

AREA FORUM (BIDSTON AND CLAUGHTON)

Wednesday, 29 October 2008

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	D Roberts (Chair)	
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors	J Crabtree G Davies	S Foulkes H Smith
	Community Representatives	Pat Landsborough	
	Lead Officer	John Webb, Director of Adult Social Services	
	Council Officers	Ian Lowrie, Community Safety	Jan Johnson, Adult Social Services
	Area Service Co-ordinator	Michelle Gray	
	Streetscene Manager	Brian Smith	
	Merseyside Police	Inspector Graham Bell	
	Merseyside Fire and Rescue	Ben Ryder	
	Partners / other officers	Joyce Jackson, Public Governor WUTH	Anna Wallis
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillors	AR McLachlan	
		Marie Armitage Garry Cummings Pip Jones Jean McIntosh	Inspector Paul Harrison Ian Jones Dr Abhi Mantgani Edith Niblock

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

The Chair, Councillor Denise Roberts, welcomed forum members and 6 members of the public to the Bidston & Claughton Area Forum meeting being held at St James Centre, Laird Street, Birkenhead.

2 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM JUNE FORUM

The minutes of the Area Forum meeting of 25 June 2008 were agreed and there were no matters arising.

Minute Decision/Resolved that: Minutes of the Forum held on 25 June 2008 be agreed.

3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Michelle Gray updated on two issues: Wirral Council was looking at the Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2009/10. If there were any roads/pavements that people felt needed attention please give details at end of meeting.

Community Initiative Fund, closing date for application forms was Monday 10th November. Bidston/Claughton Area Forum have spent their money, however other areas still have money left over.

Q – The footpath between West Road, Bidston Court and Ford Hill has been unattended for many years. Who has responsibility for maintenance of it?

A – Streetscene

Q – The footpath is in a disgraceful condition, with chopped down trees/vegetation left and old scrap and also graffiti.

Councillor Davies referred to problems, which had been ongoing for a long time. These included a house in Westway, with a side wall covered in graffiti, youths lighting fires, with fences burnt down on 3 occasions, motorbike nuisance. He had brought with him tonight a DVD of culprits which he would pass over to the Police. Fire & Rescue had a graffiti strategy and Ben would get that checked up and Ian would check what action Anti Social Behaviour advocates were taking around it.

Q – Acknowledgement about the graffiti problem, however Streetscene have not taken the trees/rubbish away, it has just been left to pile up.

A – Fire Service would arrange to have it removed tomorrow.

Q – Had previously raised issue around Barnston.

A - Speak to Streetscene following the meeting to go through details.

Q – Wanted to report a burst water main Noctorum Avenue. This was near the site of the present Somerville store and the surface of the road there was starting to break up again. Would someone please take a look into this?

A – Yes we are aware of it and dealing with it.

Minute Decision/Resolved: To thank the Area Co-ordinator for the report.

4 YOU DECIDE RESULTS

The Council had agreed a budget of £20,000 for each Area Forum to spend on additional council services. This was an initiative to bring local communities closer to the decision-making, around the YOU DECIDE campaign.

People were asked to put forward suggestions for Council services. In September we had a marketing campaign and people were encouraged to use the internet to answer questionnaire. There was also a postal questionnaire for those without internet access as well as street surveys.

Priorities for Bidston/Claughton Area Forum were:

- Cleanliness – Litter Bins
- Safety – CCTV the use of mobile camera
- Sport and Youth Activity – Youth Sports Nights
- Safety – Household security
- Environmental – new benches
- Roads/Safety

A couple of sites had been identified for litter bins. The Sixth Form College had agreed to contribute as well. Any further suggestions to Michelle.

Identified hiring a mobile CCTV camera and any hot spots that people are aware of please let Michelle know.

Sport and Youth Activity – suggestion of holding sports nights in the area.

Environment – panel decided to purchase benches. Lower Park and Ilchester Park had been suggested as sites and plaques would be placed on benches to identify funded by Area Forum.

Road safety which would cover residents parking.

Councillor Harry Smith, on behalf of Councillor Ann McLaughlin, raised the issue of a possible pedestrian crossing being installed at the site of Lincoln/Corporation Road.

John Webb confirmed there was still £2,500 available and it had been agreed that there could be further discussion tonight if anyone had any ideas they want to put forward.

Councillor Foulkes provided a breakdown of costs. 1 litter bin £500 and 10 had been purchased so do need to know of other locations. The next most popular item was CCTV and the Forum thought it would be useful to be able to buy a mobile unit to use, as and when surveillance was needed. Again, we need to know where hot spots are. On Youth Activity need to know which groups of people can engage in which types of sport etc. There had been a positive response to questionnaires, however 166 was not a very high number compared to the size of the population. Communication was always one of the biggest challenges we have. Any ideas about that would be welcomed.

The Chair confirmed there were another 4 weeks for suggestions to come in before it goes to Cabinet.

The Area Co-ordinator confirmed that for the Community Initiatives Funding pot of money, Bidston/Claughton had received lots of bids in and spent money first time round. It may be useful to advertise more in other areas for groups to get involved.

You Decide is a pilot scheme and hopefully we will receive money next year.

Q - Pat Landsborough asked whether there was a time limit for the roll forward regarding the carry-over of Community Initiatives Funds.

A – Councillor Foulkes referred to the forthcoming Area Forum Annual Conference and whether this point could be raised there. Suggestion could be made to carry the unallocated funding over or to share it between those Forums that were over subscribed.

Councillor Smith proposed a litter bin be sited at Hoylake Road shops. He also raised the issue of a letter and petition received requesting alley-gates between constituent's house and a neighbour's house and he would pass the letter on.

The results of the YOU DECIDE campaign would be published in a press release and the Chair confirmed that they would also be announced at the next forum in February.

Q – How did the questionnaires go out, if there was such a poor response.

A – The main vehicle was the Council website, use local press and radio interviews and a free phone number was issued. The vast majority came back through the website. This was very much a learning exercise and it was always a challenge to try and get past the front door of every house in the community.

Suggestion made of putting questionnaires directly into the local press.

Councillor Davies referred to also making grants through Your Wirral and explained the background to this initiative which starts again in November and how this would be publicised through a variety of methods.

Q – I notice there is no youth representative here?

A – Youth Parliament/ Older People's Parliament have their own meetings/forums and are responsible for their own funds.

5 PARTNER ORGANISATIONS UPDATE

Unfortunately nobody here from PCT or NHS Foundation Trust and apologies had been given. John Webb offered to take back any questions.

Joyce Jackson, the public governor for Wirral University Hospital Trust introduced herself as someone the community could contact. The Chair asked whether she would like to give a talk sometime.

Q – Query around the proposal to move from the Miriam Centre to a new build at the Aldi site, and rumour picking up is that it has fallen through.

A – Councillor Foulkes confirmed that Cavendish/Miriam would be separate practices but would share a building. He thought patients of practices had agreed. JW would get this clarified.

Police

Overall good progress to report. Crime had reduced, however assaults had increased, mainly domestic but also on police officers. There were a number of initiatives running throughout the year to try and reduce crime. There had been a high profile incident over the last couple of months, one involving fire arms in Trinity Street. They were actioning diversionary activities of youth around this weekend towards 5 November.

Wirral Community Safety Team

Team consists of Policy, Fire Service, Council, Youth Offending Service, Anti Social Behaviour Teams and was a mix of people working together towards crime and disorder reduction.

They reported a drop by 32% burglary/car crime. They worked with partner agencies around the North West as well and Wirral was the best performing local authority.

Recently involved in 'Not In My Neighbourhood' week to let public know what doing to reduce crime in the area. Had 500 referrals back from members of the public indicating priorities in the area they wanted to address in the community. This would be published fairly soon.

Over last 3 years, owing to Fire Service and ourselves, reported the lowest number of firework incidents across Merseyside. The Anti Social Behaviour Team had run a 6 month programme of advice surgeries. They used the Respect bus and youth engagement was part of their activity, e.g. Operation Safe Space involving open spaces such as parks etc. All helped to reduce amount of anti social behaviour and gave young people something to do during the summer months.

Q - Councillor Smith had received a number of referrals raising concerns around a shop in Duke Street and had written to Paul Harrison about this.

A – We are aware of and looking into it, using as many different ways as possible.

Councillor Smith raised the issue of the proposal for a new Police Station on the old Rivers Streets site. He wanted to put forward that this be called Dixie Dean House the Area Forum agreed to put forward the proposal.

Q – Pat Landsborough asked Ian how these positive reviews were being publicized.

A – Ian agreed could do more to spread the message and he would take that comment back.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Ben Ryder, District Manager updated on activity since the previous forum. This was a busy period for the Fire Service and partners. We were addressing the issues at all levels throughout the organisation and working at a strategic level to stop illegal fireworks, and were probably the best region in the country for tackling this.

We have to try and improve every year. In terms of fireworks sold, inspections had been carried out on premises to make sure fireworks are being sold in the right

manner, in conjunction with Police and other agencies. This involves daily briefings to share information on where incidents are occurring. Bidston is one area that needs resources putting in. Purposely don't advertise strategies as children are resourceful. Fire Service have a network of volunteers clearing bonfire materials. If there are materials you spot in your local community phone local fire stations and a Freephone number was given out. Last year, Wirral was the only district to have a reduction in bonfire and secondary fires and the anti social behaviour that it brings, and the service was working hard to do the same this year.

Another thing we are proud of in the Wirral is that we will have been to every secondary school by 5.11.08 to target specific age groups. The Department of Children and Young People have invited us in and been of help to get message out.

Q – Councillor Davies – are you getting any financial assistance from partners?

A – not sure any funding, but partnership working going very well. Trying to work with housing associations etc to try and get premises, if not in use, secured properly. Ian confirmed Community Safety were working with Wirral Partnership Homes.

Q – I have noticed improvements and had letter box sealed.

A – We are able to do if resources available.

Q – Are you moving the rubbish in Brow Road?

A – If there is rubbish that you consider can be set on fire phone your local fire station and they will speak to their Arson Reduction Team and Anti Social Behaviour Team and try and get it cleared. The best people to tell us are yourselves, we do need your assistance.

6 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Q – Speed limits at Beryl Road – the signs are ignored. Have contacted Streetscene four times since August to complain about this.

Councillor Foulkes asked whether, since installation, there had been any accidents?

A - Didn't think there had been any accidents but queried the number of speeding offences.

Councillor Smith suggested the use of the Speed Activator Monitoring System (SAMI) as an alternative deterrent in Beryl Road, Streetscene to look into this.

Attention was drawn to Noctorum Avenue where it was reported that it was almost impossible for pedestrians to cross the road from Windermere Road into the Supermarket and the stretch from Beryl Road to Ridgeway.

Minute Decision:

Resolved that: Streetscene to look into use of the SAMI in Beryl Road.

7 NEXT MEETING

The Chair thanked people for attending and St James' Centre for the use of the venue. The next Area Forum would take place on Thursday 12 February 2009 in the Cloughton ward.

