

AREA FORUM (BIRKENHEAD & TRANMERE AND ROCK FERRY)

Wednesday, 15 February 2012

Present:

Councillor P Davies (Chair)

In attendance:

Councillors B Kenny
C Meaden
WJ Davies
J Stapleton

Lead Officer: David Ball

Community Engagement Officer Andy Brannan

Merseyside Police: Paul Vickers

Merseyside Fire and Rescue service: Mike Biratti

Community Safety: Ian Lowrie, Steve Preston

Technical Services Mark Smith

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Councillor J Stapleton welcomed the Forum members and 30 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

2 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

Andy Brannan gave a presentation on the Your Neighbourhood section of the consultation including the priorities that people have said is important to them and some of the actions that will be taken to address them.

The main priorities are:

- Community Safety
- Children and Young People (covered in the CYP section)

- Housing and social care
- Street cleanliness

Q. Philip Barton: Work is being done to stop dog fouling but what happens to clean it up afterwards because it is always on the streets?

A. Mark Smith: Biffa are responsible for cleaning up dog fouling under their contract. Reducing dog fouling is a priority for the council and a lot of working is going into tackling the issue.

Q. The procedure for cleaning roads is terrible as I was quoted it would take 15 days for rubbish in Rodney Street to be moved after neighbours threw their rubbish on the pavement on two occasions.

A. Mark Smith: If the details are passed on at the end of the meeting we can look into enforcement as this is clearly a repeated offence.

Q. Incidents of dog fouling on Seymour Street were passed onto Brian Kenny, is anything being done about it?

A. Cllr Kenny: This was passed on.

A. Steve Preston: Members of the Dog Fouling Enforcement Team will be attending Seymour Street on Friday 17th February.

Q. Cllr Bill Davies: There has been an increase in people taking dogs through the Pyramids Shopping Centre which has lead to more dog fouling. Can the Police or the Dog Fouling Enforcement Team do something about this?

A. Steve Preston: The shopping area is enforced by a private security firm but we can liaise with them and ask if there's any assistance than could be given.

Q. Why has Highfield South been re-tarmaced twice over the last year?

A. Mark Smith: We will look into the reasons behind this and report back to the next forum.

3 PARTNER UPDATES

Community Safety:

-Steve Preston: All Community Safety Officers now wear body worn CCTV to capture images of incidents. The Community Safety Team have also been training all Police CSO's to issue dog fouling fines.

-Ian Lowrie: Work will be taking place to secure the football cage on Union Street. The work should be completed in March as Network Rail have to follow health and safety rules with turning the track off etc while the work takes place.

Q. Thank you for the work that is taking place by Network Rail. However is there anyway of making the football cage 4 sided? If this happened there would be no need for the kids to go onto the railway tracks in the first place.

A. Ian Lowrie: The additional work by Network Rail should secure the area to stop that happening.

A. David Ball: We will liaise with Wirral Partnership Homes to look into the possibility of this.

Merseyside Police:

-Insp Paul Vickers: The presentation on the Neighbourhood Plan highlighted peoples concerns with having more police presence. The number of officers at Well Lane Police Station has stayed the same. We are also working with the Local Authority to monitor clubs and off licenses in the town centre.

There are slightly more burglaries in the area but overall crime figures have been decreasing.

-Ian Lowrie: The Council is looking to expand its Neighbourhood Watch and No Cold Calling areas so if anyone is interested in getting more information contact the Community Safety Team.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service:

-Mike Biratti: Each fire station on Wirral is producing a Community Safety Plan unique to that area. The Fire Service have been working with the Local Authority on issues in Victoria Park. There was also a 35% decrease in incidents on bonfire last year compared to the year before.

Q. Philip Barton: Staff at Hamilton Square Train Station have informed me that they are unsure of the fire evacuation procedure for wheelchair users.

A: Billy Bradshaw (Merseytravel): I will take this away and contact Merseyrail about this issue.

Q: When will the extended platform at Birkenhead Central be finalised?

A: Billy Bradshaw: I will contact Merseyrail for the details.

Older Peoples Parliament:

-Andrew Taylor: Gave an overview of the work the Older Peoples Parliament does and encourage anyone who is interested to get involved.

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Q. Ken Neale: People who cycle for leisure are well catered for with the Wirral Way and coastal areas but people who commute on bikes suffer on some roads, such as the A41 because of dangerous junctions and uneven roads?

A. Mark Smith: The Council repairs as many roads and pavements as possible every year under the Highway Maintenance Programme. Sections of the A41 will be repaired this year. The Council also has a cycling officer called Mandy Keenan and Mandy will contact Ken to discuss some of his issues.

Q. June Spencer: Parking on Helena Street is still a problem. There are 7.00am – 7.00pm parking restrictions but people are parking all the time which causes obstructions for bin lorries and would make it very difficult for emergency vehicles.

A. Ian Lowrie: The CCTV camera on Rodney Street is fully operational and could be used to try and identify vehicles that are parking on Helena Street.

A. Insp Paul Vickers: We have targeted Rodney Street in the past for parking and for cars going against the no entry sign so we will also look into the issue on Helena Street.

Q. Is the CCTV camera working in Woodland Park as dog fouling is a big issue there?

A. Ian Lowrie: Yes the camera is working and we will make sure attention is given to try and address the problem.

Q. Philip Barton: When will the street lighting on Lorne Street be replaced as the surrounding roads have already been completed?

A. Mark Smith: It is the current programme of works so it should be completed shortly.

Q. Philip Barton: With the Older Peoples Parliament providing opportunities for people to effect policy and decisions that are made other people cannot get involved as they are not within the age needed to be a member of the OPP. In some ways this is age discrimination and means that some people's voices, such as disabled people within a working age aren't being heard. While there organisations such as WIRED I don't know if these groups communicate with each other. Is it possible to explore the opportunity of establishing a forum for disabled people like the OPP?

A. David Ball: We will take this idea back to speak to the relevant groups and bring the information back to the next forum.

5 **CLOSE & AOB - MATTERS ARISING**

Date of next meeting: 27th June 2012.

Venue: To be arranged

Matters Arising:

Q. The procedure for cleaning roads is terrible as I was quoted it would take 15 days for rubbish in Rodney Street to be moved after neighbours threw their rubbish on the pavement on two occasions.

A. Mark Smith: If the details are passed on at the end of the meeting we can look into enforcement as this is clearly a repeated offence.

15 days is the response time for an issue raised with the Council's Contact Centre and a CRM issue, not a street cleanse issue which in normal circumstances depends upon the schedule of cleanse.

For example Rodney Street is cleansed every Monday. Therefore the longest someone will have to wait is 7 days (this would be worst case scenario - if the incident occurred after cleanse on a Monday).

Q. Cllr Bill Davies: There has been an increase in people taking dogs through the Pyramids Shopping Centre which has lead to more dog fouling. Can the Police or the Dog Fouling Enforcement Team do something about this?

A. Steve Preston: The shopping area is enforced by a private security firm but we can liaise with them and ask if there's any assistance than could be given.

The operations team for the company running the area have been contacted by the Dog fouling team manager and training offered to assist in the prosecution of offenders.

Q. Why has Highfield South been re-tarmaced twice over the last year?

A. Mark Smith: We will look into the reasons behind this and report back to the next forum.

Highfield South / Highfield Road was given a carriageway retread, due to binder issues failed in a number of places. To remove the problem Colas carried out a micro – asphalt at their expense to seal the surface.

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Q. Is the CCTV camera working in Woodland Park as dog fouling is a big issue there?

A. Ian Lowrie: Yes the camera is working and we will make sure attention is given to try and address the problem.

Arrangements were made for Councillors to view the images. The dog fouling team are also aware of the issue of dog fouling and regularly patrol the area.

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A. David Ball: We will take this idea back to speak to the relevant groups and bring the information back to the next forum.

The Council has provided information to Andrew Taylor about the principles of establishing a Disabled People's Forum if there is a demand for it from Disabled People. The Council's Equality Officer will meet with Mr Taylor at some future date to discuss this matter further. The Forum will not be a Wirral Council Forum but one which is set up for Wirral by interested parties. A further update on this idea will be brought back to a future Forum.