

# CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - WIRRAL SOUTH

Wednesday, 5 October 2016

Present: Councillor T Pilgrim (Chair)  
C Carubia ~(Vice Chair)

Councillors P Gilchrist A Sykes  
C Muspratt J Walsh  
T Pilgrim W Ward  
L Rowlands I Williams  
W Smith KJ Williams

Community Representatives: M Craig  
R Squire  
P Wright

Councillor: M Patrick – Cabinet Member – Community Engagement and Communications

## 13 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non pecuniary interests in connection with any items on the agenda and to state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

## 14 AGREE PROTOCOL FOR COMMITTEE TO ENSURE ALL PROCEEDINGS ARE FULLY AUDIBLE

The Chair informed the Committee that, following the previous Committee held 6 June a referral was made by a member of the public to the Constituency Manager highlighting difficulties members of the audience had experienced in hearing due to microphones not being used appropriately by Committee Members

Members of the Committee were reminded to use microphones at all time.

## 15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

**Councillors:** A Hodson,  
K Hodson,  
C Povall,  
D Mitchell

**Community Representatives:** Kevin Sutton  
Mal Wright

Richard Clarke ( Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service)

16 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE**

Mr Ray Squire, Community Representative (Heswall), expressed his dissatisfaction that a round of applause had not been recorded following the submission of the Community Representatives Report, despite this having been recorded under minute 5 ( Support so Far Impact Video), whereby Members had expressed their support through a round of applause.

**RESOLVED :**

**That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 June 2016 be amended as above and confirmed as a correct record**

17 **UPDATE FROM MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

It was noted that the Committee would not be receiving an update from the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service as the Station Manager could not be in attendance at the meeting due to him having been called out to an incident.

The Constituency Manager, on behalf of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service requested that, leading up to bonfire night, waste should be put out the morning of collection, or as late as possible the night before. He also asked that combustible material be disposed of correctly prior to the bonfire period.

The Constituency Manager then advised that if residents require removal of combustible material they believe is being placed on a public space to be used as a bonfire.

18 **UPDATE FROM MERSEYSIDE POLICE**

Kate Wilkinson, the Neighbourhood Inspector was in attendance at the meeting and provided the Committee with an presentation on key issues and priorities within the Wirral South Area.

Members were informed that an imminent force re-structure could affect local policing. It was explained that staff at Bromborough will merge with staff at Birkenhead and will be based out of Bebington Police Station. The Police will be separated into functions rather than areas. The Neighbourhood Inspector advised that she would remain within local policing.

The Neighbourhood Inspector then provided a verbal position statement on crimes and anti-social behaviour in Wirral South. This included:

- A number of young people who had previously been involved with ASB at The Oval and New Ferry had now been dealt with accordingly.
- There is an emerging issue of ASB in the New Ferry area and there is a lack of community based support work. Volunteers are sought to assist with issues and anyone interested should contact Kate Wilkinson.
- There has been a dramatic increase in burglaries in Spital. Local Police Officer have worked alongside the Neighbourhood watch members and it had been identified that in the majority of cases, burglaries had occurred in unsecured properties.
- There has been concern raised over young people throwing items from a bridge, located on the A41 ( New Ferry Bypass). An incident had occurred whereby an object had been dropped onto a vehicle of a woman who has 7 months pregnant. A press release had been issued to appeal for witnesses, however, there had been little feedback received. A 4G camera had now been installed as a deterrent.
- During the meeting of the previous Constituency Committee it was identified that there had been a spike in burglaries in Community Based Centres. Members were informed that CSO's had visited affected premises and as a result there had been a reduction.
- ASB had reduced by 6%, however some concerns were raised regarding the methods in which ASB was being reported. On occasion, residents had contacted their Councillor or MP to report incidents but had not notified the Police. Members and residents were urged to always report to Police so hotspots can be identified.

### **Questions and Answers**

Councillor Jerry Williams enquired as to why issues still remained in getting through to the 101 call centre. He advised the Committee that it had taken 20 minutes for his call to be answered.

Inspector Wilkinson informed that she was aware of the issues and had spoken to the Call and Response Team, based in Liverpool. She informed the Committee that over 75% of calls are answered within a minute and some work is being conducted around exploring 'demand times' to consider the structure of the call centre. It was explained that if the nature of the call meant that an Officer did not need to be deployed, then the crime must be accurately recorded, thus adding to call times. She explained that this is a national issue and has been raised at Government level.

Councillor Les Rowlands commented how he had found it extraordinary that a Section 60 Order had been put in place in Heswall Ward and enquired about police patrols in the area

Kate Wilkinson explained the Committee that a Section 60 Order is a power vested to the Assistant Chief Constable and when issued to an area Officers can stop and search individuals for offensive weapons. This had been put in place following an incident in Pensby following a knife attack. Members heard how during this time extra patrols were deployed to the area and a dispersal zone was implemented in the area.

Councillor Phil Gilchrist expressed his gratitude to CSO's who had attended and assisted with the new system of dropping of children to Christ the King Primary School. He then enquired over the Asset Management Strategy in place for existing Police Stations and he was informed by Kate Wilkinson that some Officers involved in a Tri-Force collaboration project would remain at Bromborough Police Station for at least 1 – 2 years. David Armstrong, Assistant Chief Executive also informed the Committee that the Council have worked closely with Merseyside Police with regards to plans for Bebington Police Station.

Mark Craig, Community Representative, explained that a meeting had taken place last week in New Ferry Ward to discuss growing incidents of ASB. He informed that Community Representatives had constantly urged resident to report crime, but confidence had been lost on the 101 reporting system. A comment was made regarding Pledge 19 of the 20/20 plan, 'Wirral's Neighbourhoods are safe' and the viewpoint that in New Ferry, the Council are failing on this pledge.

The Chair explained that, as part of this Committee's agenda, the 20/20 pledges would remain to be a standard agenda item so that issues can be monitored and discussed.

Ray Squire, Community Representative informed the Neighbourhood Inspector how he is responsible for coordinating a Home-watch scheme in the Heswall area. He raised concerns that he had not been informed by the Police about any burglaries.

Kate Wilkinson responded by explaining that while Mr Squire's Home-watch scheme involves a large number of residents, the area covers a small section of Heswall, Reported burglaries have been in other parts of the Ward, not covered by this scheme.

Councillor Walter Smith enquired into plans for Bebington Police Station and expressed concern over a lack of communication and secrecy in obtaining plans.

Kate Wilkinson explained that plans of any police station would not be published and made readily available as this could pose a significant security threat.

*Councillor W Ward, declared a personal interest at this stage by virtue of his previous employment and his involvement with the Estate Strategy.*

**RESOLVED:**

**That Inspector Kate Wilkison be thanked for her report and her attendance at the meeting.**

19 **SOCIAL ISOLATION CONTRACT UPDATE**

Jenni Moss & Ola Rug, GIFT Coordinators, Cathrina Moore, Chapel House DRC and Caroline Huyton, Project Manager were in attendance at the meeting to update Members on Wirral South's bespoke Social Isolation Contract.

GIFT Coordinators explained that the main key objectives of the Gift Network were to:

- Reduce social isolation and impact of loneliness
- Identify gaps in community services
- Facilitate and support community groups both new and existing.

Members heard how GIFT provides engagement, one to one support and involvement for people at high risk of isolation including: older people, people from black and ethnic minorities, people who have substance misuse problems, people with mental health issues and carers.

GIFT Coordinators then provided Members with information about the GIFT journey and set out work conducted so far in order to engage people. Members heard how there had been 20+ meetings with local groups and forums where GIFT had been introduced and promoted. They also heard how there had been collaboration with key referral agencies including the NHS. Members were informed that various events had been coordinated including a Welcome Day, Dementia UK Fundraiser, monthly lunches, coffee mornings and social event at the Singing Café in the church of the Goodshepard, Heswall.

Members were advised about the distinctions between social isolation and loneliness and were provided with information about how loneliness could be understood.

GIFT Coordinators then informed the Committee that the total beneficiary referrals in contact with GIFT was 27 + 6 out of areas in the period from May – Sept 2016. Members were further informed that GIFT were able to engage with 24 beneficiaries in Wirral South and that top referral agencies were: Wired, Community Mental Health Nurses, GP Birchwood Detox Centre,

Admiral Nurses and Magenta Housing. Case studies were set out to Members to explain how individuals had engaged with the project

Councillor Les Rowlands expressed his support for the Project and informed the Committee that during his time spent as Mayor (May 15 – May16), it had been one of his themes to highlight loneliness and social isolation. He reiterated to the Committee that loneliness and social isolation affects young people as well as the elderly.

A member of the audience asked GIFT Coordinators as to whether the charity had any existing links with Age UK. In response, the resident was informed that meetings had taken place with Age UK and links would continue.

In response to a question from a member of the audience it was explained that part of the existing contract involved assisting local groups. They also informed Members about close links to the ABCD initiative, (Asset Based Community Development )

**RESOLVED:**

**That representatives present from GIFT be thanked for their presentation and attendance at the meeting.**

20 **SEPTEMBER 2015 FLOODING: INVESTIGATION REPORT**

The Committee considered a presentation introduced by Mark Camborne, Head of Corporate & Community Safety and led by Mr Richard James, Flood Risk Consultant AECOM. The presentation updated Members on the findings of the Flood and Water Management Act, Section 19 Flood investigation which covered the flood events from 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2015 to 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015. Members were advised that a significant amount of data was collected through consultation with multiple organisations, stakeholders and members of the public. Members were then informed that the data was used to identify 'hotspots', where clusters of reports could indicate a common problem or flooding mechanism for example: main river flooding, sewer blockages or capacity issues, surface water ponding; and, combined flooding mechanisms. Maps were provided to demonstrate hotspots in Wirral.

The Flood Risk Consultant set out key these identified as follows:

- Limited warning
- Rapid onset of flooding over a very large area
- Information about the scale and severity of the flooding was slow to reach key decision makers
- Lines of communication with the public were challenged
- The authority response was impacted by the gradual exchange of information and limited resources.

Members were informed that the Section 19 Flood Investigation made multiple recommendations, including:

- Developing a Multi- Agency Severe Weather Plan for Wirral
- Developing integrated catchment models
- Developing information capture and rapid sharing capability
- Promoting and fostering community resilience to repeat events through the provision of resources and partnership working with local communities.

The importance of community resilience was then explained to the Committee and the details of a flood survey was demonstrated to Members.

In Summary, Mr James concluded to Members that the Section 19 Flood Investigation had made recommendations to improve communications and resilience of the communities at risk. He also informed Members that a full report is available on the Wirral Council website.

Councillor Muspratt drew attention to Ackers Road, Bebington an area that continues to be flooded.

Mark Camborne responded by explaining that a site visit had taken place to the area and although this road had not specifically been mentioned in the Section 19 report, every property affected had been considered.

Councillors J Williams and W Smith also expressed their concern for the flooding occurring in the Ackers Road area. Councillor W Smith also drew attention to Wirral Grammar School for Girls, an area which also experiences flooding on a regular basis.

A Member of the audience expressed concerns surrounding the potential for the River Birkett and Fender to overflow. A question was asked about the effectiveness of the associated pumping stations and it was explained that as, part of the Section 19 report this would be investigated.

**RESOLVED:**

**That Members note the contents of the report.**

21 **WIRRAL SOUTH PRIORITY UPDATE**

The Constituency Manager introduced his progress report to update Members on resolved priorities and allocated budget for Wirral South Constituency Committee in 2015/16 and beyond.

The Committee were informed that, in respect of the Open Spaces initiative and since the last Constituency Committee, Dawstone Park had been awarded its green flag. Members of the Committee, alongside respective friends groups were praised for their efforts. Members were advised that the two locations of focus for the WSCC for 2016/17 and 2017/18 are Torr Park Eastham and New Ferry Park.

The Committee noted the successful provider for the Wirral South One to One Counselling Service had now been in place since May 2016 and that 'Response' are currently delivering the following sessions:

- Eastham Youth Hub: Friday 6pm-9pm
- Heswall Community Library & One Stop Shop: Thursday 2pm – 5pm
- Bebington Youth Club: Thursday 6pm – 9pm

Members further noted that the new service is fully subscribed and has a small waiting list in Eastham. The Constituency Manager informed the Committee that prior to this WSCC specific service young people would have been placed on a much longer Wirral wide waiting list and it would have been necessary for them to travel to Birkenhead for appointments. The table below demonstrated to Members, the number of young people who had engaged with the service up until the writing of the report.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Counselling so far</b>	<b>Waiting to be seen</b>	<b>Counselling ended</b>	<b>Attended drop in</b>
Heswall	3	0	1	No drop in
Bebington	4	1	2	24
Eastham	3	2	1	16

It was then reported that the National Citizenship Service (NCS) is a programme aimed at 15 to 17 year olds enabling them to embark on exhilarating challenges and build skills for work and life. Members heard how engagement in the NCS requires a sign-up fee of £20 - £50 ( depending on the applicant's financial circumstances). The Committee were informed that the Wirral South budget for gaps in youth provision has a £3,097 projected underspend for 2016/17 and a proposal was set out to utilise the underspend to offer a bursary to young people from deprived areas in Wirral South which would cover:

- Initial sign up fee
- An agreed list of essential kit for residential elements
- Access to public transport for a 2 week period during social action element.

The Constituency Manager then informed the Committee that on 13 July 2016 Cabinet agreed to an allocation of £130,000 to the Constituency Committees (£32,500 per constituency) It was explained that schemes will need to be in



line with priorities and contribute to the delivery of the Transport Plan for Growth ( minute 34 refers). Members were informed that the Wirral South Transport for Growth Fund Task & Finish Group had met on Tuesday 20 September to discuss the funding and agree their approach. Appendix one of the report included the minutes and action points from the meeting.

The Constituency Manager further reported that a meeting of the Wirral South Constituency Plan Task and Finish group had met for the first time on 19 July and the following next steps were agreed:

- Further development sessions for those wards that haven't had them
- A further task and finish group prior to the next committee
- A brief report to said committee to show progress made.

Councillor Adam Sykes proposed that recommendation 15.1. be amended as follows:

“the Wirral South Constituency Committee agree to commit £3,097 (remaining gaps in youth provision budget for 2016/17) to provide a National Citizenship Service bursary for young people who are **financially excluded** (with further details to be reported to the next committee on 2 February 2017)”

The amendment was agreed unanimously

Councillor Tracey Pilgrim proposed the following motion which was duly seconded and

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) the Wirral South Constituency Committee agree to commit £3,097 ( remaining gaps in youth provision budget for 2016/17) to provide a National Citizenship Service bursary for young people who are financially excluded in Wirral South (with further details to be reported to the next committee on 2 February 2017);**
- 2) a Social Isolation Contract Extension Assessment Panel is established (made of one elected member per ward, plus/inclusive of Chair and Vice Chair with volunteers requested). The Panel will receive a further presentation from the incumbent contractor in January 2017 (date tbc) and a judgement will be made on the extension of the existing contract. The delegated decision will be reported to this committee ( on the 2 February 2017);**
- 3) the Wirral South Transport for Growth Fund Task & Finish Group are given the delegated power to spend against the associated budget in order to ensure the works related to this funding are implemented as efficiently as possible and;**

- 4) the Wirral South Constituency Plan Task and Finish Group meet for the second time within 4 weeks of the date of this committee.

## 22 WIRRAL SOUTH COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

A report by the Constituency Manager, on behalf of Wirral South Community Representatives (com rep) updated Members on work programme progress to date and highlighted particular issues experienced by the communities within the five wards of Wirral South Constituency.

Peter Wright, Community Representative provided a verbal update on progress to date, work undertaken and future priorities.

Some concern was raised by com reps regarding the content of the report and it was explained that a meeting would be held with the Constituency Manager and Legal Advisor to discuss this.

### **RESOLVED that:**

- (1) further exploration work takes place into how com reps can add value to the existing Wirral South specific approach to addressing social isolation. A detailed proposal to be developed via the existing constituency plan task and finish group and presented to the WSCC on 2 February 2017;**
- (2) the current cohort of community representatives be appointed as members of the Wirral South Constituency Committee from 15 October 2016 to 15 October 2017;**
- (3) meetings between community representatives and officers be continued on a quarterly basis taking place as close to four weeks before the WSCC meetings as practicably possible;**
- (4) the WSCC handbook be urgently reviewed by a Task and Finish Group; and**
- (5) the Clatterbridge Ward team meetings take place as soon as possible.**

## 23 WIRRAL PLAN OVERVIEW REPORT 2016-17 QUARTER 1 - PEOPLE THEME

A Report by the Constituency Manager updated Members on performance at Quarter 1 (April to June 2016). The report summarised performance highlights and delivery of outcomes for residents.

**RESOLVED That:**

**Members note the content of the report and its associated progress**

24 **DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECKS - UPDATE**

Vicki Shaw, Legal Advisor to the Constituency Committee informed Members that there had been some work undertaken corporately to address the criteria for staff and elected Members to be DBS checked. She explained that, at present, the criteria for warranting a DBS check had not been met for Committee Members

Councillor Muspratt expressed her concerns over DBS checks not currently being a requirement for elected Members and suggested that an analysis is undertaken on the role of a Councillor to identify occasions they had come into contact with vulnerable children and adults.

Councillor Carubia also expressed concerns and expressed support on behalf of the Committee in its entirety for Councillors to be DBS checked.

**RESOLVED That:**

**Members record their willingness to be DBS checked.**

25 **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER (APPROXIMATELY 20 MINUTES) INCLUDING RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED AT THE PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING**

No questions were asked.

26 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee had been advertised as taking place at 6pm, 2 February 2017, Heswall Hall