

CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - WALLASEY

Wednesday, 19 February 2014

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	R Gregson (Chair)	
	Councillors	RL Abbey	C Jones
		L Fraser	A Leech
		P Hackett	B Mooney
		P Hayes	J Salter
		AER Jones	J Williamson
<u>Community Representatives:</u>		L Collins	T Jones
		K Harrison	K Raybould
		B Higgins	P Roberts
<u>Apologies:</u>	Councillors	C Blakeley	L Rennie
		P Glasman	S Williams
		I Lewis	

15 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

16 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the Wallasey Constituency Committee held on 11 December, 2013, be approved.

17 UPDATE FROM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Tony Jones gave an update on the work of the Community Representatives over the past four months since their co-option onto the Committee. He reported that they had attended a number of meetings, structured, casual and informal and had met with a large variety of groups and organisations in the constituency. Four of them had also been involved in the two Task and Finish Groups currently established.

He requested that the Committee should consider the terms of office of the Community Representatives, which was currently just 12 months. He felt that this was not sufficient time to develop in the role and even to visit all the

community organisations and groups within the constituency and that a two year term might be a better option.

Some Members expressed agreement with the view to extend the term of office of Community Representatives as it would be good for continuity, although they were not precluded from reapplying to serve further term(s) of office.

A Member commented that the young person's representative might not be able to commit to a two year term.

The Chair suggested that the 'Committee Handbook' Task and Finish Group could look at the Community Representatives' terms of office and make a recommendation on this.

He stated that as this was the last Committee that the Community Representatives would be sitting on as a cohort (unless they chose to reapply) they should be thanked for their time and contribution on behalf of the Committee. The Committee would like them to continue to have an involvement until the next cohort was appointed and also be involved in the recruitment of those representatives.

Resolved – That the thanks of the Committee be accorded to the Community Representatives and the 'Committee Handbook' Task and Finish Group look at the Community Representatives' terms of office and make a recommendation on this.

18 **CONSTITUENCY PRIORITIES AND SPEND**

Further to minute 11 (11/12/13) Caroline Laing, Constituency Manager, introduced a report which set out a number of recommendations in respect of the proposed allocation of funding priorities and processes related to spend for Wallasey Constituency Committee for 2013/14.

This included the Constituency Options spend of £30,000 being allocated as follows:

- £15,250 to a 'Maximisation of disposable income pilot' scheme
- £4,750 to the promotion of WirralWell to help tackle social isolation
- £10,000 for road maintenance and improving road safety (Locations in respect of this would be determined following further discussions with Members and this amount would be carried over into 2014/15)

In respect of the 'Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund' of £40,000, a final submission of 34 applications had been made, totalling £48,013.98 and the 'Priorities and Spend' Task and Finish Group was recommending 23 projects at a cost of £27,449 and the Committee were invited to consider these.

The underspend of £8,160 from the Public Health Outcomes Fund (Voluntary Sector Support Fund) would be carried over into 2014/15, as would the underspend of £4,391 from the (£50k) devolved budget.

No spend had been agreed by the Task and Finish Group in relation to the Constituency 'Problem Solving Fund and any underspend as at 31 March 2014 would be carried forward into 2014/15.

The Task and Finish Group had recommended that the £25,000 Public Health Funding be allocated as follows:

- £20,000 to the Rampworx Youth Village
- £3,500 to a behaviour change campaign to reduce criminal damage by young people
- £1,500 for Constituency Community Safety Week

With regard to the £10,000 Love Wirral grant allocation and the online vote, 11,016 votes had been cast by 2,785 individuals for 37 projects. Caroline Laing provided details of the 20 projects with the most votes amounting to £9,598.37, the twenty first project with the most votes could be part funded at a cost of £401.63 to enable full expenditure of the allocated funding.

The Committee's budget for 2014/15 would, if the Administration's budget proposals were approved at budget Council, be £50,000 for each constituency committee. The Committee however needed to agree an approach to the allocation of this funding in order that recommended spend could be considered by the Constituency Committee at its next meeting on 26 June 2014. This included whether the Committee continued to delegate responsibility for making recommendations to a 'Priorities and Spend' Task and Finish Group and, if so, the composition of its members. This proposed spend would be aligned with the 2014/15 Constituency Plan that would be taken to the same Committee meeting for consideration.

A Member commented in respect of the proposed £10,000 allocation for road safety measures and that a list of Councillors' suggestions should have been produced. In response, Caroline Laing stated that a list had been collated although at the Task and Finish Group considering priorities and spend, it had been agreed that the sum of £10,000 be carried over into 2014/15 prior to discussion on the proposals.

A Member suggested that there was already a road maintenance programme and it would be almost ineffective to spread a little amount of money for such works across the constituency.

A Member commented upon the proposed grant of £20,000 to Rampworx, at the Task and Finish Group she had suggested that a grant of £10,000 this

year with a further grant of £10,000 in 2014/15 would be more appropriate to enable investment of £10,000 in two or three other youth facilities within the constituency. She expressed concern that no proof had been provided that Rampworx was a 'not for profit' organisation, although it did have charitable status.

Other members of the Committee expressed their support for giving the whole grant to Rampworx as it would be providing 25 jobs as well as opportunities for volunteers and a much needed facility not just for Wallasey but for Wirral young people.

Responding to comments from Members, Caroline Laing stated that Rampworx did have two proposals for Wirral, one being the Seacombe project which it anticipated would be there for 4/5 years and a longer term project for Bidston, which would be a £6m project. If funding for the Bidston project was not available then the site at Seacombe might well remain for longer than 4/5 years.

On a motion by the Chair, duly seconded, it was –

Resolved (11:0) – That:

- (1) Committee agrees the 'Constituency Options' spend as outlined in Section 3.2 of the report (£30,000);**
- (2) Committee agrees the allocation of Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund (incorporating the Public Health Outcomes Fund – Voluntary Sector Support Grant) as outlined in Section 3.3 of the report (£40,000) and agrees a carry forward into 2014/15 of a total of £12,551;**
- (3) Committee notes the update regarding the Problem Solving Fund as outlined in Section 3.4 of the report (£5,000) and agrees a carry forward of any underspend into 2014/15;**
- (4) Committee agrees the Public Health Outcomes Fund spend as outlined in Section 3.5 of the report (£25,000);**
- (5) Committee agrees the Love Wirral grant spend as outlined in Section 3.6 of the report (£10,000).**

In respect of the allocation of funding for 2014/15 the Chair then moved, seconded by Councillor Adrian Jones that –

“Committee agrees an approach to the allocation of 2014/15 funding, which is;

- That the 'Priorities and Spend' Task and Finish Group will continue to have the same ratio of participants (4 Labour elected members; 2 Conservative

elected members and 2 Community Representatives), however, it will aim to have representation from each ward within this ratio of elected members;

- This Task and Finish Group will identify priorities and items for spend, taking recommendations to the Committee for a decision;
- The budget will again be split between a small grants programme (Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund), Problem Solving Fund and an amount to be used at the discretion of the Committee giving consideration to recommendations from the Task and Finish Group.”

A discussion then followed on this suggested approach.

A Member suggested that it would be better for all 18 Councillors within the constituency to be invited to a meeting to consider the allocation of funding for 2014/15. Another Member suggested that as with the previous Area Forums funding should be split equally between wards and that all Members should be invited when these decisions are being taken.

Other Members suggested that it would be unmanageable to in effect have all 18 Councillors making these recommendations and the format of a Task and Finish Group should be continued with a member from each ward. All councillors within a ward could be made aware of those bids received for funding within their wards and feed their comments through those Councillors on the Task and Finish Group. Ultimately the decisions on funding would be taken by the whole Committee when it considered the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group.

The Chair commented that having sat on this Task and Finish Group, never once was the location of a bid taken into account but rather each bid was assessed on its merits. The aim was to have an elected Member from each ward involved in the Task and Finish Group.

Responding to a comment from a Member, Caroline Laing stated that Councillor Blakeley had asked her to convey that he wouldn't want the Task and Finish Groups to continue.

It was then moved as an amendment by Councillor Fraser, seconded by Councillor Hayes, that –

- (1) “The funding for 2014/15 should be split equally between the six wards within the constituency.
- (2) Meetings where decisions are made allocating public money should be made in public.”

A member commented that the decisions on the allocation of funding were being made in public as it was for the Committee to decide as was happening at this meeting.

The amendment was put and lost (2:8)

The motion was put and carried (9:2)

Resolved (9:2) – That this Committee agrees an approach to the allocation of 2014/15 funding, which is;

- **That the ‘Priorities and Spend’ Task and Finish Group will continue to have the same ratio of participants (4 Labour elected members; 2 Conservative elected members and 2 Community Representatives), however, it will aim to have representation from each ward within this ratio of elected members;**
- **This Task and Finish Group will identify priorities and items for spend, taking recommendations to the Committee for a decision;**
- **The budget will again be split between a small grants programme (Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund), Problem Solving Fund and an amount to be used at the discretion of the Committee giving consideration to recommendations from the Task and Finish Group.**

19 **WALLASEY CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE HANDBOOK**

Caroline Laing, Constituency Manager, introduced a report which outlined the work in developing a draft operating handbook for the Constituency Committee. The draft handbook was included as an appendix to the report.

The draft handbook provided an initial framework for the Constituency Committee. This would be added to over time, subject to approval by the Committee, to include a Community Engagement Framework and Communications Plan for the Constituency. In addition, financial protocols would be included for 2014/15 now an approach had been agreed. Once the handbook was complete its final design and layout would be consistent with the Council’s marketing guidelines.

A Member commented upon the process regarding the recruitment of a young person’s representative needing to be clearer and it was noted that the Task and Finish Group could consider this further.

Resolved – That:

(1) Committee agrees the contents of the draft Committee Handbook and adopts this for use;

- (2) Committee authorises the Constituency Manager to make minor changes to the Handbook to ensure that it is kept updated without having to seek Committee approval (for example, updating venues, contact details, etc).
- (3) Committee notes that the content of Sections 4 and 5 will be considered at a future Committee meeting/s and the completed Handbook's design and layout will be consistent with the Council's marketing guidelines;
- (4) Committee agrees to review the contents of the Committee Handbook at the first Wallasey Constituency Committee meeting in each Municipal Year, or sooner if required, commencing 2015.

20 PAVEMENT AND GRASS VERGE PARKING UPDATE

The Committee received a report which had been referred from the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee at its meeting on 27 January, 2014 (minute 28 refers) for consideration by each Constituency Committee in respect of pavement and grass verge parking.

The Chair explained the issues raised at the Policy and Performance Committee.

A Member suggested that this should be something that that Committee itself looked at and what were the Constituency Committees themselves being asked to do.

The Constituency Manager suggested she convene a Problem Solving Meeting with relevant officers and individuals to bring recommendations back for further consideration. In response to a question from a Member she stated that the Constituency Managers would liaise with each other on this issue and share any good practice. She also confirmed the proposed meeting would include representation from the Community Safety Team. She noted in response to a question, that there may be issues at a local level which could be addressed through this approach.

Resolved – That the minute and report be noted and the Constituency Manager report back on the situation to a future meeting.

21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair invited Inspector Kolokotroni to update the Committee on issues raised at the earlier 'Have Your Say' meeting.

Inspector Kolokotroni informed the meeting of the following matters being raised and that he would report back to the Committee in June:

- Anti-Social Behaviour – Ashville Road, Seacombe
- Burglaries from sheds – Liscard, Egremont and New Brighton
- Anti-Social Behaviour – Moreton Cross and Pasture Road
- Problems related to drugs, begging and drinking of alcohol – Area around Rudgrave Square and King Street, Liscard

The Chair informed the meeting that questions had been received in writing, some asked why the funding was not being split equally across all six wards. He stated that this issue had already been addressed under the item, 'Constituency Priorities and Spend'. The second question was, 'Are there any plans to turn the 'dips' along Coastal Drive into car parks?'

Councillor Hackett in response stated that because of the success of the New Brighton development which had created 950 jobs to date, extra parking would be provided along the embankment of the railway adjacent to Smugglers Way and there were no plans to turn the dips into car parks. As the area got busier there was a possibility of expanding the shuttle bus service.

Members of the public were then invited to ask questions.

A question was posed on the Love Wirral grants applications and that these had not been laid out clearly online, either numerically or alphabetically.

The Constituency Manager stated that she would take this back.

A question was asked about the appearance of sinkholes around the country.

The Constituency Manager stated that she would refer this matter to the Technical Services section.

A member of the public thanked the Committee for supporting the Leasowe Allotments Society but asked if at future meetings councillors did not bicker with each other.

The Chair assured the questioner that all councillors had worked well together on the Task and Finish groups.

One further question was asked to the police and Inspector Kolokotroni responded that the main problems with break-ins was regarding sheds at which cycles were targeted and stressed the need for these to be reported to the police.

The Chair thanked all the members of the public for their attendance and questions.

22 **VENUE FOR NEXT AND FUTURE MEETING**

On a motion by the Chair, duly seconded it was –

Resolved – That the venues for meetings of the Committee in 2014/15 be as follows:

- **Thursday, 26 June 2014 – Liscard Primary School, Withens Lane.**
- **Thursday, 23 October 2014 – New Brighton Primary School, Vaughan Road.**
- **Thursday, 22 January 2015 – St Mary’s Catholic College, Wallasey Village.**
- **Thursday, 16 April 2015 – Wallasey Town Hall, Brighton Street.**