

CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - BIRKENHEAD

Thursday, 28 May 2015

Present: Rt Hon Frank Field MP

Councillors	A Brighthouse	S Foulkes
	P Cleary	M McLaughlin
	J Crabtree	C Meaden
	A Davies	T Norbury
	G Davies	D Realey
	P Davies	D Roberts
	WJ Davies	J Stapleton
	P Doughty	

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Head of Legal and Member Services invited nominations for the appointment of the Chair.

On a motion by Councillor M McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor C Meaden, it was –

Resolved – That Frank Field MP be appointed Chair of the Birkenhead Constituency Committee for the remainder of this municipal year.

The Head of Legal and Member Services then requested nominations for appointment of Vice-Chair.

On a motion by Councillor J Crabtree and seconded, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor George Davies be appointed Vice-Chair of the Birkenhead Constituency Committee for the remainder of this municipal year.

2 CHAIRS OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed all Members and those members of the public present to the meeting and indicated that he would be bringing Item 6 – Anti-social behaviour – Presentation, forward to the first item of the agenda for consideration to allow Ms Jane Kennedy, Police and Crime Commissioner to present and for members of the public to ask questions.

3 **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - PRESENTATION**

The Chair indicated that at the last meeting of the Committee, Mr Kinsella, Independent Consultant, was requested to provide information to the next meeting on the data surrounding Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and the Council's strategy to support this important issue (minute 28 refers).

A copy of the analysis undertaken by Mr Kinsella was circulated as part of supplementary papers.

The Chair indicated that the analysis highlighted that 1 in 10 people in Birkenhead were affected by crime and anti-social behaviour, and that the figures highlight that Birkenhead had a slower downward trend compared with other constituencies; with rowdy behaviour being highlighted as the biggest issue faced.

At this point in the meeting the Chair welcomed Ms Jane Kennedy, Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced both Mr McAdam from the Office of Police and Crime Commission and Inspector Georgie Minnery, Neighbourhood Policing Team for Birkenhead and gave Members a brief outline of her role as the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Then with the permission of the Chair, circulated some data in relation to crime statistics and indicated that in relation to ASB this appeared to show a reduction but there was an evidential increase in overall crime. Ms Kennedy indicated that out of the 90,000 calls received only a small amount became reported crime.

In relation to the figures, Ms Kennedy indicated that these were reviewed at a regular ASB governance meeting and that she was reassured that those figures were reliable and regularly audited. Ms Kennedy explained that her perception of the concerns raised at the Committee and the figures reported was that there were fewer neighbourhoods policing teams therefore possibly less reporting, this may be why the figure were showing a reduction.

Ms Kennedy reiterated that her role was to hold the police to account and that she had no power to interfere with operational issues, but reassured the Committee that the first of her policies was to tackle ASB.

The Poverty Act Fund was available from the Police Authority; this was a smaller fund than what was given in previous years to community/voluntary organisations, to make Wirral a better place to live. Details of the fund were available on the website and deadline for applications was 10 June 2015.

Ms Kennedy further highlighted the Positive Futures initiative in particular a case study of a young person who had come through the scheme and had been very successful, with no further reports of ASB. Ms Kennedy stated that this was an excellent example of agencies working together.

In response to a question raised by Mr Haywood, Ms Kennedy explained that Police Officers and Police Community Support Officer had very different roles to perform within Merseyside Police. Police Officers who were on mobile patrol were generally responsible for answering grade 1 and 2 calls, these being emergency calls, requiring an immediate response or within an hour. To maximise resources a lot of the officers patrolled independently, a small number doubly crewed. They also had a team of officers who were responsible for taking crime reports and conducting investigations.

The role of the Community Support Officer was to be on foot visible within their community. They did not have the same equipment, training or legal powers as police officers as it was not anticipated that they would be routinely dealing with confrontational or violent incidents.

In relation to Special Constables these were volunteers who undertook the role of a police officer on a part time basis, primarily used to support police officers in their role and also provided a physical presence within the local communities. Anybody can apply to become a special constable; however, they were subject to a selection process. Most of the special constables had other jobs and as such are subject to the working time directive. As the role of the community support officer was a full time role, this would limit their ability to work as a special constable also. However the opportunity was available to them if they chose to take it.

Certain police officers' conducted the role of a neighbourhood officer who was dedicated to a specific area, building community contacts and providing a consistent police presence. Community Support Officers and special constables would be seen with these officers.

Ms Kennedy indicated that the most successful route into the Police had been via the PCSO role.

In response to a request by the Chair, Inspector Georgie Minnery indicated that she would investigate the suggestions made by Mr Haywood but reiterated that although police officers and PCSO's had in the past patrolled together, this was not standard practice.

In response to a question raised by Mr S Andrews regarding the closure of Laird Street Police Station, Birkenhead, Ms Kennedy indicated that this issue had been discussed at length by Members of the Police Authority where it was felt that the current building did not lend itself to modern policing but plans were being looked at to identify an improved neighbourhood station.

A member of the public working at St James Centre indicated that they were working alongside the Police to identify an alternative location that would be fit for purpose within the community.

In response to comments, Ms Kennedy indicated that an appropriate place was needed for officers to hold surgeries and for that to be a base for officers to be able to be on hand to assist people within the community without actually being required to staff the building. Ms Kennedy stressed the need for officers to be out and about within the community and not in buildings.

In response to a Member, Ms Kennedy indicated that the recruitment of voluntary community support officers could possibly be considered in the future.

In response to a request by the Chair for information as to how much of the Police budget was spent and allocated to counter ASB, Ms Kennedy indicated that collating that information as requested was proving difficult to narrow them down to specific areas, but she could circulate information on the overall spend throughout the force.

Ms Kennedy highlighted that early intervention and working with the whole families had proven to achieve better outcomes when it came to ASB and Crime and that the force was moving to a different way of delivering services and tackling anti-social behaviour.

Ms Kennedy reported that the County FA had arranged floodlit football events which allowed young people to play football when they want to play. Young people from across the county were also partaking in a 'mash up' football tournament at Goodison Park.

Mr Mike Withy, Sports Development team indicated that the team did undertake activities for young people based on ASB and based on intelligence received sought to tackle hotspots with activities; however, there was a lack of funding for such activities.

A Member indicated that they had along with other partners i.e. Magenta Living, fire, police and Liverpool FC dealt with reported race hate crime. To tackle this issue a group was formed and each partner had donated £2000 so that each Thursday young people could come and play football with LFC coaches at Ridgeway High School.

A Member further highlighted the work undertaken by the Wirral Youth Services in particular the Youth Zones which had proved successful elsewhere to alleviate ASB, a planning application had been submitted for a Youth Zone in Birkenhead and it was hoped that the build would start in the Autumn.

The Chair thanked Ms Kennedy for her informative presentation and then invited Councillor P Davies to highlight the conclusions outlined within the report (Anti-social behaviour – executive summary) within the Constituency Managers update report, to include establishing why ASB levels were reducing at a slower rate in Birkenhead in comparison to the other three constituencies and Wirral overall and quantifying the level of resources utilised by both Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service in preventing and tackling ASB. Councillor Davies concluded by reiterating the need for all initiatives undertaken to have clear evidence of what had been achieved by doing the interventions and funding those that worked.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Ms Kennedy, Police and Crime Commissioner and Mr McAdam be thanked for their attendance and informative presentation;**
- (2) the next steps as detailed in appendix 3 (anti-social behaviour – executive summary) of the Constituency Managers Update report be approved and progressed accordingly; and**
- (3) the Constituency Manager be requested to invite officers from the Troubled Families Projects to give an update to a future meeting of the Committee.**

4 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Phil Davies and Councillor Chris Meaden declared a personal interest in Item 9 – Constituency Managers Update by virtue of them being Non-Executive Directors of Lairdsie Communities Together.

Councillors Steve Foulkes declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 – Constituency Managers Update by virtue of him being a Board Member of Magenta Living.

5 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor B Kenny

Councillor A McLachlan

Councillor P Williams

Mr J Blott, Strategic Director, Transformation and Resources

6 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2015 be agreed as a correct record.

7 **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND PUBLIC SPEND ANALYSIS UPDATE**

The Chair indicated that a series of work was to follow on anti-social behaviour and public spend analysis.

Councillor P Davies indicated that the Chief Executive , Mr Eric Robinson was very supportive of targeting resources based on need and was very receptive to this approach. Spend would be much more targeted on Birkenhead especially in relation ASB.

8 **CONSTITUENCY MANAGER'S UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report by the Head of Neighbourhoods and Engagement that updated the Committee on progress in relation to the agreed schemes of work from the budget devolved to the Constituency Committee to date. A finance summary sheet for the Committee's budget and expenditure was attached as appendix 1 to the report.

Attached to the report were appendices which the Constituency Manager presented to the Committee in relation to the Constituency Committee's Financial Summary; Improving the Environment Project update; Anti-Social Behaviour Briefing Paper; St Paul's Community Hub Action Plan; Birkenhead Your Wirral Project Summary; List of dropped kerbs funded through Integrated Transport Board funds; Wirral Wide Your Wirral Summary of Projects; 7 Beats Update, Birkenhead Police Project and Community Engagement Activity.

The Constituency Manager updated the Committee on the following:

Town Talk Community Newspaper

The Constituency Manager indicated that she had met with Ward Members and others to discuss the future of the Town Talk Community Newspaper and reported that the publication now incorporated the comments from Members. A Member indicated that had attended the meeting commented that he felt the meeting was positive and suggested that publication includes the opportunity to applaud those young people who do good things for the community.

Improving the Environment

The Constituency Manager updated the Committee on the three month contract report from Lairdside Communities Together which identified sites for proposed action and the progress made to date.

The Constituency Manager referred to the pictures of completed works which had previously circulated to Members indicating that the pictures were not the ones of completed works therefore these would be re-circulated.

The Chair reminded Members to report all grot-spots on behalf of their constituents and contact the Constituency Manager if issues raised were not addressed.

In response to Members comments regarding the CRM system, the Constituency Manager indicated that she would look into resolving the issues raised by Members.

Public Health Outcome Fund 2013/14

The Constituency Manager indicated that the action plan and progress made by St Paul's Community Hub were detailed within her report for Members to note.

Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme 2014/15

The Constituency Manager updated the Committee on the road safety project which was going well. A list of the proposed dropped kerbs was attached as an appendix to the report.

Birkenhead Project

The Chair invited Mr Andy Brannan, from the Neighbourhoods and Engagement Team to update the Committee on the Birkenhead Project.

Mr Brannan indicated that each of the four Constituency Committees had been allocated 'Your Wirral' funding. Birkenhead focused its funding on lunch/breakfast clubs for children in Birkenhead. This was currently being undertaken by Manor kitchen.

The Chair suggested that these kinds of activities be publicised to enable the community to be informed and able to utilise the activities.

Mr Brannan indicated that the next round of 'Your Wirral' funding would be made available shortly to enable organisations to apply to do something during the next school holidays.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the updates contained within the Constituency Manager's report be noted and progress be approved;**
- (2) the following Task and Finish Groups be set up and responsibility for allocating the 2015/16 ASB and Environmental Funds be delegated to them; with each of the Task and Finish Groups being requested to report back to the Committee with an update on spend, activity and progress in September 2015.**

Each ward be allocated £1K skip fund and the remainder be allocated to LCT to continue the 'grotspot' project

ASB – Councillors Doughty, Meaden, Brighthouse, G Davies and Cleary

Environmental – Councillors McLaughlin, Crabtree and Doughty

- (3) Your Wirral progress be noted and the priorities of child poverty and feeding Birkenhead's children to continue in 2015/16 be approved;and**
- (4) the 2015/16 £50,000 Constituency Committee funding to be allocated later on in the year to Constituency Committee projects in line with priorities of ASB, Child Poverty and Environmental issues after a review of effective projects has taken place.**

9 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Prior to consideration of this item the Chair requested that all Members of the Committee receive a copy of the Questions and Answers paper prior to the meeting, the Chair then indicated that 11 questions had been received prior to the meeting all of which had received a response from appropriate officers, copies of which were made available at the meeting.

The Chair invited the following members of the public to ask their questions.

Question 1 Residents of the Crossways Estate

Residents raised concerns and submitted a petition and circulated photographic evidence regarding the poor living conditions faced by residents living on the Crossways estate, Residents asked when Magenta Housing would be making a decision on the future of the estate. The estate had been

left in a poor state, overrun with rats and plagued by anti-social behaviour and flytipping.

It was commented that Magenta had issued the same response to residents for the last two years and that the community had fell apart living in such poor conditions with no information given as to its future.

A Member who also was on the Board at Magenta Living commented that it was a difficult situation and one that he had called for to be resolved as soon as possible, however before any further decisions were made on the Crossways estate more information was needed. He further commented that Magenta had invested funds to improve the area and would continue to do that for tenants until a decision on its future was made.

The Chair asked that those representatives of the Council who sat on the Board at Magenta Living raise this issue on the resident's behalf to try and get a response; he further suggested that a public meeting be held for the residents of the Crossways estate to discuss this issue further.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Those Members that were the Council representative on the Board of Magenta Living be requested to raise the issues raised by the residents of the Crossways estate at their next meeting; and**
- (2) the Constituency Manager be requested to arrange a public meeting to include the residents of the Crossways estate and representatives of Magenta Housing to discuss the issues raised by residents.**

Question 2 Hugh Langford

Mr Langford raised concern regarding cyclists riding on the pavements in particular in New Chester Road.

Mr Langford had received a response from Merseyside Police. Mr Langford commented that he felt that the response he had received was unsatisfactory and asked if the use of CCTV could be a possibility in that area and also requested further information on the number of prosecutions undertaken to date.

10 **THURSTASTON NCS PROGRAMME HOME RESIDENTIAL**

Ms Julie Smith, CSDO, Sports Development informed the Committee of the NCS Programme Home Residential. They were currently engaging with a 150 young people from across Wirral who had signed up for the NCS Summer programme, part of the project was that each young person would give 60

hours of volunteering within the communities of Wirral. This would be the decision of the young people in their cohorts to gather information facts and figures then agree to which group they would like to help. They would fund raise for the groups; paint areas within the community anything that would help the community to flourish. They have two waves of 75 young people in each in cohorts of 15.

Community Group were invited to hold a market stall on Thursday 23 July WAVE 1 and 30 July WAVE 2 to sell their projects to the young people.

The community had to enter into the Dragons Den and pitch themselves to the young people, the young people then gather the information given to them; following which will be a Question Time where the young people shall ask questions to the community groups.

Stalls from 10am-11.30am
Question Time 12pm – 1.30pm

In the afternoon the young people would go forward to the Dragons Den and the stage was then set for them to pitch to the Panel telling them what and why they had chosen their project.

Anyone interested they can email their show of interest to paulabaker@wirral.gov.uk.

Ms Smith further reported that Sport Development Team had been working very hard to support Thurstaston behind the scenes to open it up for camping projects, there was now running water, toilet facilities and showers.