

AREA FORUM (BIDSTON AND CLAUGHTON)

Monday, 8 June 2009

Present:

Councillor	D Roberts (Chair)
Councillors	J Crabtree, G Davies, S Foulkes, AR McLachlan, H Smith
Community Representatives	Jean McIntosh
Lead Officer	John Webb, Director of Adult Social Services
Council Officers	Mike Collins (Community Safety Officer), Alf Mullin (Respect Bus)
Area Service Co-ordinator	Michelle Gray
Streetscene Manager	Garry Cummings
Merseyside Police	Sergeant Mike Cavanagh
Merseyside Fire and Rescue	Richard Clarke
NHS Wirral	Joyce Jackson (Public Governor), Joyce Magennis
Wirral University Teaching hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Marie Armitage, Joint Director of Public Health
In attendance	Ema Boddison (Minute Taker), John Martin (7 Waves Radio)
<u>Apologies</u>	Graham Cole (Business Representative), Pat Landsborough (Community Representative), Ken McDermott (older Peoples Parliament)

1 **WELCOME**

The Chair, Councillor Denise Roberts, welcomed forum members and 16 members of the public to the Bidston and Claughton Area Forum meeting being held at St James' Centre, Laird Street, Birkenhead. A loop system was installed for anyone with a hearing impairment.

Apologies were noted from Community Representative Pat Landsborough, Older Peoples Parliament Representative, Ken McDermott and Local Business Representative Graham Cole.

The Chair, Councillor Denise Roberts informed the Forum and members of the public of the new format of the area forum meeting that was taking place this evening

2 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Member of the Public asked about the new surgery in Laird Street, when is it due to open? As it was publicised that there would be a delay as the builders went into liquidation?

Marie Armitage was unsure if new contractors had been put in place due to the credit crunch.

Councillor George Davies advised new contractors have been put in place and the surgery should be open in the new year.

Member of the public raised an issue about the security at the allotments, there had been some progress but there are still some issues around civil disobedience.

Steve Foulkes replied that he has spoken to Clive Ranson about the allotments he and he has had a quote of £17k for fences. SF suggested maybe to try "Funds for You" or the health authority.

Member of the public asked why the drop crossing fitted in the Claughton/Bidston area was only completed Upton Road side and not Park Road North side. He said people are struggling with this, especially those with prams and wheelchairs.

Gary Cummings – 'I wasn't aware of this, it should never have been left and I will look into this' GC suggested a site meeting and will meet up after forum to arrange this.

Steve Foulkes – 'I would like to add that each area forum gets an allocation of money to spend on extra council services and road safety this is funded through "You Decide"

3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Sergeant Mike Cavanagh from Merseyside Police gave update of their progress. There have been seven arrests for Anti Social Behaviour – offenders have been charged except for those on the burglary matters. The respect bus has been placed on the Noctorum and there have been 16 arrests and 16 stop and searches which is a great success for the estate.

Mike Collins from Community Safety commented on how they have been working alongside youths with 'Beat the Bands', 'Don't give a dog a bad name' and the beanbag group are now involved with this project.

Richard Clarke informed the forum that there was an update on pages 14-15 of the forum papers, and highlighted the following:

Home Fire Risk Assessment – the target is that all homes on Merseyside will have received a home fire safety check by the end of this fiscal year. Anyone wishing to have their home checked can contact the fire service on the free phone number 0800 731 5958.

Home fire risk assessment plans have still to assess approx 250,000 homes. The campaign has been started in Claughton and if they cannot get in the houses they will leave the relevant contact information. If the property is derelict they will make a note of this as the property is prone to being set alight. If wheelie bins are left outside they are asking residents to move them so they are not a risk. There is a campaign to address issues around smoking related fires and to educate people on preventing this happening in their own homes.

Marie Armitage from NHS Wirral explained the reason for Miriam Medical Practices' new build being delayed due to the builders going into administration. Member of the public asked when this build would be finished, Marie was unsure and was advised by George Davies that it should be in the New Year. People have been complaining of lack of appointments with their GP's. Marie informed the forum that most GP surgeries are open until 8pm. The all day health centre is also now open based at Arrowe Park Hospital anyone can register there, but will still need to be registered with their own practice. The NHS full report can be found on pages 17 – 18 of the forum papers.

Funding to tackle disturbances fuelled by alcohol is £2.2 million. The NHS has introduced a new campaign for people with concerns over drinking in the local community for themselves, families and others they may know. It is also an initiative to educate and help young people around the misuse of alcohol will be promoted at the Wirral Show July.

George Davies commented that he seen an article in the Liverpool Echo with Dr Mantgani advising people that they will receive a tape measure in the post!

Marie Armitage confirmed this and explains that it is about measuring your waist to see if you are obese or not dependant on what colour the tape measure reaches around your waist. i.e yellow area means 'think', red area means 'serious'.

Joyce Magennis from NHS Hospital Trust spoke extensively how Wirral hospitals have developed and improved. Full report on the NHS developments can be found on pages 18-19 of the forum papers.

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Q – On 11 March 2009, David Bird wrote to the Wirral Globe re: Trust looking for Public Membership with a target figure. The Trust are forever asking for Public Membership, but why? They have meetings with big bosses and Governors and public do not really get a say!

Joyce Jackson – ‘ at the meeting in question there were only six public members present so they were outnumbered by Governors. The public are always invited to attend meetings, but not many did attend. The public will still have the vote as it is a democratic decision’. Meeting are advertised in the local press?

A petition signed by 176 people against speeding traffic on Fender Way was handed to the forum.

Harry Smith raised the point of the petition itself being political as it was on Liberal Democrat headed paper. He explained that he has already had talks with Geoff Bell from Technical Services and has already achieved slow signs, one at Upton end which is already done and one at Bidston end. He said they cannot put lights there to slow people down as people did not want that. The Fire Service Department had advised the Council against sleeping policemen/road bumps due to the road being an access road.

Q – ‘Opposite the Observatory School there looked like an exercise for the Fire and Police Services. Was it an emergency exercise Friday last week’?

Richard Clarke ‘ We were asked by the Council to open the tunnels, we had a large amount of equipment as no risk assessment for the tunnel had been done, we did not know what could be in the tunnel. There was nobody in there – Council closed the tunnel straight away’.

Steve Foulkes – commented how these tunnels where part of our heritage.

Jean McIntosh -. We are having problems with speeding cars and bikes on the Bidston Rise estate. Registrations have been given to the Police but nothing has been done. Are we going to wait for a child to be killed before anything happens? What is going on’?

Sgt Mike Cavanagh – ‘I will look into it as I do not know what has been handed in’.

Jean also commented that she is very disappointed over the Police response over the cars in Bidston Rise. However she wanted to highlight to the forum that the Community Support Officers are doing a cracking job on Bidston Rise Estate.

There is a gang of youths always at the shops and I feel very intimidated along Hoylake Road, Bidston. Their ages range from 10 – 11 and 20 – 21. sometimes they are nice but other times are very abusive, on one occasion out of approximately 14 kids, 9 of them were drinking – where do they get it from?

Sgt Mike Cavanagh – Police are doing stop and searches and this is still going on, this is part of the Tapestry Gardens scheme, we will definitely do something within the local area and will keep forum updated on progress.

Someone was attacked when walking home by a man who jumped out of an alley. The assailant produced a knife but did not pierce the skin and ended up in a wheely bin and he is still shaken. How long does it take for the Police to come and see you after an incident like this? He will not walk past alleys now. Alleygates were supposed to be fitted but the residents opposed.

George Davies – ‘ Every house in that area had signs in their windows saying ‘say no to alleygates’. I wanted alleygates and went back a second time and still had the same response. We don’t have the funding anymore for alleygates. You would have to pay yourself unfortunately and they cost around £1500 each.’

Steve Foulkes – ‘I could not understand why that area did not want them. Have a look in the ‘You Decide’ for any possible funding’ for alleygates this is one of the options one the questionnaire.

Harry Smith – ‘From the Councils point of view there are no objections’

Q – ‘I thought they could go up and people could just petition after?’

Steve Foulkes advises against this as he would be unpopular afterwards and to go through ‘You Decide’.

George Davies – ‘Two years ago the entry to Alderley Avenue was the first to have alleygates. They got fed up of waiting for the gates so paid for them themselves and they were made up however, they have now adopted that alley and are liable’

Chair advised forum members and the community to take advantage to look around the St James Centre and visit the exhibition stands, these provided information on:

- 7 Waves Radio
- What’s on at the St James Centre
- Bidston Hill
- Alcohol awareness
- You Decide – 2008/2009 expenditure
- “Funds for You” – £15,500 plus an additional £5,000 from NHS Wirral
- You Decide 2009/2010 – £20,000 for additional services plus an additional £18,200 for road safety
- Respect Bus – there are an opportunity to go on the respect bus that was outside the centre this bus was to travel all over Wirral to engage with all young people

The questionnaire was available for completion by any Wirral resident. Young people under the age of 16 will need parent/guardian consent. There will be a three month consultation period for this. Please take copies for relatives and neighbours, and let me know if you need any advice or information on the questionnaire or if there are any groups you would like us to consult with.

5 NEXT AREA FORUM MEETING

Next meeting will be held on Thursday 8th October 2009 at a venue to be confirmed.

Anyone who has any suggestions on other venues / areas to hold future forums to contact Michelle Gray – tel: 0151 691 8213; e-mail: michellegray@wirral.gov.uk .

George Davies congratulated the St James Centre for winning Wirral Community Champion at the Strictly Regeneration (HMRI) Awards.

