

# AREA FORUM (LEASOWE, MORETON AND SAUGHALL MASSIE)

Monday, 4 October 2010

Present:	RL Abbey (Chair) S Mountney
Councillors	RL Abbey C Blakeley S Williams A McArdle
Community Representatives	Jane McLean
Lead Officer	Carolyn Curr (Head of Corporate Policy)
Streetscene Manager	Chris Jones
Merseyside Police	Inspector Peter Kolokotroni
Community Safety	Steve Preston
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	Ian Maxwell
NHS Wirral	Martin McEwen
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Pat Higgins
Council Officers	Sarah Risnes
Apologies:	Councillor Ian Lewis Tracey Smith (Community Engagement)

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

Councillor Ron Abbey opened the meeting and welcomed 15 members of the public to the meeting. All area forum members introduced themselves and apologies were given for Councillor Ian Lewis and Area Coordinator Tracey Smith.

## 2 **AREA CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT: INCLUDING MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

Carolyn Curr informed the forum that the area coordinator's report included the minutes of the last meeting and partner updates. She asked if there were any proposed amendments or matters arising. Cllr Blakely raised the issue that a few more questions were asked of United Utilities at the last meeting than were recorded and that this should be noted by the forum.

Carolyn also updated the forum on the results of the You Decide process in which the area forum took part at the last meeting. Around 20-30 responses were received and the top 3 priorities were – Community Sports Day, Sports Development Officer and Activities and Opportunities for Young People. Each ward will have one of these choices each.

Minute Resolution: That the area coordinator be thanked for her report and the minutes of the last meeting are accepted as a true record of the meeting.

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

Carolyn Curr gave a presentation to the forum on Wirral Council's new consultation process Wirral's Future: Be a part of it! Copies of the questionnaire were available to forum members on their chairs and they were also invited to take part by filling them out and returning them by post or that the questionnaire could also be filled in online.

Carolyn explained that this consultation is seeking the views of all Wirral residents, businesses and community groups regarding the council's future budget priorities. Wirral council are actively engaging with the community by visiting shopping areas, community centres and community groups.

Member of the public: I visited the supermarket and couldn't access the questionnaire as the person on the desk was talking to someone else. I don't think it will change anything as the area forums are always the same, I am disheartened at the area forums as I have been coming for years and see no improvement, and people here at these forums have heard nothing about this consultation.

Cllr Blakeley: The council have been promoting the area forums, and we would love to see more people attending but unfortunately we cannot force people to come along. Good things do happen at the area forums such as 'You Decide' residents have chosen positive community activities for their area. With regards to the Wirral's Future consultation, the questionnaire has been promoted online, in the local press and at the road shows but once again we can't force people to engage with this process.

Jane McLear: The consultation exercise hasn't reached Leasowe community centre yet as they have recently had a joint management committee and there was no mention of this at all, it is really important that it reaches the community centre.

Cllr Blakely: Leasowe community centre is on the schedule for the road shows to attend, this will be double checked. If anyone else knows of any other community centres or groups who haven't yet been notified of this process we can check the schedule and inform people of the dates or add them to the schedule.

A representative from Sandbrook community centre then said that they too had not heard of this process.

Member of the public: I thought this was a supermarket promotion? I haven't seen any in the supermarkets.

Cllr Blakeley: Unfortunately some of the supermarkets can only let the stands be situated in one place and quite often these areas are not as visible as we would like. Up to now around 4,000 questionnaires have been given out which is really good for the half way stage of the process.

Minute resolution: Carolyn Curr to check if both Leasowe and Sandbrook community centres are on the schedule for the Wirral's Future consultation.

#### 4 FUNDS FOR YOU - UPDATE

The Chair read out a list of those projects/ groups which have been successful in this round of 'You Decide' funding. The successful applicants are as follows:

West Wirral boys club  
Moreton Community Lights association  
The Yew tree Online Centre  
Leasowe Youth Football Club  
Moreton Community Centre  
Men's Keep Fit & Health  
Leasowe Autumn Club  
Leasowe Adventure Playground  
Leasowe Art Club  
Towns Women's Guilds  
Wirral Festival of Music, Speech & Drama  
Breath Easy Wirral  
St Vincent de Paul Society  
New Brighton Junior Rigby  
Wallasey Amateur Boxing Club  
Friends of Birkenhead Council Kennels

Jane McLearn thanked the forum for supporting the following groups: Leasowe Art Club, Men's Keep Fit & Health, Leasowe Autumn Club, Leasowe Youth Football and Leasowe Adventure Playground.

Eileen Jones expressed her unhappiness with the forums decision not to support the application from the Moreton Umbrella Group to refurbish Eastway community centre. This is a building which supports the elderly; they have now been left with no heating, no support and no help after being promised funding.

The Chair explained that as part of the Funds For You process this application must not have met the criteria set. Whoever promised this money to the group should not have done so and that he would speak to Eileen separately to try and get a full explanation for these events.

Eileen explained that she has been passed around from different funding streams in the council and no-one will take responsibility for the repairs which need doing.

Cllr Blakeley stated that the building in question was a council asset and this should be taken up with Ian Brand who is the head of Asset Management.

Minute Resolution: The Chair will take this up with Ian Brand and contact Eileen with an answer.

## 5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following questions/issues were raised:

Member of the public: Are the flats in Sandbrook which house around 150 residents being knocked down.

Chair: Wirral Partnership Homes have done a review of the flats and the results show that they are no longer providing value for money. They are in a huge state of disrepair which would cost around £74 million to make them meet the decent homes standard; this is not feasible as people do not want to live in them so there is no demand for them to be refurbished. The blocks of flats will be demolished over a 3 year period and any people who will be affected will receive help with relocation to another home.

Member of the public: What were the results of the questionnaire that Streetscene designed as part of the Integrated Transport Model?

Carolyn Curr: The following things were chosen by the forum out of the Integrated Transport Block funding:

Bollards

Vehicle Activated signs

Cycle stands

Cross-over points

Grit Bins

It is still to be confirmed where these road safety measures will be located but this will be agreed after a survey has been conducted by Streetscene and results will be shared with the forum.

Also, please if anyone has any suggestions for where the grit bins should be placed within the area forum areas please send them through to us.

Member of the public: The new Tesco's in Moreton cross didn't get refused on safety grounds as I was advised it would if people objected on these grounds. This area is too busy already without adding to the problem and putting the car parks right next to a zebra crossing, it will become dangerous for both drivers and pedestrians.

Chair: Streetscene had to conduct a traffic survey as part of the planning application, and were the plans were approved as they were satisfied it met the criteria in the traffic survey.

Cllr Blakeley stated that members of the panel were invited to visit the site as part of this process.

Cllr Mountney stated that it was never the case that the planning application would be approved due to the financial gains of the site and he was at the meeting in which the application was approved as it met the survey criteria.

Cllr Blakeley stated that he advised anyone who had objections to the site to object on the grounds of road safety as the previous objection on the grounds of adverse effects to local businesses would not be accepted by the planning committee.

Chair: The planning committee have acted upon the law within they have to make decisions and they were satisfied that it met all the criteria and was approved by 8 votes to 4.

Member of public: Will the road at the side of Poundland be used for parking and will this shop go to make room for parking?

Chair: This will become clearer as plans progress at this point it is not known but at the moment plans are based on existing parking at the site.

## 6 PARTNER UPDATES

### **NHS Wirral**

Martin McEwan advised the forum that there is a partner update section from NHS Wirral within the Area forum pack, and members can also visit the website for updates at [www.wirral.nhs.uk](http://www.wirral.nhs.uk)

There were no questions for NHS Wirral.

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

Pat Higgins advised the forum that there is a partner update section from the Hospital Trust in the Area forum pack.

Recent highlights include the new investment for a MRI scanner which is now up and running, this will help to reduce waiting times.

MRSA cases have reduced with only 4 cases recently this is due to the hard work of staff promoting the continued use of antibacterial handwashes.

There is a new computer system up and running within the Accident and Emergency service this helps the hospital share information with GPs and other hospitals to ensure accurate and up to date patient information.

Member of the public: If the patient has a large medical history file will the medical staff still have the time to read through all the information, if not it is still the same as reading through a paper file.

Pat Higgins: The system in A+E will also link to other hospital systems to gather information and it will be easy to access the relevant information quickly.

Member of the public: I had an experience where I had to wait 3hrs because there was no communication between departments who had been dealing with my condition.

Pat Higgins: The new system will help with the ability to share information between departments and should enable patients to be fast tracked quickly to a doctor.

The chair advised the forum that if residents do not 'Opt Out' of the information sharing, then information from the patients GP would automatically be shared.

Cllr Blakeley: To 'opt out' of the information sharing you have to apply for a form, I waited 3 months for this to arrive this is completely unprofessional and patients should be given the choice to 'opt in' not out. This is NHS Wirral's way of ensuring people do not know that they have to opt out, and NHS Wirral should not assume that everybody want to be in to start with.

Pat Higgins replied that some of the benefits of the system are that if a patient has an accident the hospital will know what medication the patient is on so they can treat the patient accordingly.

Member of public: The smoking outside the hospital is completely unacceptable.

Cllr Mountney also agreed with this statement and asked what action NHS Wirral was taking to rectify the situation?

Pat Higgins: This is correct and the hospital is working hard to stop this, unfortunately not all people adhere to it and it is a hard issue to stop. There is such a high turn over of patients at A+E that it is hard to police and is particularly bad at visiting times. There are security officers at the hospital but this is only one of many duties they have. The current focus is to stop the smoking outside of the maternity unit.

Jane McLearn suggested there should be an area away from the entrance where smokers can go, like the smoking shelters at other buildings and they should be away from where non-smokers can see.

Chair: The whole site is a non-smoking site which is obviously not being adhered to, can NHS Wirral take this issue back and maybe investigate how other hospitals deal with this problem.

Hazel Roberts: As the governor at the hospital trust she will take every comment back to the committee for patients and bring a response back to the forum.

Minute resolution: NHS Wirral to investigate what other hospitals do to enforce no smoking on the site.

### **Merseyside Police**

Inspector Peter Kolokotroni advised the forum that there was a partner update leaflet on the chair for members to read, and also a flyer with the details of the next Have Your Say meetings which are for residents to decide which issues the Neighbourhood policing team will deal with over the coming month.

All police targets within the neighbourhood are on track except burglary which is off target by 2. This is due to a spate of incidents at the blocks of flats within Sandbrook estate. This is nothing to worry about the flats were targeted as they were unoccupied and 6 people have been arrested and charged.

Mischief night is fast approaching and the police will be working hard with partners to ensure any illegal fires or fireworks are stopped. Operation banger has seen letters to schools shops and other areas to help them deter youths from buying eggs flour etc around this time. There will be extra police to support the neighbourhood police and target individual hotspots.

Inspector Kolokotroni urged the public to continue providing information to him and his team as they do use it, it is extremely useful and they have even issued several warrants due to information from the public.

Member of the public: I have previously reported that there are a number of people repeatedly causing trouble in the bus shelter on Pasture Avenue as they are drunk. It is extremely intimidating to walk past this area.

Inspector Kolokotroni: I have seen these people and moved them on from the area, 1 of the people has since died and the others have been warned they will be arrested if they continue to loiter in this area.

Member of public: The Sandbrook community centre will be undergoing refurbishment early next year so there could be possible disruption in the area, if kids try and mess with the scaffolding etc.

Chair: Sandbrook community centre should inform Wirral Partnership Homes who should make sure the area is secure whilst the refurbishments take place. Please ensure the dates are passed through to the neighbourhood police team who can ensure that patrols of the area are planned in advance.

Inspector Kolokotroni also advised the forum that the trial period of opening Moreton Police station on a Saturday was now postponed and they would not continue this service as the demand was so low. Unfortunately, one weekend there was only 2 callers which does not justify removing a police officer off the streets to man the office. People who need to contact the police can call 0151 709 6010 24hrs if the issue is not an emergency.

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

Ian Maxwell advised the forum that there was a partner update leaflet from MFRS within the Area forum packs.

Updates include the Fire service planning to knock on as many doors as possible within the area to provide information on accidental dwelling fires. They are specifically targeting work on reducing the number of kitchen fires. If anyone has any concerns please contact the Fire Service on 0800 731 5958 which is the non-emergency number.

Also, the Fire service is implementing the Bonfire Strategy this year with vans collecting waste materials which kids may use to start bonfires. If you see anything which gets missed please ring the non-emergency number.

### **Older Peoples Parliament**

Margaret Testo, Older People's Parliament representative advised the forum to read pages 28-29 of the area forum pack, and if they would like to join please ring up. All issues can be dealt with such as offering support for grandparents looking after grandchildren full time or being a carer.

**7 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next area forum meeting will be held on 2nd February 2011.

Cllr Blakeley wished forum members a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.