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CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - WALLASEY

Wednesday, 28 September 2016

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	B Mooney (Chair)	
	Councillors	RL Abbey B Berry C Blakeley T Johnson AER Jones C Jones T Jones	A Leech I Lewis C Spriggs P Stuart T Usher J Williamson S Williams
	Community Representatives	J Jones	S Spoor
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillors	P Hackett P Hayes	L Rennie
	Community Representative	J Carson	

6 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.

Councillor Tony Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 9, 'Constituency Budget and Spend', by virtue of him being Chair of the New Brighton Coastal Community Team.

7 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors Pat Hackett, Paul Hayes and Lesley Rennie and Community Representative, John Carson.

8 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the Wallasey Constituency Committee held on 9 June, 2016 be approved.

MERSEYSIDE POLICE: UPDATE FROM 'HAVE YOUR SAY' MARKETPLACE EVENT

The Chair invited Sergeant Kate Roberts to update the Committee on the police matters for the previous quarter. Sergeant Roberts' comments included the following:

- In the Leasowe and Moreton areas a meeting had been held at Moreton Library regarding the increase in anti-social behaviour and there had been very positive engagement from residents and partners. Intelligence from local people had resulted in several warrants being executed on the Leasowe estate, all with positive outcomes. Three occupants within three houses had all been evicted. Home visits had been undertaken to parents of young people identified as causing issues and being on the periphery of crime.

Members thanked Sergeant Roberts for all her hard work, and referred to the incentives of free Tranmere Rovers tickets available for those young people who attended a certain number of diversionary activities.

Some Members expressed concern at the speed of response to incidents and the danger that some residents might be tempted to take matters into their own hands if a Police response was slow.

Sergeant Roberts acknowledged that the police response ideally should have been quicker. A follow up meeting was being arranged at which a representative from Magenta Living would be in attendance. Monthly meetings were held with all partners on the issue of anti-social behaviour.

- In the New Brighton area the problems which had occurred in 2015 with anti-social behaviour from young people travelling from all over Wirral had reduced in 2016 by working with a number of partner agencies. She outlined a number of diversionary activities which had been arranged through the summer.

A Member expressed concern at the secondment of a Neighbourhood Inspector for Wallasey to Liverpool and suggested that the concerns of this Committee should be communicated to the Area Commander.

With regard to the use of dispersal orders a Member suggested that there was a need to look at this in the round so that a problem was not moved from one area to another.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

10 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair informed the meeting that no relevant questions had been received in advance of the meeting.

The Chair then invited questions from the audience.

A resident of Poulton, Mr D Felton, referred to the number of street lights which were not lit between Poulton, Seacombe and Liscard, approximately 50 within about a 5 miles radius.

The Chair suggested that Mr Felton be informed of the Council's response via the Constituency Manager and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

[Subsequent to the meeting, a response from the Head of Environment and Regulation had been sent to Mr Felton and the wording of the response is appended to the minutes].

11 COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES' UPDATE

The Chair invited Jenni Jones to give an update on behalf of the Community Representatives. She informed the meeting that a questionnaire was being circulated to the audience and responses would be collated.

The Chair referred to the fact that John Carson's term as a Community Representative would finish before the next meeting and in his absence thanked him for his work with the Committee.

12 SEPTEMBER 2015 FLOODING: INVESTIGATION REPORT

Mark Camborne, Head of Corporate and Community Safety, introduced Richard James, Flood Risk Consultant, of AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited to give a presentation on the findings of the Flood and Water Management Act, Section 19 Flood Investigation covering the flood events from 22 August to 2 September, 2015.

Also present were Neil Thomas, Team Leader, Highway Assets, John Kinsella from the Environment Agency along with Barry Cropper and Peter Tallboys from United Utilities.

Mr James gave a presentation in relation to how the floods affected the Wallasey constituency area. He referred to the fact that there was little to no warning of the 1 and 2 September event as the Met Office had considered the weather conditions to be insufficient to trigger a National Severe Weather Warning. Both flood events had resulted from a significant depth of rainfall over a relatively short period. The flooding resulted from a number of different

sources and mechanisms. All agencies and organisations were involved in responding to the flooding as the events unfolded. The slow capture and exchange of information may have limited the effectiveness and speed of the authority response. The Section 19 Flood Investigation had made recommendations to improve communications and resilience of the communities at risk. The full Investigation report was available to view at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/communities%20and%20neighbourhoods/Emergencies/Flooding/Flood%20report%20August%202015.pdf>

The Section 19 Flood Investigation had 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.

Responding to comments, Mr James suggested that had flood forecasting and weather forecasting information been available a couple of hours before the rain and flooding, then Council staff could have been on the ground earlier to help people.

In response to comments from Members, Mark Camborne's comments included:

- The Environment Agency was now using a river level monitor downstream at Acton Lane and a revised trigger level to issue flood warnings.
- Nationally and regionally a lot of work was taking place in producing predictive models and a hazard manager system.
- Mersey Now, the community messaging service for Merseyside, would also be used for text alerts and he would provide details of this to all the Committee members.
- The Council or the other agencies (Environment Agency and United Utilities) had been in contact with every resident who had been flooded.
- There were a number of social housing properties which were flooded but worryingly the repairs undertaken by the housing associations had put back what was there before rather than incorporating some flood resistance and / or resilience measures.
- He acknowledged that the Council's response was uncoordinated and elaborated on new measures which had been put in place with the Environment Agency and he would like to think that the response to a similar situation would not be the same again.
- The Council was working with colleagues in Sefton to secure 3,000 hydro bags which would be issued to all the properties which had been affected by the 2015 flooding events and it was hoped these would be available within four weeks.

- Some funding was available from the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee which would be used to provide property surveys and give advice as to what householders could do for their properties.

John Kinsella commented that a flood alert system had been in place for a number of years but some people were reticent to acknowledge that they lived within an area that was at risk even though flood maps were publicly available documents. Mr Kinsella also reported that the Environment Agency tried hard to engage with communities through very many events to raise awareness of flood risk. Being aware of flood risk and signing up for flood warnings could help residents prepare ahead of a flood event and give them more time to react when a flood was happening.

The Chair thanked Richard James, Mark Camborne, Neil Thomas, John Kinsella, Barry Cropper and Peter Tallboys for their attendance at the meeting.

Resolved – That the presentation and comments be noted.

13 **FUEL POVERTY ASSISTANCE: WALLASEY CONSTITUENCY**

Dominic Griffiths of Energy Projects Plus gave a presentation on the work of the charity which aimed to deliver solutions to fuel poverty and improve domestic energy efficiency across Merseyside and Cheshire.

He outlined the causes and solutions for fuel poverty and the projects which they were delivering, which included:

- Save Energy Advice Line
- Warm and Healthy Homes
- Wirral Fuel Debt Advice Service
- Health Through Warmth
- Merseyside Collective Switch
- Liverpool City Region Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Central Heating Fund and the Cheshire East DECC Central Heating Fund
- Wirral Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency Programme
- Wirral Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency Programme Solid Wall Insulation Scheme

He also gave details of a case study of a client who had benefitted by almost £8,000 through help in maximising income, energy efficient behaviour and energy efficient products.

During this item, Councillor Mooney declared a personal interest by virtue of her employment with Age UK.

Councillor Janette Williamson, as Cabinet Member for Public Health, urged Members and the wider public to keep an eye out for residents who might be in a vulnerable situation during the coming winter months and to take advantage of the service offered by Energy Projects Plus.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Mr Griffiths for his presentation and commended the project to all.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

14 **CONSTITUENCY BUDGET AND SPEND**

The Constituency Manager introduced a report which provided an update on the Constituency Committee's committed spend and outlined the Committee's budget for 2016/17. It also sought the Committee's views on how the budget was allocated. The Core budget of £50,000, with the addition of three underspent budgets, amounted to £55,513.08.

At Wallasey Constituency Committee on 26 June 2014 (minute 9 refers), the Committee agreed its three year priorities to:

- improve personal wellbeing
- improve economic wellbeing
- improve neighbourhood wellbeing

An up-to-date profile for Wallasey Constituency was currently being developed which would be used in due course to inform a Constituency Plan for the area. This would be developed following the production of a new Neighbourhood Working Strategy. With there being a large number of ongoing projects, funded by the Committee, currently being delivered, including the Constituency based project of the New Brighton Coastal Community Team, the Constituency Manager recommended that the Committee gave consideration to investing its available budget to supporting local communities with Christmas lighting displays, supporting the existing work of New Brighton Coastal Community Team and providing a further grants programme to both support local voluntary, community and faith groups and to help the Committee tackle its priorities.

With regard to the Problem Solving Fund, since the last meeting an amount of £70 had been allocated for four 'Do not feed the birds' signs at the model boating lake in New Brighton. An amount of £14,480 remained in the Problem Solving Fund.

A 'community clean ups' budget was available of £10,000 and also a devolved budget of £32,500 from the Transport Plan for Growth.

The Chair agreed that the Committee consider each recommendation in turn.

The Constituency Manager reported that since the local election only one party spokesperson had been in place and the Committee handbook required that two party spokespersons administer the Problem Solving Fund.

The Chair asked if the Conservatives wished to put forward a spokesperson. Councillor Blakeley stated that it should be for the Committee to allocate funding from the Problem Solving Fund.

On a motion by Councillor Janette Williamson, seconded by Councillor Chris Spriggs, it was –

(1) Resolved (11:3) (One abstention) – That the Chair be designated to administer the Problem Solving Fund and any spend agreed between Committees be reported back to the subsequent Committee.

With regard to recommendations 2 and 3 and Community Clean Ups, Members asked regarding the provision of extra litter bins including collection and also the possibility of providing skips for communities to clear large items of rubbish.

The Constituency Manager stated that she would make enquiries regarding any ongoing revenue charge in respect of emptying any additional bins bought by the Committee. Any suggestions for further community clean ups should be sent to her in the next three weeks on or before 23 October; these could then be costed up and brought back to the January Committee.

(2) Resolved – That £3,000 be allocated from the devolved ‘community clean ups’ budget for the purchase of a supply of litter pickers and bag hoops (for free loan) and compostable bin bags to support community-based cleansing activity and environmental clean ups.

(3) Resolved – That suggestions for ‘clean up’ projects be forwarded to the Constituency Manager on or before 23 October, as to how the remainder of the devolved budget can be allocated and a report be brought back to the January Committee with these items costed up.

With regard to the devolved budget for Transport Plan for Growth of £32,500, the Constituency Manager reported that she had received some suggestions as to how this money could be spent and asked that any more suggestions be sent to her in the next two weeks, on or before 16 October so that these could be costed up and brought back to the January Committee.

(4) Resolved – That suggestions for the Transport Plan for Growth budget be forwarded to the Constituency Manager on or before 16 October, and a report be brought back to the January Committee with these items costed up.

With regard to the core budget of £55,513.08 it was then moved by Councillor Chris Blakeley and seconded by Councillor Steve Williams, that –

“An allocation of £20,000 be made for Christmas lighting and the remaining £35,513.08 be divided equally between the six wards with £5,918.84 being allocated to projects within each ward.”

The motion was put and lost (4:11).

The Committee then debated the proposed allocation of the core budget with some Members suggesting less to be spent on the Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund and others suggesting a larger allocation. Some Members expressed reservations at the proposed allocation to the New Brighton Coastal Community Team as millions of pounds had already been spent on the resort.

The Chair suggested that the New Brighton Coastal Community Team was slightly different from other groups and that it was working with other coastal teams around the country.

The Constituency Manager informed the meeting that the proposed funding would help in delivering the Economic Plan for the resort and New Brighton was being used as a blueprint with a view to developing the approach across the borough. The bulk of the spend on Christmas lights was for installation and community groups did rely heavily on this funding.

Two alternative proposals for the allocation of the £55,513.08 budget were then each proposed and seconded as follows:

A. Christmas Lighting	- £20,000
New Brighton Coastal Communities Team	- £10,000
Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund	- £25,513.08
B. Christmas Lighting	- £20,000
New Brighton Coastal Communities Team	- £10,000
Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund	- £15,000
With a reserve fund of	- £10,513.08

Each proposal was put and not carried (6:6).

A compromise proposal was then moved, seconded and carried (14:0), and it was -

(5) Resolved – That an allocation of further funding of £20,000, from the Committee’s core budget, for Christmas lighting, to support local traders’ associations and community groups for this festive season, be approved.

(6) Resolved – That an allocation of £10,000 be made to support the work of New Brighton Coastal Community Team from the Committee’s core budget, to support delivery of the Economic Plan for New Brighton, the use of which will be administered and overseen by the Constituency Manager on behalf of the Coastal Community Team.

(7) Resolved – That an allocation of £20,000 be provided for a further small grants programme (Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund) for 2016/17, from the Committee’s core budget, adopting the additional criteria set out in paragraph 4.2.22 of the report and the remaining £5,513.08 be held in reserves.

15 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR

Councillor Blakeley referred to the fact that an item on the recently published Ofsted report into Children’s Services was on the agenda of another Constituency Committee.

The Chair responded that it would not be appropriate to consider the report at this meeting and Members would have the opportunity to discuss this matter at future meetings.

Appendix to Minute 10 - response to question attached below

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Response to Mr Felton's question (see minute 10) from the Head of Environment and Regulation.

New LED units have been installed on all major traffic routes to improve the road network within Wirral and to dramatically reduce the Council's overall energy consumption. All units installed are to be controlled via our central management system (CMS). Unfortunately we have a technical problem that has caused a communication failure in certain areas and in turn resulted in some of the new lanterns switching on much later than anticipated, and in some locations not switching at all. We are currently working on this issue alongside the system manufacturer, Harvard Technology Ltd, and will have the matter resolved at the earliest opportunity.

Harvard Technology Ltd have been working closely with Wirral Council on the rollout of our LeafNut Central Management System, which enables the Council to save money, by remotely monitoring, managing and controlling our Street Lighting asset over the internet from a centrally controlled interface. LeafNut has been operating successfully in the area on a limited number of street lighting points for a number of years, utilising wireless radio and GPRS communication technology to apply dimming, profiles and time schedules to individual or groups of streetlights. Fault and energy consumption information are also reported back to the interface via the Central Management System, enabling more efficient maintenance activities and optimising energy management.

During 2015/16, we extended our CMS combined with the rollout programme of new LED lighting units. An Initial 7553 units have now been installed together with LeafNut CMS technology. Unfortunately some of the Radio Nodes (the hardware deployed on each streetlight) fell "out of communication" with the main control system, caused by an external interference or power event. Being "out of communication" in itself is not an issue, as redundancy in the system allows them to continue to operate in the way they were last instructed for up to 2 weeks. After this period, the Nodes will default to a normal "dusk until dawn" profile, based on the on-board light sensor which should have provided a default – failsafe operation of the lights. Upon further investigation however, some of the nodes have not "reset" themselves as expected and as such have remained locked "out of communication" with the central management system. The light sensor on the nodes was also calibrated to a level which has meant that those nodes which have been persistently "out of communication" (and as such which have entered the default light sensor operation) have been switching on much later than what would be the norm with existing streetlights.

A combination of the above has led to the observed "late / early switching", where lights do not come on or switch off as normally expected. Additionally some power supply and other problems encountered during installation have left some streetlights "unlit" and /or out of power. To address the observed issues and underlying causes, we have embarked on a significant programme of improvement in the following areas:

1. We are managing a weekly improvement programme together with Harvard Technology Ltd, our installation contractor and luminaire supplier to identify and

act on performance improvement of the CMS / LED install. This involves site diagnostic and installation visits, remote system management and a routine detailed review of CMS reported performance. This is imperative in the early stages of any rollout and assigns a priority emphasis on addressing any complaints, any “out of light” assets reported and items reported automatically by the CMS as faults or communication issues. Actions are assigned to the various stakeholders and progress is tracked and reported back to us on a weekly basis.

2. Replacement of the affected Nodes. Additional components and software changes have been made to new Nodes, to allow for greater resilience in the resetting function, in case they are affected by any external power or interference event in the future. These are now being deployed to the affected areas to ensure radio communication with the CMS is optimised.

The embedded Light Sensors on the new nodes have been set to levels more normal to those in place elsewhere in the Wirral. This will address “late switching” concerns, if lights are “out of communication” with the CMS for any reason in the future.

I will forward the locations identified onto the system manufacturer and I am confident that a full resolution to the concerns raised by Mr Felton will be achieved soon.