

AREA FORUM (BIRKENHEAD & TRANMERE AND ROCK FERRY)

Tuesday, 21 June 2011

Present:

Councillor P Davies (Chair)

In attendance:

Councillors B Kenny
C Meaden
WJ Davies
J Stapleton

Leader of the Council: Steve Foulkes

Community Representatives: Peter Exley, Hazel Roberts

Lead Officer: David Ball

Area Service Co-ordinator: Andy Brannan

GP Consortium John Oakes

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Pat Higgins

Merseyside Police: Greg Hawswell

Merseyside Fire and Rescue service: Craig Whitfield

Streetscene Manager: Garry Cummings

Community Safety: Ian Lowrie, Steve Preston

Council Officers: Kevin MacCallum (Marketing)

1 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES:**

The Chair, Councillor J Stapleton welcomed the Forum members and 23 members of the public to the Birkenhead, Tranmere & Rock Ferry Area Forum meeting held at Rock Ferry Community Centre.

Apologies:

Councillor M McLoughlin because of Mayoral duties & Myles Platt – Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

2 **MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING: (PREVIOUS MEETING - FEBRUARY 2011), INCLUDING AREA CO-ORDINATORS REPORT:**

Andy Brannan informed the meeting that the updates from the previous minutes were on Page 9 of the briefing pack.

He also informed the meeting that suggestions for the Structural Maintenance Programme (road and pavement repairs) are being sought. Forms are available to complete.

Any questions relating to the minutes can be discussed with Andy Brannan at the end of the meeting.

3 **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS:**

Kevin McCallum delivered a power point presentation to the meeting to explain how the Neighbourhood Plan will go ahead.

The consultation process will be taking place across the borough at various locations and events. (Shops, summer fairs etc) If anyone knows of any events taking place and would like the team to come along, then contact the team and it will be arranged.

Consultation Process	July – September 2011
Analyse	September
Results	October
Findings	December

The findings will be presented to Cabinet in December.

- Q. Is this the same as the Localism Bill which includes a Neighbourhood Plan?
A. No, it is not the same, but similar – the wider issue is where the resources of Wirral Council go.

David Ball, Lead Officer explained to the meeting what the Localism Bill is all about.

- Q. Could you give examples of where the money is being put in from the Neighbourhood Plan?
A. Over the past 10 years of Area Forums, approx £1.4m has gone into the Community from the Area Forum – There have been 100's of projects that have benefited from the money. Andy Brannan can provide a list of the projects.
- Q. Could you elaborate on the empty shop fund, as there are quite a few empty shops in this area.
A. There is £17,500 funding per Area Forum Area. It is to assist local groups/voluntary with start up costs, for example, maintenance. Also to help to get business's back into the area.
Details of the objectives to get the funding will be made available shortly.

The energy efficiency scheme funding details will be published from 1st July 2011.

- Q. It has been reported to Street Scene in December that workmen had put cement down the drain in Hollybank Road. No action has been taken and the drain now floods.
- A. Give the details to Andy Brannan and he will speak to Street Scene.
- Q. There has been an exercise like this approximately 4 years ago, and nothing was improved then.
- A. The Neighbourhood Plan will be used to develop the budgets for next year.
- Q. The £17,500 Empty Shop Fund doesn't seem very much for this large area.
- A. Unfortunately, that is the budget and the Council will try and make it work.
- Q. What is the difference between the Neighbourhood Plan in the Localism Bill and the Council Neighbourhood Plan?
- A. The Neighbourhood Plan is to see how services are to be delivered and enable the Council to set budgets for next year.

Steve Foulkes, Leader of the Council introduced himself to the meeting, and expressed that he is introducing the Neighbourhood Plan to make Wirral a better place to live in. He wants the Council and Communities to work together,

Each area has different needs, he wants to revitalise the Area Forums and to help guide Wirral Council to distribute money into the communities.

4 **WIRRAL GP CONSORTIA'S QUESTION AND ANSWERS:**

Dr John Oates gave a brief presentation on the new GP Consortium plans.

The plans are on pause at the moment, so it is still uncertain as to when the Bill may change when it goes to Parliament.

He explained that as a GP, this new plan will

- Help to navigate patients on how the system works and to listen to the patients views
- Try to commission services locally
- Promote integrated care

- Q. There are concerns now that Doctors will be in charge of budgets, which will take them away from their role as a Doctor.
- A. The Doctors will have the responsibility for the budgets, but not a cheque book. You will still be able to see your own Doctor. There will only be a small number of doctors who will be away from the practice for approx 1 – 1½ days, a replacement GP will be put in their place for those days.
- Q. The NHS computer system doesn't seem to be very good. It might be a good idea to use your own computer for the practices.
- A. There is a national plan for all NHS service to be linked, but this is not in place as yet. Wirral is a main leader in the use of IT services for discharge information, which is then sent through electronically to practices. This information is available usually the next day.
- Q. What do the Consortium discuss at their meetings every 4 months? Will the system change and are you for this change?
- A. We are in the transition period, so not much change at the moment.

There will be GP's on the board. GP's are on it to make a better decision for patients rather than the previous advisors on the board. GP's will be the majority. Patients will be able to have the same service in the surgery, rather than having to travel to the hospital. (blood tests)

Councillor Phil Davies raised the following points of concern:

- Is it a good idea to move the budgets to the GP's, as they have enough to do – will they be capable?
 - The system in Wirral worked well, Why Change something that works well. There will be a huge amount of disruption.
 - Some services have been provided by the private sector.
- A. Agreed, the original system did work well. Wirral GP's were happy, but other GP's in other areas were not happy. There were different views in different areas. Some funding has gone into Murrayfield Hospital for many years to assist with the hospital services.

5 PARTNER UPDATES:

Wirral University Teaching Hospital:

Russell Favager reported on the following: There is talk that Specialist Services for Vascular Services may be moving to the Countess of Chester Hospital from Arrowe Park Hospital. It has been recommended nationally to have 2 specialist centres – 1 north and 1 south of the Merseyside/Cheshire area. If it is agreed that the specialist unit goes to the Countess of Chester, it will be Arrowe Park Consultants that will carry out the operations. There is a meeting next week and all questions will be answered by the team and consultants.

- Q. It will be difficult for EP Wirral residents to get to Chester to visit.
A. There will probably only be about 150 of the specialist operations per year. There are schemes available for arranging transport to hospitals.
- Q. If services are going to be moved, will this affect the university teaching?
A. There is no evidence that services will be lost or moving away from Arrowe. A service is being built up in cardiology at Arrowe Park, which will stop patients having to go to Liverpool.
- Q. There are some procedures that take place in various locations (Laird Street, St Caths) and the local GP surgeries will do minor operations. What will happen to Arrowe Park Hospital?
A. The patients will have more choice and Arrowe Park will be doing the more complicated operations.
- Q. Is Clatterbridge being closed and the services going to Arrowe Park Hospital?
A. It is not closing. There has been a review of sites and the feedback received has been overwhelming. All suggestions are being looked at and because so many have been received, a decision will be made by the end of October.

Street Scene:

For a more detailed report see pages 13 -18.

Community Patrol:

For a more detailed report see pages 12 – 13.

In addition to the report the following was reported:

- To prevent burglaries, it is important to keep all windows, doors and patio doors locked.
- It is National Neighbourhood Watch Week. There is a meeting next Thursday. If anyone is interested in starting a Neighbourhood Watch – details can be obtained at the end of the meeting.

Merseyside Police:

- In the area, Police Officers are working on 'Operation Door Handle'. This is a scheme whereby Officers try front doors and if they open, they will speak to the owner about the hazards and the risk of burglaries.
- If you have a UPVC door, ensure that is locked when you are in the house as well as when you are out. Also ensure that the deadbolts are used.
- There have been incidents of ASB, particularly around the parks – Well Lane, Mersey Park and Victoria. The police are working with Wirral Council ASB teams

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service:

For a more detailed report, see pages 18 20.

In addition to the report the following was reported:

- There have been 10,000 Home Fire Safety Checks. The Fire Service will come out to houses and fit smoke alarms and offer safety advice.
- The Fire Service are running a Fire Watch Scheme – looking for potential risks around the area. If anyone knows of or sees any risks, then contact the fire service.

Q. Please don't put your adverts in the local Newspapers for this area, as we don't receive the local paper.

A. Noted.

Q. When will the new fire station be completed?

A. It should be open sometime next year.

Q. What will happen to the Heartbeat Gym when the old fire station closes?

A. Will take details and find out.

Q. There is a container that could potentially leak into the Mersey, if this happens, would the Fire Service deal with this?

A. This will be an issue for Environmental Health. The Fire Service would only deal with any preventative measures. The Fire Service will collate risks in the area and will have set up an action plan in how to deal with any emergencies.

There are plans in place to improve that area, from Rock Ferry, Esplanade, Bromborough and Eastham. Plans are being explored to see if external funding can be found.

Q. This is good news. When will residents get to hear about all this? It gives the community hope and hopefully new investments into the area. A newsletter might be a good idea for the residents.

A. Information is passed onto residents through the Area Forums, twice yearly. Andy Brannan will take details

Q. Who owns Tranmere Oil Jetty?

A. There are issues on who actually does own it. We are trying to work with companies to improve this area.

Q. There are plans for making a car park in Rock Lane East – Information about these plans were put in the Wirral Globe, but unfortunately local residents don't get this local paper delivered.

A. Planning Applications process:

- On Wirral Council Website
- Site Notices
- Letters to adjoining neighbours

Any issues, see Andy Brannan or David Ball.

Q. Peter Exley, Community Representative – He was involved with the committee and was at the St Peters Meeting regarding the proposals for the front. No information has been passed on since this meeting

A. Andy Brannan will check and find out some information.

6 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Date: To be arranged, **Venue:** To be arranged