

AREA FORUM (GREASBY/FRANKBY/IRBY, UPTON, WOODCHURCH)

Monday, 19 October 2009

Present:

Chair	J Quinn (Chair)
Councillors	T Smith G Gardiner, P Reisdorf
Community Representatives	Maureen Cain (Woodchurch Board Member), Ron Green (Greasby Community Association), Jean Robinson (Overchurch Residents Association), John Smith (Greasby Community Association), Mark Stevenson (Woodchurch Neighbourhood Board Member)
Lead Officer	David Smith (Deputy Director of Finance)
Area Service Co-ordinator	Andy Brannan
Street Scene Manager	Dave Green (Director of Technical Services)
Wirral University Teaching Hospital Trust	Pat Higgins
NHS Wirral	Glen Coleman
Merseyside Police	Inspector Brian Griffiths
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	Sarah Patterson
Community Safety	Jim Thompson
Council Officers	Jo Burrell (Woodchurch Neighbourhood Management Board Co-ordinator)
In Attendance Councillors	Ema Boddison (Minute Taker), Tony Garrett (Secretary for Wirral Transport), Tony McDonough (Merseytravel)

1 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair, Councillor J Quinn, welcomed forum members and 21 members of the public to the Greasby, Frankby, Irby, Upton and Woodchurch Area Forum meeting being held at Greasby Methodist Church, Greasby Road, Greasby.

2 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING, INCLUDING AREA CO-ORDINATORS REPORT

Area Co-ordinator went through previous minutes pointing out the matters arising on page 14 and highlighted the fact that the results of the 'You Decide' surveys were now all submitted and awaiting perusal. He explained again what the 'You Decide' scheme was and invited anyone with any questions to contact him personally and he would be happy to help. The results of how the 'You Decide' money is spent will be brought to the next are forum in February.

2.1) Q – There is no return address on these questionnaires regarding the You Decide Scheme.

Andy Brannan – The questionnaires have a return free post address for Mott McDonald on the front of them. They are an independent research company who are collating the questionnaires and results on behalf of the Community Engagement Team.

2.2) Mark Stevenson (Woodchurch Neighbourhood Board Member) asked if he could receive a hard copy of the minutes before each Forum as he did not receive them via e-mail and now feels unprepared for this forum.

Andy Brannan (Area Co-ordinator) – you are on my distribution list and I will see you get hard copy in the future.

2.3) Q – Why are the papers not on the internet from the last meeting?

Andy Brannan – The minutes are usually placed on the internet by the Community Engagement Team. Unfortunately due to a misunderstanding in communication within our team, this was not done this time.

Chair – I would like to know what the problem was so it can be prevented in the future.

2.4) Q – It is not good that we only see the minutes the night of the forum; we should have access one month after the forum has been held.

Andy Brannan- give me your details at the end and I will make sure you get a copy.

Chair – it used to be that whoever signed in on the night can get a copy.

Andy Brannan – This can be arranged.

Chair – I would like to know what the process for the minutes is at the moment.

Agreed: that all documents should be available on the website in good time and sent out electronically or in hard copy as necessary/requested

2.5) Q – Why do we have to wait until after the meeting to bring up our points?

Andy Brannan- People can raise issues with me anytime in between the forums. They don't have to wait until the meeting itself. My contact details are always on the front of the coordinators report and I am more than happy to take people's issues if they contact me.

2.6) Page 7 of previous minutes – member of the public asked is this to be carried out? (pruning of overhanging trees)

Jim Thompson – Was checked for the health of the trees.

Dave Green – 30,000 trees are under contract with Amenity Tree Care to check trees over 3 years for safety or to prevent a hazard. We have different priorities, priority 1 being dangerous and priority 3 being hanging over people's gardens etc. We are trying to work through it.

Tony Garrett (Secretary for Wirral Transport) – trees were cut back along bus routes that were hitting buses.

2.7) John Smith (Greasby Community Association) – with reference to page 9, giving power back to the people, we are a joint Management Committee established since 1984. We have a meeting with Jim Wilkie to discuss repairs and take the transfer forward. In 2011 the Council will close Greasby Community Centre so we need support if you want the Community Centre to be under our control.

2.8) Ron Green – page 8 of previous minutes – would like to point out that we have discovered it is not the PCTs responsibility to supply lighting to help with parking for the new dentists on the car park at Coronation Park. WBC has drawn up a plan and can supply lighting at a reduced cost although GOAL's application to the Lottery for funding was turned down therefore GOAL needs to raise the money to pay for the lighting.

Page 12 – there was a questionnaire re activities people would like in Greasby sent out in the last Greasby Messenger and the results have now been printed in the latest addition.

3 AREA PLANS UPDATE

The Chair explained to the members of the public what the area plan is and the fact that it is a few years old now needed to be renewed. Members of the public are being encouraged to voice their opinion and it was suggested by the Forum that some sort of road show was put in place to promote area plans.

3.1) Q – Does this include assets?

Chair – Yes

Cllr Gardiner – I think we need a whole session really just on this topic.

Q – Can we see it online?

Andy Brannan – www.wirral.gov.uk under ‘area forum’. We want people to comment on how to do it and we are really interested in getting everybody’s opinion.

Q – How soon can we have the meeting, as it’s important to see the plans before we can comment?

Chair – I agree that people need to have the current plans to work from and feel we need a meeting dedicated to this one evening or in the afternoon.

Q – People would still prefer to have a hard copy of the Area Plan. Everything on this agenda should have been sorted a long time ago.

Andy Brannan – the area forums are all about listening to residents’ issues.

Chair – I think people are not happy with how the paperwork is dealt with and it is a valid point and we need to take it back and look into it – we only have 3 of these per year and different people attend each time so it is difficult to send paper information to everyone.

Cllr Smith – How are the area forums and plans advertised?

Andy Brannan – We advertise in the local press, posters, GP surgeries, dentists, libraries. However anyone can raise an issue with the Community Engagement Team anytime in the year.

3.2) Q – Is it feasible to get something for November with regards to the asset review?

Chair -We will see what can be done. We can raise this issue on the next forum

Chair –If anyone wants electronic information please let us have your e-mail address at the end.

Agreed: to request a special area forum meeting to discuss the Area Plan with format and date to be arranged

4 MERSEYTRAVEL QUESTIONS + ANSWERS

4.1) Tony Garrett - There is now a service every 10 minutes to Birkenhead and Arrowe Park Hospital so I would just like to say well done however my friend lives in a side street and has to walk a long way, with walking sticks, to get to the bus stop. You need to take that into consideration.

Tony McDonough (Merseytravel) – if he is registered disabled then we do have a ‘link’ bus which can get him to the bus stop.

Chair – we have done a survey for that reason – we were hoping to be able to provide a bus through all the little estates but the cost was in excess of the funds available. However we do have an application in to accessibility funds for an additional system of volunteer drivers to get people to their GP surgery etc.

4.2) Tony Garrett – there is no service after 6:30pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays – can you update us on this?

Tony McDonough – we are getting ‘new powers’ and when they come into force we will work closely with the Council. 80% are commercially operated who take a revenue risk. 20% is what I run because people don’t want to because it is not commercially viable i.e. small buses to Arrowe Park Hospital – our team are dedicated and will look into this. If anybody has got any concerns I will take them back with me and I will definitely return with a response.

4.3) Q – We don’t have a direct school bus from Woodchurch to Wallasey. I have to get the bus at 7:20am to get to school

Tony McDonough – We do provide local school buses and unfortunately if you have decided to go to a non local school I am afraid I could not help you with that as an individual. It costs £60k per year to run a school bus. All I can do is apologise.

4.4) Q – Compared to before privatisation, what do we get from our services?

Tony McDonough – will look at everything more even split, we have a good service and work with operators so buses are more often and hopefully in the future we can look at pricing. We will never get back to how it was but with our strategy, we will get better.

4.5) Q - After a residents forum 2 months ago we were getting reports from young people that they get charged full fare when they are in full time education. Can teachers sign some sort of ID? I just feel that the attitude of bus drivers is quite bad and sometimes the young people don’t have the money to pay full fare.

Tony McDonough – drivers have been fully trained and they should never leave anybody behind.

Q – Avon buses did – they left a young girl behind.

Tony McDonough – I will take these issues back to my team and we work closely with schools.

4.6) Maureen Cain – why are we down on buses on the Woodchurch?

Tony McDonough I cannot comment on that I am afraid. Maybe it was because it was not profitable. Maybe invite someone from that bus company next time.

4.7) Tony Garrett First Bus have old double decker buses on school routes, is this right?.

Tony McDonough – we do have standards, so old buses should not be utilised.

Chair - Shall we invite the bus companies to the next Area Forum to clarify some of the issues raised tonight?

Public – agreed

4.8) Q – There is no zebra crossing by where I live so we can't see properly to cross the road

Chair – This is not really a matter for Merseytravel

Dave Green – I will speak to you at the end. A traffic engineer can come out and meet you.

Chair – I think Joseph Smith is already looking into this so you will need to speak to him as well.

4.9) Tony Garrett – I would just like to point out that it is very hard to get private companies to come to these meetings. We have tried in the past.

Tony McDonough If you do have any questions I will try and answer them. I can do a bulletin of answers and feed them back to Andy.

5 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

5.1) Q – I was hoping Climate Change Department was here so I could get some news on the Carbon Footprint.

Andy Brannan – unfortunately there as no one available to attend today. Member of the public did not ask his questions in advance.

6 **PARTNER ORGANISATIONS UPDATE**

Inspector Brian Griffiths Merseyside Police

Went over his newsletter as to what is going on in the area which is available to all residents and should have been posted. If it is not posted you can contact them or it can be accessed on line via Merseyside police. Brian Griffiths requested that members of the public be more vigilant as burglary rates have gone up slightly in the area mainly from sheds. He then proceeded to explain how the Police are working in partnership with the Fire service to put in place new bonfire strategies (pg 21 of previous minutes).

Brian Griffiths also explained how his team have spent the last 2 Fridays taking alcohol of youths after doing 'spot checks' which has been extremely successful, confiscating over 400 bottles/cans. He would like to encourage people to call the Police if they do see groups of youths 'hanging around'. This may decrease the number of thefts from off licences as well although it is not just children it is adults with alcohol problems as well and we are working closely with the ASB team.

6.1) Q – It was claimed in the newspaper that a local MP said that 300 children were involved with the ASB team on the Woodchurch alone?

Brian Griffiths- We cover Prenton, Upton and Greasby as well and my target is 3 per day in relation to ASB and I rarely go over that – sometimes it can go up to 5 over a busy weekend.

Member of the public stated that he was just upset as he lives on the Woodchurch and didn't like the fact that it was being labelled with a bad name.

Brian Griffiths – I agree – there is not over 300 youths involved in ASB on the Woodchurch alone.

6.2) Maureen Cain – The One Stop Shop (Convenience Store) on the Woodchurch is selling to under age children.

Public – Upton is a hot spot lately

Brian Griffiths- I will definitely look into it and report back to the forum

6.3) Q. Ron Green – the whole of Wirral is to become an alcohol free zone which would include Coronation Park. Where do we stand on that?

Brian Griffiths – I will have to get back to you on that.

Jim Thompson – there are a number of places on the Wirral. I believe it is down to discretion. They are mainly put in places where there is an identified problem.

Brian Griffiths – OK – I would like to know where exactly on the Woodchurch is alcohol free.

6.4) Ron Green – People regularly gather in Coronation Park, especially youths to drink. If anyone sees issues like this please call the Police if they ever see this happening. It doesn't matter how many times people ring, just keep ringing each time you see it.

Brian Griffiths – We are aware of this and it is being looked in to.

Pat Higgins Wirral Hospital NHS Trust

Brief note contained in the pack that everyone received. MRI scanner will be ready at the end of the month. The Ronald McDonald house has now been opened for parents with sick children. It is free to parents and is excellent

If anybody would like to be a member of the NHS Trust they can get a pack at the end of the forum.

6.5) Tony Garrett – Have you got the new Park and Ride bus yet?

Pat Higgins- It hasn't arrived yet.

Tony Garrett – I would just like to add that I am aware that you now have 86 new parking spaces for blue badge holders which is amazing.

Ron Green Greasby Community Association

Informed forum of the fact that he has now secured funding for 2 new benches at the top of Wood Lane.

John Smith Greasby Community Association

Explained to forum how a small group of volunteers have planted bulbs around the Community Centre and the Library and asked that if anybody spots anything wrong with the trees to let him know. Will update everybody on the Christmas lights in the Greasby Messenger.

Sarah Patterson Merseyside Fire and Rescue

Read over her extensive report enclosed in pack. Confirmed the new Bonfire strategy put in place in partnership with Merseyside Police and ASB team which actually started today.

6.6) Q – How are you reducing your Carbon Footprint?

Sarah Patterson – we perform house checks, reduce our diesel, reduce our heating at the fire stations and we get checked constantly.

6.7) Q – We have asked a few times to use the fire station garden, community room and have been denied. Could you tell me why?

Sarah Patterson – I don't understand why you were denied – you should have been allowed to use it.

Maureen Cain Woodchurch

The Woodchurch is going to Southport on Thursday to get an award for 'Woodchurch in Bloom' which is a great achievement. Young people have been awarded the 'Peoples Champions Award' – one girl teaches 30 children to dance each week in her own time.

Jean Robinson Overchurch Residents Association

Thanked Inspector Brian Griffiths on behalf of residents for the section 30 as they feel the area has improved.

6.8) Mark Stevenson Woodchurch Board Member

Stated that he asked in the last forum for somebody from Equality and Diversity to be here and they have not attended and have had no explanation as to why therefore could not give an update. Stressed that he felt like he was letting his residents down due to the fact that he did not have time to read the previous minutes as he did not receive them until the day of the forum.

Chair apologised and proceeded to ask if he had any particular points.

Mark Stevenson replied that his points were the same points he brought up in the last forum but no one has attended from Equality and Diversity to answer his questions.

Glen Coleman NHS Wirral

Read an extensive report enclosed in the papers. Informed the forum that it is now time to go and get their seasonal flu vaccine – this does not cover the H1N1 (swine flu) therefore if you get an invite for either of the flu jabs then please go for them.

6.9) Tony Garrett – are Dentists in each ward doing NHS work?

Glen Coleman - I am not an expert on Dentists I am afraid – I can get details for next time.

7 **FUTURE MEETINGS / PRESENTATIONS**

The next Area Forum was confirmed for Wednesday 10th February with a venue to be confirmed.

8 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

8.1) Q –there was £18k put aside for transport – what are the results of how spent?

Andy Brannan – I can give you the results at the end.

8.2) Q – Carbon footprint – what is happening in the domestic properties

Cllr Gardner – we have Wirral Warm Front Zones where we offer free insulation is available for those on benefits and over 70s there is information on the Council website which will tell you what grants are available in your area.

Q – Are Climate Change Officers going to help?

Cllr Gardner- Yes. They have only been in post one month. It depends on the funding so we have put a bid in for extra funding for insulation and there are grants available.

Q – What about solar panels?

Cllr Gardner – The Council has now obtained approval from the landlord to install solar panels in the Cheshire Lines building

8.3) Q – Are we going to receive something in writing in relation to you decide?

Andy Brannan – some decisions still need to be made and approved yet between the panel, Community Representative and Councillors and we will get back to you at the next forum. We do this as there may be issues we come across i.e. somebody may not want a bin by their house etc.

8.4) Q – Library report – do the public get a copy of this?

Cllr Gardner – it is not down to us to make that decision – it is a Government decision.

Chair – the Secretary of State will decide if and when the report will be available to the public.

Q – The public deserve to know about this and have access to it.

Cllr Gardner – it is not our report and it is not our decision.

The Chair and Area Co-ordinator thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting was concluding at 9pm

9 **MINUTE DECISIONS**

MINUTE DECISIONS:

2.3-2.4) Area Forum Documents to be out in good time both electronically and in hard copy where necessary/requested.

ACTION: Andy Brannan

2.2) Mark Stevenson (Woodchurch Neighbourhood Board Member) will receive a hard copy of the Agenda and Minutes for the Area Forum in plenty of time for the next meeting.

ACTION Andy Brannan

3.1) Special Meeting to be arranged to discuss Area Plan

ACTION: Andy Brannan

3.2) Information re the Asset Review to be supplied by November

ACTION: Andy Brannan

4.2) Tony McDonough –Will answer any concerns people may have about lack of buses after 6.30 pm

ACTION: All, Tony McDonough and Andy Brannan

4.5) Buses must not leave vulnerable children behind (especially Avon Buses). Also lack of buses on the Woodchurch

ACTION 1. Tony McDonough – to take this back to his team who work closely with schools.

ACTION 2. Andy Brannan to invite bus companies to the next Area Forum

4.8) Need new pedestrian crossing in Greasby for lady with visual impairment

ACTION: Dave Green to take details and arrange for a traffic engineer to meet her on site.

6.2) The One Stop Shop (Convenience Store) on the Woodchurch is selling to under age children.

ACTION Brian Griffiths- to look into it and report back to the forum

6.4) Is Wirral an alcohol free zone which would include Coronation Park?

ACTION: Brian Griffiths to report back

6.7) Sometimes people unable to use Community facilities at the Fire Station

ACTION: Sarah Patterson to find out why.

6.8) Someone to attend next Area Forum from Equality and Diversity to answer Mark Stevenson's questions.

ACTION: Andy Brannan

6.9) Are Dentists in each ward doing NHS work?

ACTION: Glen Coleman to get details for next time.