

CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - WIRRAL WEST

Thursday, 6 March 2014

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	JE Green (Chair)	
	Councillors	J Hale E Boulton P Brightmore W Clements D Elderton G Ellis M Hornby	M Johnston M Patrick T Smith M Sullivan G Watt S Whittingham
	Community Representatives	Lynn Collier Jackie Hall John Smith Elise Wong	

Apologies David Wade

Twenty eight members of the public were in attendance, with the percentage attendance by ward as follows:

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|------------------------------|-----|
| • Greasby, Frankby and Irby | 11% |
| • Hoylake and Meols | 22% |
| • Pensby and Thingwall | 14% |
| • Upton | 25% |
| • West Kirby and Thurstaston | 11% |
| • Other areas | 14% |
| • Not stated | 3% |

20 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.

All Members of the Committee declared their personal interest in agenda item 4 – Wirral West Constituency Funding 2013/2014 (see minute 23 post), by virtue of their involvement with various community groups within the Wirral West Constituency.

Councillors Jeff Green and Stuart Whittingham declared their personal interest in agenda item 5 – Wirral West Public Question Time (see minute 24 post), insofar as advanced notice had been received in relation to a question to be asked concerning a lease with Magenta Living, of which they were Board Members.

Councillors Jeff Green, Geoffrey Watt and John Hale declared their personal interest in agenda item 5 – Wirral West Public Question Time (see minute 24 post) insofar as a question was to be asked in relation to a request for funding from the Friends of Hilbre, of which they were Members.

21 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

22 **CONSTITUENCY MANAGER'S REPORT**

The Constituency Manager presented her report, which provided an update in relation to the ongoing work programme being undertaken in support of the Wirral West Constituency Committee.

With regard to the continued development of joined up mechanisms for community engagement, she commented that further consideration had been given specifically to the format and structure of meetings in relation to contributions from Merseyside Police. It was proposed that Merseyside Police should undertake separate 'Have Your Say' meetings across the constituency to ensure that members of the public were provided with a dedicated opportunity to inform policing priorities. The Committee would retain a Public Question Time, though which the public would continue to be able to raise questions about the work of the Committee and local issues. The Constituency Manager indicated that she would work closely with the Neighbourhood Inspector to ensure that any actions arising from the 'Have Your Say' meetings, which required joint working with the Council and other agencies, were taken forward as appropriate. The Constituency Committee would also be kept regularly informed of the outcomes of the 'Have Your Say' meetings and policing priorities.

She set out a provisional timetable with dates for Constituency Committee and 'Have Your Say' meetings, from April 2014 onwards, which would continue to be held on a rolling basis across the Constituency. Once the timetable was finalised, it would be publicised across the Constituency and published on the Council's and Police's websites.

She reported also on the development of the Constituency Plan, which would be presented for approval to the next meeting. To facilitate this, two workshops would be arranged in the coming months to explore the priorities and to finalise the draft Plan. A wider engagement strategy would also be put in place to support the development of the Plan, building on the events that had taken place with regard to the allocation of the Constituency Fund.

Resolved – That the report be noted and the approaches in relation to joining up consultation activities and the development of the Constituency Plan, be endorsed.

23 **WIRRAL WEST CONSTITUENCY FUNDING 2013/2014**

Further to minutes 7 (30 October 2013) and 17 (12 December 2013), the Constituency Manager presented recommendations for the allocation of the Wirral West Constituency Budget for 2013/2014, on the basis of two grant programmes –

- **Wirral West Community Fund**
A Council allocation of £50,000, to be divided on the basis of £10,000 per ward, for projects which aimed to improve the quality of life in Wirral West and impact positively on local people and places. The criteria

allowed a maximum of £1,000 per project, voted on by the community to inform the decisions of the Committee as to which would receive funding.

Following an initial assessment, 10 projects had been considered to be ineligible and two were withdrawn, which left 44 projects that were taken forward to be voted upon by the public, either at a series of community events or by participating in the supplementary online or paper voting process. Approximately 1500 people voted, with over 300 outside Wirral West and the Constituency Manager set out the responses for each ward.

- **Wirral West Public Health Grants Programme**

An additional allocation of £50,000 of Public Health funding, which aimed to increase the healthy life expectancy of local residents and reduce deficiencies in healthy life expectancy between communities. A maximum grant of £3,000 per project would be allocated on the basis of recommendations that had been made by an officer panel. The public health criteria required £25,000 to be split equally between wards, with the remaining £25,000 to be allocated on the basis of need, as evidenced in the grant applications from groups and organisations.

The Committee was asked to consider and agree 18 projects (set out at appendix 1 to the Constituency Manager's report) that were recommended for funding, with four having been declined on the basis of the assessment and one being withdrawn.

The Constituency Manager commented that all projects to be funded as an outcome of the report were required to be completed by December 2014 and she assured Members that robust project monitoring was in place for both grant programmes. Over and above this, proactive support for the projects funded by the Committee would be undertaken by the Constituency team, with a focus on celebrating success and promoting sustainability.

Members were also advised that, subject to decisions of the Committee, most of the total budget allocation would be committed by the end of the financial year. However, it had subsequently been confirmed that any remaining budget could be carried over into 2014/2015 should it be necessary to do so.

With regard to the Community Fund, the Constituency Manager set out the projects for consideration on a ward by ward basis, ranked in relation to the level of support each had received following the community vote and recommendations were provided for the Committee's consideration.

The Chair noted that for West Kirby and Thurstaston Ward, although the majority of projects had received more 'yes' votes than 'no' votes, it had not been possible to fund all of them. However, there was the possibility that there would be some slippage and, if that was the case, funding could then be allocated to other projects on the list. Members referred to the high levels of community engagement and participation across the Constituency and highlighted the need to build on the achievements to ensure that all areas were fully represented.

Resolved –

- (1) That the following allocation of the Wirral West Community Fund be approved:**

(a) Greasby, Frankby and Irby

The following projects be funded and an underspend of £2405 be held in reserve to contribute to ward improvements, including an exploration of options for drainage/flood prevention at Coronation Park

- CF18 Tree Planting
(Volunteer Wirral Tree Wardens)
- CF05 Provision of disabled toilet
(St Bartholomew with St Chad, Irby)
- CF06 Improving Irby Village Copse
(Irby, Thurstaston and Pensby Amenity Society)
- CF39 Expansion of Activities
(Greasby Over Sixties Club)
- CF52 Installation of Bench at Greasby Centre Grounds
(Greasby Community Association/Blooming Greasby)
- CF50 Covering front cover costs of the Greasby Messenger
(Greasby Community Association)
- CF51 Contribution to erection, dismantling and storage of Greasby Christmas Lights Display
(Greasby Community Association)
- CF23 Creating Raised Beds at Greasby Allotment Site
(Greasby Allotment Holders and Gardeners Association)

(b) Hoylake and Meols

The following projects, all with a majority ‘yes’ vote, be funded on the basis of the community vote; and a further opportunity be given for local projects to access the underspend of £6984

- CF29 Festi-Velo Bike Parade
(Festival of Firsts)
- CF65 Community Noticeboards
(Hoylake Lifeboat Museum)
- CF16 Repair Storm damaged public shelter
(Hoylake Model Boat Club)
- CF07 Minor Refurbishment
(Hoylake Marine Bowling Club)

(c) Pensby and Thingwall

Taking into account the community benefit, the availability of funding and the low response to the community vote, each of the following projects be funded. The underspend of £3410 be kept in reserve to contribute to ward improvements, including road safety schemes, resurfacing the play area at Fisher’s Lane and supporting the annual Pensby Family Fair.

- CF56 To plant hedgerow and erecting a fence at Thingwall allotments site
(Thingwall Community Allotment Society)
- CF57 Establish and maintain WW1 Memorial garden within Thingwall allotment site
(Thingwall Community Allotment Society)

- CF04 Purchase of equipment to facilitate family classes
(local Tae Kwondo Club)
- CF31 Installation of Viking Information Board near site of the ancient Viking parliament
(Irby, Thurstaston and Pensby Amenity Society)
- CF42 Brownies 100th Birthday Event at Pensby High School
(Deeside Division Guides)
- CF61 Production of two short local history films involving local young people to be published online
(AJP Media Limited/The Radio Project)
- CF67 An outing for members of the luncheon club
(Kylemore Listening Centre)

(d) Upton and Woodchurch

The following projects be funded on the basis of the community vote and taking into account also the benefits to the community. The underspend of £3149.43 be held in reserve to contribute to ward improvements, including community clean ups and allocating a small budget to the young people who attend Fender Youth Club

- CF22 Creation of a stimulating visual and sensory garden space to enhance learning
(Parents and Friends of Upton Hall School)
- CF41 Older People's event
(Woodchurch Methodist Centre)
- CF32 Development of the Salacre Allotment Site by the introduction of wildlife and wildflowers
(Salacre Allotment Society)
- CF01 Bees, bees and more bees at Salacre allotment site
(Salacre Allotment Society)
- CF37 Development of Fender Primary School garden
(Friends of Fender Primary School)
- CF49 Developing the Community Centre's luncheon club
(Woodchurch Community Centre Joint Management Committee)
- CF38 Storage Facilities
(Upton Victory Hall)
- CF63 Equipment and training
(Woodchurch Villa FC)

(e) West Kirby and Thurstaston

The following projects, those with the highest levels of community support, be funded; and that, should slippage occur, the officers be authorised to allocate funding to other projects on the basis of their community support.

- CF08 Replacement benches in vicinity of the war memorial
(Friends of Grange Hill)
- CF09 Development of an all ability footpath at Grange Hill
(Friends of Grange Hill)
- CF10 Installation of sign to encourage use of Grange Hill
(Friends of Grange Hill)
- CF24 'Story of West Wirral' installation
(Charles Dawson Brown (West Kirby) Museum)
- CF19 Clean up project in conjunction with Wirral Eco Schools
(Friends of Hilbre Parents and Teachers Association)

- CF55 Provision of audio-visual equipment for the Beacon Room of the St Bridget's Centre
(St Bridget's Centre Management Committee)
 - CF54 Activities for support group for people living with dementia and their carer
(Marine Lake Patient Participation Group)
 - CF68 'Incredible Edible' planters at West Kirby Concourse
(Transition Town West Kirby)
 - CF33 Provision of bike rack
(Caldy Cricket Club)
 - CF69 Light Up West Kirby event
(Mellow Yellow)
 - CF73 Community Art Project to develop a welcoming feature at an entrance to Grange Park
(Friends of Grange Community Park)
- (2) That the allocation of Public Health Grants in respect of the 18 projects set out at appendix 1 to the report now submitted, be approved:
- (3) That the underspend of £5633.57 from the Public Health allocation be carried forward into 2014/2015 for the development of project activity for inclusion in the Constituency Plan, aimed at building on community assets to improve health and wellbeing and tackle social isolation in Wirral West.
- (4) That the allocation of the budget for the financial year 2014/2015 be considered at the next meeting of the Committee, alongside the draft Wirral West Constituency Plan.
- (5) That the thanks of the Committee be accorded to Jane Morgan, Constituency Manager, for the work undertaken to ensure the success of the various community events, which had been undertaken.

24 WIRRAL WEST PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair invited questions from members of the public upon matters that were relevant to the Wirral West Constituency and he indicated that a number of questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting.

- From Woodchurch TRUST – With regard to the **Asset Transfer of Woodchurch Community Centre** – Lease still not signed between Magenta and The Council. It will be interesting to see how quickly the asset transfer of The Pacific Road will take compared to ours, which from our understanding is still going to cost the Council money in the future. Whereas The Woodchurch Community Centre has money ring-fenced under the asset transfer scheme, and will save the Council money when the transfer finally goes through.
 - The Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment commented that the matter was delayed as Magenta had refused to accept a licence for use of the car park. An alternative agreement was reached, which he understood had now been agreed in the lease documentation. The draft funding agreement

was now with Magenta's solicitor and was virtually in its final form. He anticipated being in a position to complete the agreement for lease in the near future. For information, he commented also that Pacific Road was first identified for potential transfer as part of the Strategic Asset Review in 2008.

- From Woodchurch TRUST – With regard to **Tranmere Rovers Football Club** – Is there any feedback from the EU regarding their proposal? Has anyone spoken to TRFC regarding a further consultation?
 - The Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment indicated that nothing had yet been heard back from the EU and there had been no movement on the Woodchurch scheme. All comments from previous consultation had been shared with TRFC and he confirmed that there had been initial discussions about an alternative site.

In response to a question from the Chair as to why officers had made contact with the EU, the Strategic Director stated that there had been a suggestion made to the EU that the Council had breached State Aid legislation. Officers did not believe this to be the case but had sought opinion from the EU for clarification.

- From Woodchurch TRUST – With regard to **Traffic Calming in Woodchurch** – We have seen proposals for traffic calming in Houghton Road, and would question if this were necessary considering the amount of parked vehicles on that road. We suggest that Home Farm Road requires the traffic calming measures and a 20mph limit. When will the traffic review take place? Will the community be involved?
 - The Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment indicated that Wirral's Road Safety Team received comprehensive and confidential details of all injury related road crashes, which were analysed to see what measures were needed to improve road safety. The proposals for introducing traffic calming measures in Houghton Road were formed following an investigation into road crashes. There had been 7 injury crashes (with 13 casualties including serious injuries) over 5 years, of which the proposed speed reduction scheme could have prevented 5. The scheme had a good overall 'rate of return' and was to be funded from the Local Transport Plan programme. In comparison, analysis of Home Farm Road indicated that there had been 3 crashes involving personal injury, and would not be a priority at the present time.
- From Woodchurch TRUST – With regard to the **Youth Hub** – We have been told that the proposed Youth Hub will be sited in Birkenhead and would like to ask the following questions –
 - (i) Why will it be in Birkenhead when there are already youth facilities available there at the Birkenhead Boys Club? Duplication of services surely?
 - (ii) How would the youth from other areas get there?

- (iii) Has the Woodchurch Leisure Centre been considered? Or The Upton Fire Station, which is due for closure.
- (iv) Will other Council run youth clubs, such as the Fender youth club be closed?
 - In response to (i) above, the Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment commented, further to minute 141 (Cabinet – 29 November 2012), that the location was chosen, mainly due to the Fire Authority offering the land free of charge, it being on neutral land and in a prime location for transport links. Although more recently an extension to the Europa Pool had been considered, a major drawback was that the Onside model was to build on a neutral site to secure maximum private sector provider investment. None of the other Onside developments, both regionally and nationally, were adjacent to Council facilities and early indications suggested that it could deter private sector businesses, who would prefer to invest on neutral land.
 - With regard to (ii), officers were working with Merseytravel to ensure that public transport was accessible and affordable and outreach work would be undertaken with young people in other areas to support young people to access the facility.

Recent consultation carried out with young people in Woodchurch High School had concluded that young people were happy to travel if they wanted to do something enough, such as travelling to Birkenhead, New Brighton or Liverpool to the cinema.

- Neither Woodchurch Leisure Centre nor Upton Fire Station were considered and the Strategic Director confirmed that the Fire Authority had not offered Upton Fire Station.
- In respect of (iv) above, Councillor Tony Smith (Cabinet Member – Children and Family Services) indicated that the facility would not be Council owned. It would be operated by a charity 'Wirral Youth Zone', who would secure funding from public sources, the private sector and grants/trusts. The Council was an investor and provider of strategic guidance for the development and he confirmed that there were no plans to close existing youth provision to fund the Youth Zone.

At 8.00pm, the Chair agreed to a brief adjournment
The meeting reconvened at 8.10pm

- A member of the public asked for an update with regard to 'Love Wirral' grant applications
 - The Constituency Manager advised that following the closing date for grant applications on 6 December 2013, 28 applications received for Wirral West had been assessed and were then subject to an online vote. A paper based vote had also been undertaken and steps had been taken to avoid duplication. She indicated that full details were now available for Members and that applicants would be notified within the next few days.

The Constituency Manager paid particular thanks to the Committee's Community Representatives, who had been especially supportive during the funding process.

- A Member of the public questioned why the Parks Consultation Strategy had not been placed on the agenda for the meeting.
 - The Constituency Manager indicated that in terms of the agenda, it was essentially a formal document to enable the business of the Committee to be conducted, rather than being an information forum. However, she suggested, with the agreement of the Chair, that an item could be placed on future agendas to highlight ongoing local consultations.

In response to further comments from Members that nothing in relation to the Parks consultation had appeared on the Council's website and that active members of the community appeared not to be aware of it, the Strategic Director agreed to take the matter up with the appropriate Department and to give consideration as to whether it needed to be re-run.

The Chair thanked the public for their questions and requested officers take such action as was appropriate and report on progress where necessary.

25 **UPDATE FROM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES**

The Chair invited the Community Representatives to provide a brief update in relation to local issues.

Hoylake and Meols Ward

Jackie Hall reported that members of the former West Wirral Area Forum remained active within the ward and continued to organise public meetings and publicise local issues. Current key issues related to the Golf Resort and to level crossings.

She was pleased that the local network remained active and indicated that she was happy to provide assistance to colleagues in other wards, if it was needed.

Greasby, Frankby and Irby Ward

John Smith sought information in relation Fire Stations locating to Greasby. In response, the Station Manager for Upton Fire Station indicated that although the merger of Upton and West Kirby Stations was being considered, there was no formal proposal at the present time. He asked for any further information in relation to the Redcap Car Park and also commented upon the use of the 'Messenger' to disseminate local information.

The Chair proposed to write to the Chief Fire Officer to ascertain the facts in relation to Station Mergers, in the light of conflicting reports.

With regard to the Redcap Car Park, the Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment advised that he had no further information at the present time.

Upton Ward

Elise Wong questioned the Council's policy in relation to lights being turned off on the By-pass. The Strategic Director indicated that the Leader of the Council had asked that some alternate lighting be switched on in certain areas and that he would provide more detailed information as required.

Pensby and Thingwall Ward

Lynn Collier expressed her concern that community groups in Pensby did not receive sufficient information from the Council, particularly in relation to the various web-based consultation exercises. She highlighted the high number of elderly residents who relied on paper communication. A Member asked that officers explore the possibility of liaison with Magenta Living to make contact with their residents on behalf of the Council

With regard to the various reports, the Chair commented that Community Representatives were key Members of the Committee and, as such, could be pro-active and directly approach officers, the Chair or other Members for information, without having to wait for each meeting of the Committee.

Resolved – That the reports be noted.

26

PAVEMENT AND GRASS VERGE PARKING UPDATE

The Head of Legal and Member Services presented the update report of the Head of Environment and Regulation on Parking on Pavements and Grass Verges, which had been referred by the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee (minute 34 (27 January 2014) refers) to each Constituency Committee for consideration.

Members of the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee commented that the high number of enquiries to Streetscene indicated the extent of the problem across Wirral, particularly in areas with narrow streets and no off road parking. However, the problem was also prevalent in areas with wide roads and pavements, with damage to pavements frequently caused by utility vehicles. In addition, it was noted that parking on pavements outside schools at peak times was also a major problem. Many motorists were either ignorant or unconcerned of the obstruction caused to pedestrians or the impact of their actions on the condition of the pavement surface, with maintenance and repairs estimated to be in excess of £40k annually.

The Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment commented that the matter had been discussed in detail by the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee. Although the Police could take action if a footway or carriageway was fully obstructed, it was difficult to define what constituted obstruction under the law. Pilot TRO schemes in a variety of locations had led to improved compliance and notices placed on cars had produced a positive response. The Cabinet was expected to allocate additional funding to Constituency Committees, who would soon have to

come to a view as to how it should be spent and whether any of it should be allocated to address parking on pavements and verges.

The Chair noted that the allocation had not yet been made and highlighted the need for clear criteria to be in place for the allocation of funding. Following the meeting of the Cabinet on 13 March 2014, he proposed to work with the officers to come forward with proposals to make best use of any additional resource.

Resolved – That the minute and report be noted.

27 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chair advised that the next meeting of the Constituency Committee, scheduled for 17 July 2014 was likely to be re-arranged, because of its clash with The Open Golf Championship.

The date and venue would be published on the Council's website in due course.