the future of

seaside economies. To coincide with this announcement Wirral along with 24 other local authorities in England was awarded a grant of £200,000 from the Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG). The allocation in the form of a revenue grant is designed to support projects that will drive regeneration and economic development in the seaside towns of New Brighton, Hoylake and West Kirby.

Cabinet have agreed that Wirral's allocation be split equally between New Brighton (£100,000) and Hoylake/West Kirby (£100,000) and that the respective Area Forum's be given responsibility in evaluating and determining which proposals be supported.

Recommendations from each Area Forum will then be presented to a future Cabinet for a decision. The application process was launched on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011 and the closing date for applications is 12 noon on Friday 25 February 2011. Applications that meet the criteria for funding will be assessed through a process of participatory budgeting at two "Special" Area Forums

- **14<sup>th</sup> March 2011, at Melrose Hall, Melrose Avenue, Hoylake, CH47 3BU for Hoylake & West Kirby 7.00 - 9.00pm**

If you are a resident in either of these areas and would like to have a say on how this funding is spent, you can attend on the evening and vote on which projects receive funding in your area. If you have any questions about getting involved please call Tracey Smith on 0151 691 8026 or email [traceysmith@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:traceysmith@wirral.gov.uk) or [engage@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:engage@wirral.gov.uk)

**United Utilities:** Councillor Gerry Ellis welcomed Peter Cummings from United Utilities to the area forum as there is a lot of work going on in the local area and Gerry felt that it was important for an update. Peter gave out information cards detailing the programme of works for the areas of Hoylake, Moreton & Caldy. Website also gives up to date information, as is updated daily. Peter said there will be full consultation with residents, including letters, leaflets drops, adverts in paper etc.

David Green Director of Technical Services informed the forum that United Utilities have to abide by law to liaise with Wirral Council re: any programme of works, affected traffic flow etc. Elected members will be advised of any disruption to traffic, any planning and timing of events. Council are responsible for carrying out inspection and assessing the quality of work, condition of roads and pavements etc. David Green advised anyone who had an issue or query to ring Streetscene on 0151 606 2004, or can email at [Streetscene@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:Streetscene@wirral.gov.uk)

- A comment was made if in the future a more co-ordinated approach can be taken to include other agencies that need to "dig up" roads/pavements (i.e. Gas, Electric). David Green advised the forum that we do try to co-ordinate programme of works, however sometimes it is not practical at that time. Agencies do endeavour to have minimum disruption to the work they need to carry out.

### 3 **REPORT FROM PARTNER ORGANISATIONS:**

#### **NHS Wirral – Glen Coleman**

- full update for the NHS is in the area co-ordinators page 12

NHS Wirral has received approval from the Department of Health for our provider arm to become a community trust. The new Trust will be from April 2011. Approximately 1400 staff will transfer to the new organisation. Under the Coalition Government's proposals, groups of GPs (consortia) will come together to commission most health services for their populations, taking over this responsibility from Primary Care Trusts (i.e. NHS Wirral). Wirral will have 3 GP Consortia, representing over 57 practices, will be "pathfinder consortia", working under the auspices of the PCT until they take over the reigns fully in 2013. NHS Wirral and Wirral Council are working closely together on the transition to the new arrangements.

Q: West Kirby Concourse, does not seem "fit for purpose" for a medical building?

A: Looking for a suitable site, funding is not the issue, as there is money set aside for the funding of this project.

Q: A plot of land had been identified opposite the Concourse, where are we up to with this?

A: The land belongs to Wirral Partnership Homes and not the Council, this piece of land may not be big enough as space is needed to be considered for car parking.

Q: Sandstone Medical centre has and offers an excellent service why can't we have one similar to this?

A: It is an excellent service, however it is not efficient we want to aim for one reception service, one administration service, under one roof. Streamlining services & improving communication.

#### **Wirral University Teaching Hospital Trust – Sue Green**

- full update for the Trust is in the area co-ordinators pages 23 - 26

Sue Green highlighted some key changes to the NHS Foundation Trust, improving the way it delivers services, working with key partners. From a patients point of view they should not see major changes to services.

The Trust has a board of Directors which is made up of directors and non-directives membership. With effect from January this year the Trust welcomes Dr Jean Quinn to the board. In addition the Trust has an Assembly of Governors with a membership of 37 governors representing our public, stakeholders and staff. The next meeting is scheduled for the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011 to be held at the Arrowe Park Site and will be looking at plans for "Treating you Well into the Future", the meeting is an open meeting for all to attend.

Sue Green wanted to thank residents for their commitment and support of the Christmas period due to there being a restriction on visitors to hospitals. The disruption was kept to a minimum.

Q: Councillor Eddie Boulton raised concerns over the administration services at the hospitals especially around correspondence, he provided examples of his experience in a number of hospitals and particularly in relation to information.

A: The Trust has made a major investment into a new clinical information system and has already started to see improvement. Further improvements will be

made over the next 12 months, including improvements in administration services (patient letters, quality and accuracy of correspondence).

### **Merseyside Police – Mike Blease**

- Newsletter was available at the area forum

Mike Blease introduced himself and one of his targets is to improve relationships within the community. Mike informed the forum that he is looking to re-vamp the “Have You say” events which are due to take place on:

- **15<sup>th</sup> February 2011 at 2.00pm – West Kirby Concourse**
- **16<sup>th</sup> February 2011 at 2.00pm – Hoylake Police Station**

Everyone welcome to attend these meetings. Mike also gave some updated information:

- Burglaries are low in this area
- UPVC doors are easy targets, advised residents to ensure they lock the door from the inside and not to have key in the door but somewhere accessible for home owners to get out of the house safely

Q: Resident wanted to inform the forum that Community Police Officers on the streets, it is very re-assuring, and had a huge impact on the community of the visible presence and makes people feel safe?

A: Mike Blease & Chair thank residents for the positive feedback

Q: Is there going to be any cuts to PCSO?

A: PCSO's those that were on a temporary contract have been made permanent after 4 years, Government have set money aside for the funding of these officers and we will not be losing any of our neighbourhood policing, cuts like all leading bodies have to be met and the police will be looking at back office services, the administration services are being reviewed. Police are not recruiting and front line services are staying as they are.

- PCSO's – reduce their work they spend on administration and have them on the beat more, the use of blackberry's is a way forward and less paperwork.

### **Community Safety – Mike Collins**

- full update for community safety is in the area co-ordinators pages 9 - 12

Community Safety Team work closely with other partners such as: Police & Fire, all officers are equipped to deal with small fires, they are the leading body for addressing dog fouling and have a team appointed to this, officers were recruited from the “Future Jobs Fund” and are funded until September 2011.

Over 60,000 bags issued to dog owners, huge campaign to launch this, now the future programme of works is looking at enforcement in the area.

If you see these officers in your area and have issues you can approach them and will be happy to help or advise.

### **Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service – Myles Platt**

- full update for fire service is in the area co-ordinators pages 13 - 14

Myles Platt informed the area forum of the fire service spending review and this is detailed on page 13 of report. Wirral will not see major changes in deduction over the next 3 years, after this time it may be different. One of the key roles for the fire service is joining up and working with other partner organisations to address the prevention agenda and delivering the emergency response.

Q: Smoke Alarm randomly going off, why does this happen?

A: maybe faulty, contact fire service and will be more happy to come out and replace it.

An incident had taken place in the West Kirby area where a gentleman lost his life due to a fire, his wife was saved. Myles emphasised the importance of having smoke alarms and more importantly have a fire escape route of your own for yourself and family members.

Forum members/residents wanted to thank the fire service for their hard-work and quick response to this incident. Since this incident fire officers went into the area visited more than 120 homes providing safety advice to vulnerable and isolated residents anyone wanting advice or support to see Myles at end of meeting.

#### **Older People's Parliament – Sandra Wall**

- full update for the OPP is in the area co-ordinators pages 15 - 19

Sandra gave an update from her report that is detailed in the papers, Sandra wanted to promote an event that was taking place:

Floral Pavilion Conference Centre for two full days 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> May 2011 to showcase what Wirral has to offer its older population. There will be stalls displaying services available from health, the local authority, and a range of voluntary and independent groups. There will be a many leisure activities and special interest clubs, advertising their programmes. There will be entertainment by musicians and others throughout both days. There will be a series of workshops in one of the lecture rooms on a variety of topics. We are asking all participating organisations to contribute as much as they can to the funding of the event, the key costs of which are being met by Wirral University Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust.

## **4 CENSUS 2011:**

### **Census Area Manager - Deborah Morgan**

Gave an update on the importance of the census for the Wirral. The census is a snapshot of the whole population and gathers data on how many people live here, how we live our lives, how many children we have, if we have a car etc, it also collects data about what services we need in our area, like schools, hospitals, houses, roads & transport to name just a few. Census Day is scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> March 2011. Wirral's Census 10 years ago, had a really good return however it was recorded that about 6% did not return forms and this cost around £13 million in funding for Wirral.

#### **Key Points:**

- Personal information will not be shared with any other government department, third party or anyone.

- Protected by law for 100 years
- Compulsory – if you don't take part, you could be fined up to £1,000
- Posted out in early March to each household
- Return via royal mail using pre-paid envelope or
- Complete on-line [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk)

**Information:**

- Helpline 0300 0201 101/Text Relay 18001 0300 0201 160
- Individual Appointment – contact Helpline
- Local Charities, Support and Information Services
- Local Drop-in sessions
- Translation services available

**5 WIRRAL'S FUTURE**

Kevin Adderley updated the forum on outcome of the Consultation exercise "Wirral' Future- Be a part of it". He recapped on the Four Task Forces and outlined the engagement activities undertaken to consult with the public and businesses. He stated that 5,659 responses had been returned, which was the largest number of responses of any similar consultation exercise, and all responses fed into a report to Cabinet on December 9th 2010. The vast majority of comments and suggestions from the four Task Forces were agreed by residents. The Task Forces met again after the consultation had closed to consider all responses. They then made recommendations to Cabinet that were endorsed at the meeting on December 9th and fed in to the budget and priority proposals for 2011/12.

Q: What Percentage of Wirral residents returned completed forms?

A: 40,000 questionnaires were distributed, and 5,659 were returned, giving a response rate of 14% - this is a significantly higher response rate than we could have expected by mailing a questionnaire to every resident, and also cost a lot less.

Q: How much was spent on the consultation, including staff time

A: All staff who engaged with residents during the consultation process had engagement as their usual duty and therefore, they were carrying out usual engagement activities. The cost of preparing the questionnaires and all promotion of the exercise was £15,000

Tracey explained it was one of the biggest consultation exercises we have been involved in, delivered over 120 events, over 10, 000 people completed forms, staff were out about during the 6/7 weeks consultation period and about 30 per day were out promoting and advising on the questionnaire.

Kevin also explained it is a good way forward, consultation hasn't ended and was one of the highest response in England, consultation is vital. All information regarding the consultation is on our website [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

Q: Can residents have an input into future questionnaires?

A: This was the first of what are planned to be continuous consultation exercises. It has to be pointed out that residents were involved in designing questions as the vast majority of Task Force members were Wirral residents. Obviously, a balance needs to be drawn between having enough members with an interest and expertise and making the Task Force manageable. Lessons learnt and future improvement exercise is being undertaken to determine how consultation, including the design of the questions can be taken forward.

Q: Form was difficult to complete?

A: Guidance was given out on the sessions and staff were trained in explaining the process for completion of the questionnaires.

Q: Concerns over completed forms, some residents did not tick the box, was answered then missed out and not recorded.

A: All information was recorded and all data from the free text boxes was recorded this is all detailed in a full report (2 x folders and these are available at all libraries and One Stop Shops)

## 6 WIRRAL PARTNERSHIP HOMES:

Claire Moore and John Mycock attended the area forum to answer any issues or concerns residents have with regard to housing in the local area.

### Key points

- Bridge Court – currently empty does not meet living standards
- Need appropriate housing for young people
- Hoose Court – needs to be re-developed
- Shortage of properties in general
- Empty properties could take up to 3 to 4 years to develop
- Yeoman Cottages – remote area behind industrial estate, are being updated and brought up to standard

## 7 PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE (PACSPE):

David Green updated the forum on the most recent development relating to the Parks and Countryside Procurement Exercise (PACSPE). This exercise will see key parts of the overall service "externalised" with a view to improving the service and also reducing the overall cost. This new arrangement will be in place by January 2012 and work is underway preparing the tender timetable.

### The series contained within the new contract includes;

Parks and Countryside Services, Management of Golf Courses and Crematoriums Highway verges and trees, Public open space and account for approximately £8m from the overall budget of £13m.

Consultation is key to understanding the views of the public and service users and the second round of public meetings have been arranged they are;

All sessions to be held at Wallasey Town Hall:

- |                   |                  |                       |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| • 3rd March 2011  | Committee Room 1 | Parks and Open spaces |
| • 8th March 2011  | Committee Room 3 | Bereavement           |
| • 5th March 2011  | Committee Room 3 | Golf                  |
| • 23rd March 2011 | Committee Room 1 | Sport and recreation  |

Council are overseeing the process and specialist consultants are also being used to provide advice.

In addition to this the services being retained by the Council are also being reviewed and a number of key aspects are being actioned:

1. Use of Street-Scene Call Centre for all enquiries (606 2004).
2. Introduction of an electronic payments system.
3. £4m Capital investment programme over 3 years to improve facilities within Parks and Countryside.

**Key Points:**

- Contract to go out to an external organisation
- Tenders to be in by Mid April 2011
- Decisions made by June 2011
- Award to a single contractor by early September 2011
- New contractor in place by Christmas 2011
- Series of workshops with members and staff and those who are interested in the following subject areas:
  - sports/clubs
  - golfing
  - bereavement services
  - parks & countryside

**8 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:**

**Wirral Way:**

Q: Concerns raised over the trees along the Wirral Way Corridor, trees being cut down which is affecting the wildlife in that area.

A: This issue has been addressed and is currently under review. David Green offered to speak to those individuals at the end of the meeting to arrange an appointment.

**Comment:** Hoylake Beach is a great asset to the Wirral, visitors and local residents. The Spartina grass that was growing on the beach was affecting the beach area. This has been removed and is a huge improvement

- **Thank you to Streetscene & Elected Members for their commitment to this.**

**PACSPE:**

Q: How did you come to decide on a 10 year contract for the new contract?

A: Had discussions within this industry, and this is standard this helps the new contract develop and improve services and helps with purchasing and using

equipment etc (example Biffa is 14years clause in place after 7 years). A performance management framework will also be in place.

**Area Forums:**

Q: What is the future of the area forums?

A: Area Forums will still have funding for voluntary and community groups, they will also have funding available to help improve the local area. The format of area forums is currently under review due to the Localism agenda, a report will go to Cabinet later on in the year.

**9 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS:**

- Next area forum is scheduled for:

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011 in West Kirby Area**