

AREA FORUM (BIDSTON AND CLAUGHTON)

Wednesday, 8 February 2012

Present:

Councillor	D Roberts (Chair)
Councillors	J Crabtree G Davies S Foulkes
Lead Officer	Mark Smith
Community Engagement Officer	Michelle Gray
Streetscene Manager	Garry Cummings
Merseyside Police	Inspector McGregor
Community Safety	Steve Preston, Jim Thompson
Merseyside Fire and Rescue	Paul Murphy
In Attendance	Ema Boddison (Minute Taker)

1 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES**

- *Minutes are a summary only, issues raised with individual officers after the main meeting are actioned separately with the relevant officer/organisation.*

Apologies were received from and Cllr Harry Smith, Cllr Ann McLachlan due to other council business. Councillor Denise Roberts, welcomed forum members and 40 members of the public to Bidston Avenue Primary School, Tollemache Road, Claughton.

2 **TAM O'SHANTER FARM**

Janet Thorning gave a presentation on the development and future plans of Tam O'Shanter Farm in Bidston. Janet has been involved with Tam O'Shanter since 1985 and is Chair of Friends and the Farm and Secretary to the Trustees. They are also looking for new volunteers. She explained that the farm welcomed comments from visitors, and comments forms were available at the back of the Hall. Large part of the future funding of the farm mainly comes from grants/funding. Visitors also very kindly give donations. "Secret Gardens of Oxton are willing to give the farm some of their proceeds if the farm can sell some tickets on their behalf so anyone interested in attending the Oxton Village event to purchase tickets from the farm. Janet left lots of useful information for anyone to take away.

3 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

Michelle Gray gave a presentation on “your neighbourhood” The street where you live theme, part of the Neighbourhood Plan for the area.

Key Points that were highlighted for the area forum to address:

- **Road Safety & Maintenance**
 - Road Safety - Education
 - Road and Pavement Maintenance
 - Traffic Calming
 - Parking
 - Obstruction on the highway
- **Community Safety**
 - Neighbourhood Watch
 - Anti-Social Behaviour
- **Street Cleanliness**
 - Dog Fouling
 - Litter
 - Fly-Tipping

***Update:** The Area Forum panel has also acted on your feedback following the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation and the following road safety scheme will be funded subject to site survey/visits with Technical Services and your local ward Councillor.*

- **Improve access** - improvements to dropped pavement kerbs in Norman Street and Torwood area
- **Safety measures/Speeding traffic** - purchase Vehicle Activated Signs for Bidston Village, Sumner Road and Park Road South
- **Road Signs** purchase of signage (no-through Road) for **Ilchester Road**

What next: June 2012 - all 11 area forums will cover the next round of themes of “Your Family” and “Your Economy”. All themes will be collated and form a local action plan to address issues and future developments for the local area.

- Anyone who is interested in being part of the Neighbourhood Plan developments to contact the Community Engagement Team. Tel: 0151 691 8026 email: michellegray@wirral.gov.uk

4 PARTNER ORGANISATION UPDATES

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Paul Murphy informed the forum that Dan Stephens is the new Chief Officer. The Fire Service is visiting as many people within the

community to address house fires. Accidental dwelling fires have decreased. They have visited almost 1,200 homes in 9 months. There was a reduction last bonfire night and a reduction in serious road traffic accidents. Informed forum that leaflets were available to take away with regards to getting free smoke alarms fitted.

Noctorum – Bon Fire Night - Councillor Steve Foulkes Congratulated the Fire Service as they put a big effort in last year's at bonfire night, this is in partnership with Council and other organisations. It was a good safe night. Steve thanked them for the efforts.

Wirral Youth Zone - Councillor Steve Foulkes advised the Wirral Youth Zone has an initial fund of £200k. this will not just be for the Birkenhead area it is open to all. It is what young people want not what we think young people want.

Community Safety - Jim Thompson Informed the forum this area has become less challenging and is improving and getting a lot better. As a borough burglary dropped by 60% however slightly increased due to the economical climate. Warned Residents to shut doors properly, lock them and not leave keys in doors, put alarm on and close windows etc.

Merseyside Police - Roy McGregor explained they had a new computer system to be able to breakdown crime statistically - per ward area and by subject of crime. St James area has gone from down from 1,501 to 1,290. Anti social behaviour in 2010 was 1,300 and in 2011 it was 1126 and now it is 1,000. Robberies have gone up, especially in connection with shops/outlets etc Roy explained the Police have an operation in place advising shops to close their doors half hour early and to be alert when people come into shop when they are due to close. Police are using tracking system equipment to address robbery issues. Roy also warned people to mark their bikes as their has been a slight increase in bikes being stolen. Overall though crime for Wirral is down. Roy gave out detailed statistical information at the forum covering both wards. Police newsletters were also available.

5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Q: Ilchester Road - fly tipping is a disgrace. Street Scene have cleaned area in the past however I have seen a van pull up, look at rubbish, laugh and then drive off.

A: Mark Smith – I will take this away and get the right people to look at this.

Q: Buttermere Road I have been asking to get a portion of this road resurfaced as there are lots of pot holes that just keep getting patched up. When do we get this road on the list for a full repair?

A: Mark Smith if we are doing as much patching as you say we are, my Officers will be aware of it.

Comment: would like to thank you for Streetscene. I e-mailed them about broken street lights and they were fixed the next day.

Q: Anti Social Behaviour at Tapestry Gardens; what is being done? Also the new Asda in Birkenhead there has been some trouble around that area.

A: Steve Preston there are two cameras in that area (Tapestry Gardens). I will take back and get control room to monitor both areas.

Update: Tapestry Gardens - there have been no reports of any anti-social behaviour conduct that are not the normal low level ones we always get from all areas, and as for the new Asda there has not been any increase from our side of incidents. Area is still be monitored.

Q: Number of residents highlighted that **Street Lights** were out in the following areas:

- Fender Lane (Tesco to Aldi)
- Hoylake Road (bottom/Opposite the Rods)
- Bidston by-pass
- Boundary Road
- Ford Hill

A: Mark Smith – I will take this information away and report back.

Update: Power failure to Streetlights in Bidston Moss Area/ the power was restored on 28/02/2012. The repair work involved the replacement of sections of old aluminium cable that provided the main electricity supply to the distribution cabinet adjacent to the roundabout at Fender Lane/Hoylake Road.

Further Update: Contractors working at the M53 junction 1 near B&Q were using a JCB and took a chunk out of our main service cable on Bidston Moss on Saturday 24/03/2012 hence a large number of lights were out again on roads leading away from Tesco Roundabout and around M53 Junction 1. Colas had to install another new section of cable and power was restored by Thursday 29/03/2012.

Q: What do you call a deprived area?

A: Councillor Steve Foulkes unemployment levels, free school meal numbers; there are lots of criteria we have to measure.

Q: In 1974 the council pulled down houses at the end of Tyne Street. Now the Council say there is a shortage of housing yet you pulled down 5 bedroom houses. You said you were going to put smaller houses there but I got a letter the other day to say it was going to be a car park. Tell me why you pulled the houses down and why you have allowed this to happen in your own Labour ward?

Q: You have deprived the people in this area.

A: Councillor Steve Foulkes decisions were made at the time when we were in charge of council housing we had to improve and regenerate certain areas within the Borough. People where in need of houses, however no one wanted to live in that area at the time. Our priority is to tie up what wasn't finished when the funding stopped. We are looking to try and develop that area and have a plan that works with regeneration.

Local Tidy Up's:

Q: I am pleased that Bray Street is getting tidied up however, can you tidy up Beauford Road as we don't want people to think we live like that.

A: Councillor Steve Foulkes – I understand and accept that. Technical Services will look into this.

Update: Are residents talking about the open spaces on Beauford Road? Or are they referring to road and footpaths as this is cleansed by Biffa every Monday. The land

where the train tracks are is not owned by us but has been cleansed by the probation team in the past.

Grit Bins: I would like to thank Michelle Gray who helped get us with the issues we have had around the location of our grit bin (placed in the wrong place) Michelle has taken this issue on and is trying to get it moved to the correct place.

Michelle Gray – I have a lot of outstanding issues with regards to Grit Bins. I have been told by technical Services this particular bin can be moved and hopefully this will be done in the near future.

6 CLOSE

The Chair Councillor Denise Roberts thanked everyone who attended and closed the meeting and announced the next area forum would take place on Tuesday 12th June 2012 at the St James Centre, 344 Laird Street Birkenhead CH41 7AL starting at 6.30pm.