

# AREA FORUM (LEASOWE, MORETON AND SAUGHALL MASSIE)

Tuesday, 9 June 2009

## Present:

Councillor	S Mountney (Chair)
Councillors	RL Abbey, C Blakeley, IO Coates, I Lewis, S Moseley
Community Representatives	Bruce Martin (Faith Representative), B Seddon
Lead Officer / Area Service Co-ordinator	Tracey Smith
Merseyside Police	Inspector Peter Kolokotroni
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	John Davies
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Alistair Bardsley
Council Officers	Mike Collins, Community Safety Brian Smith, Street Scene, Technical Services Department
Apologies	Jason Borlase, Jane McLear

## 1 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair, Councillor S Mountney, welcomed Forum members and 15 members of the public to the meeting of the Leasowe, Moreton and Saughall Massie Area Forum in Moreton.

Apologies for absence were received from Jane McLear and from Jason Borlase, Faith representative. Jason Borlase's work has taken him away from the area and he is no longer able to attend meetings of the area forum.

The Chair invited Forum members to introduce themselves.

### **Minute decision:**

**Resolved: That Jason Borlase be thanked for all his efforts on behalf of the Area Forum.**

## **2 AREA CO-ORDINATORS REPORT AND YOU DECIDE**

The minutes of the last meeting were incorporated into Section 1 of the Area Service Co-ordinator's report. There were no matters arising.

Section 2 of the Area Service Co-ordinator's report contained Local Updates on Community Safety, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Equality and Diversity, Wirral University Teaching Hospital, NHS Wirral, Wired, Youth update, Transport update and Wirral's Older People's Parliament. Anyone who wishes to raise questions, or receive a copy of the report in advance, should contact the Area Service Co-ordinator [details on the front cover of the report].

The Area Service Co-ordinator reminded the meeting that the area forum received £20,000 in 2008 for additional Council services. The funding had been used to provide benches and additional litter bins in the Moreton and Saughall Massie areas, and on sports facilities in Leasowe. She introduced Jane Smith Community Sports Development Co-ordinator, who was in the audience.

A further grant of £20,000 will be available to spend in 2009. Further information is available in the 'Funds for You' application pack.

At the last meeting, the Area Forum voted in favour of receiving a share of the Integrated Transport Block. As a result, £18,200 has been devolved to this Area Forum and can be used for local schemes such as lowered kerb crossing, modest local signposting and road lining schemes. Members of the public are asked for suggestions for spending this year's transport block allocation by completing a survey.

**Minute decision:**

**Resolved: That**

- i the minutes of the Area Forum meeting of 25 February 2009 be confirmed as a true record;**
- ii the Area Co-ordinator be thanked for her report.**

## **3 SEVEN WAVES RADIO**

The Chair welcomed John Martin, Community Development Officer for 7 Waves Community Radio.

7 Waves Community Radio is a state of the art media centre housed in a new building opened in July 2008 in Twickenham Drive, Leasowe, on the site of the old community centre.

7 Waves is a registered charity and any profits made are invested in the community. The station has been awarded a 5-year licence by Ofcom and broadcasts live 24 hours a day/7 days a week on 92.1.FM. The target audience is the whole Wirral population. Daytime programming is focused on the 25-55 age groups, and offers a

mix of essential local information, local news and music. Specialist evening shows give added value to the offer.

7 Waves non-music features include global, international and local news, traffic and travel, weather, faith interviews, local sports events and interviews, community events, topical debate, health concerns and awareness, business interviews, job and training vacancies, leisure news, school news and events.

The new media training centre has two radio training suites, two broadcasting suites, a news suite and a live room for use by local bands and artistes.

7 Waves radio runs 12-week radio production courses using industry standard equipment, that enables students to learn all aspects of the radio industry, including editing, writing radio commercials, voice-overs, interviewing, making jingles and presentation skills. Students are given the opportunity to broadcast on air at the end of the course.

**Minute decision:**

**Resolved: That John Martin be thanked for a most interesting presentation.**

**4 AGE CONCERN**

Pat Lloyd explained that Age Concern has been running as a Charity on Wirral for 61 years. It started with one person in 1948, and now has 80 paid staff and hundreds of volunteers.

Wirral has a higher-than average number of older people, with about 75,000 over the age of 60. The fastest growing group is the over 80's, with 3,000 over the age of 90. Income to support the services provided is raised through charity shops and insurance services.

In a comprehensive presentation, Pat described the services and facilities provided in Wirral for people over the age of 50, and on the support provided for older people by volunteers.

A guide to services and leaflets giving contact details were available at the meeting.

Pat answered questions on eligibility for disability living allowance, attendance allowance, the befriending service, and the vetting process used in the recruitment of volunteers.

**Minute decision:**

**Resolved: That Pat Lloyd be thanked for a most useful and informative presentation.**

## 5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Prior to accepting questions from members of the public, the Chair invited Brian Jenkins, United Utilities, to discuss the major road works scheme in Hoylake Road, and to address any questions raised on the impact on the local community.

Brian Jenkins explained that United Utilities are relaying the water main along Hoylake Road from Chadwick Street to Carr Lane. A mobile information centre had been set up at the Sacred Heart site in May, Press releases have been issued, and there have been leaflet drops in the local area. In the main, responses have been received from local businesses, with minimal interest shown by the general public.

The existing main, which was made from PVC, has broken down over time resulting in a number of leaks. The work will progress in 100m stretches and at all stages will comply with traffic management arrangements agreed with Wirral Council. Foam based concrete, which gives a smoother finish, will be used to infill the excavations. The work is currently behind schedule due to engineering problems, but is scheduled for completion in three months' time. Regular updates will be given via the Area Service Co-ordinator and on United Utilities' website.

Brian Jenkins responded to questions about the arrangements for traffic management at major road junctions, the role of the customer liaison staff working with local businesses, and the arrangements to leaflet households along the route as the work progresses.

Brian Jenkins explains that there are no current plans for work to reduce flooding in Reeds Lane/Reedsville Grove, but he would investigate the issue.

### **General questions from members of the public:**

**Q I wish to bring your attention to the nuisance caused by the Plough Inn. There is a lot of noise caused by people who sit outside drinking, they are intimidating to people who are passing by, the area at the side of the pub is a mess with abandoned furniture etc. The area around the Plough Inn needs to be cleaned up, it is a disgrace and an eyesore in Moreton.**

**A** [Cllr Blakeley] the premises are licensed for the consumption of alcohol outside the premises, but I will speak to the Council's Licensing Section about nuisance being caused by patrons. The land is privately-owned, and whilst we can talk to the owners about cleaning it up, there is little the Council can do unless it is a harbour for rats and vermin.

[Police] No complaints have been received from local residents about problems caused by patrons who drink outside the Plough. However, the matter will be investigated.

**Q Is Birkenhead Town Hall definitely for sale?**

**A** [Cllr. Abbey] The use of Birkenhead Town Hall has changed over the years. It used to be the focal point for Council meetings for the old Birkenhead County Borough Council. When local government was re-organised in 1974, the Council Chamber for Wirral Council was relocated to Wallasey Town Hall. The building was included in the Strategic Assets Report, which has just been published.

**Q [Bob Seddon] We have representation on this area forum from various Council Departments, but there is no representation from the Education Department. I suggest that Education needs to be represented**

**A** [Area Service Co-ordinator]: We do not have representation from all Council Departments. If a specific issue is raised we would normally invite a representative from the relevant Department to attend and address the issue, or the matter would be passed to the appropriate Council Officer for action and/or response. Based on previous experience, it is unlikely that sufficient issues would be raised on education to justify representation on the Area Forum on a regular basis.

[Cllr. Abbey] Council Officers are called in on an ad hoc basis to address particular issues. Most questions are about Street Scene etc.

**Q I understand recycling bins have been allocated to some blocks of flats. Can you give an update?**

**A** [Brian Smith, Technical Services] A pilot scheme for multi-occupancy dwellings has been operating in difficult locations. If you can let me have your contact details I will give you an update on the particular properties you are interested in.

## 6 PARTNER ORGANISATIONS UPDATE

**NHS Wirral:** Martin McEwan apologised for the lack of representation by the Primary Care Trust at the last meeting. He drew attention to the launch of What? [Wirral Health and Alcohol Treatment], a campaign aimed at providing information about sensible drinking and signposting to services.

Wirral has a very high level of cardio-vascular disease compared with the rest of England, and there are vast differences in life expectancy of people who live in different parts of Wirral. In an effort to address the problem, everyone over the age of 40 will be invited to have a health check with a GP. People's waist sizes are a good indicator of their propensity for cardio-vascular disease and a tape measure will be included in a guide to health services, which will be distributed to all households in the coming months. People who have a concern do not have to wait for an invitation – they can contact their GP at any time and ask for a health check.

Swine Flu is well contained in Wirral with only one confirmed case to date. Plans are in place to deal with an expected outbreak of swine flu in the autumn/winter.

In response to a question on the availability of Dentistry Services in Wirral, Martin McEwan stated that a major consultation exercise had taken place that resulted in the identification of ten issues that are most important to the community. Dentistry had not been identified as a major priority for Wirral.

During a discussion on the number of private dentists operating in Wirral, a comment was made that people who live on Wirral have access to excellent dentistry services.

**NHS Foundation Trust:** Alistair Bardsley explained that the pack of materials available at the meeting included a Briefing Note for Local Area Forums and News Releases on Stroke Services and on the inclusion of the Trust in the country's top 40 performing hospital trusts for the third year in succession.

The issue of car parking charges had been raised at the last meeting. The car park at Arrowe Park Hospital is staffed by two attendants who are on duty from 8 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday. The income generated from the car park charges is used to offset the cost of employing the attendants and the car park security that is provided. The alternative would be to meet the costs at the expense of another service, and for that reason there are no plans to abolish car parking charges.

Consideration has been given to increasing capacity by building a multi-storey car park but during discussion with Council officers it became apparent that the granting of planning approval for such a development would be highly unlikely. 16 additional spaces have been allocated for use by disabled patients and visitors.

Hazel Kelly, a public governor for the Trust, introduced herself. She can be contacted via the hospital switchboard – Governors' office.

Alistair Bardsley responded to a question from a member of the public on infection control. A microbiologist has looked at the issue and concluded that the practice of staff coming to and from work dressed in their uniforms is not a risk to patients. Staff who deal directly with patients that are infectious change from their uniform into 'theatre blues'. Staff have lockers which they use for personal belongings and they have the option of changing into their own clothing to travel to and from work, but they choose not to.

**Police:** Inspector Peter Kolokotroni reported that crime and antisocial behaviour continues to fall year on year. Half of reported thefts from vehicles were due to vehicles being left in insecure vehicles with items on display. Extra patrols, uniformed and non-uniformed, have been deployed to identify offenders in car crime areas.

Antisocial behaviour amongst young people has dropped dramatically over recent years. During the summer holidays, plans are in place to target parks and open spaces where children congregate and drink alcohol and cause rowdy behaviour. Police Officers attend assemblies in secondary schools to deliver key messages to pupils about the problems associated with under-age drinking and anti-social behaviour.

Diversionary activities for young people include organising five-a-side football matches. Working with the Army, groups of young people are spending a week at a barracks in Staffordshire. The initiative has been very successful so far.

A member of the public raised the issue of the problems caused by a group of young people who congregate around Moreton Methodist Church.

Inspector Kolokotroni replied that the problem is mainly concerned with 'free runners'. Apart from the danger and risk of serious personal injury, the practice of jumping from one building to another causes structural damage to roofs and coping stones. Problem solving groups, made up of people from the Local Authority, Youth Service, Police and Anti-social behaviour team, are working together to combat the problem.

**Community Safety** Mike Collins explained that the Community Safety Team works closely with the Police and other partner agencies in issues ranging

from dealing with 'hot spots' for anti social behaviour to dog fouling when people are educated to be responsible pet owners.

**Fire and Rescue Service** John Davies reported that the fire services works proactively to reduce calls in the area, including anti social behaviour where young people light small fires etc.

Wallasey Fire Station is having an Open Day on 20 June between noon and 4 pm. Members of the public will be welcome to look at the fire appliances and equipment. Fund raising activities will be organised and the income generated will be donated to Claire House. Everyone will be welcome.

**Older People's Parliament:** People over the age of 50 are invited to become associate members of the Parliament. Associate members have the opportunity to have their voices heard on issues that are important to them, and they are eligible for election as a Public Member. A report on the activities of the Parliament is included on pages 33/34 of the Area Co-ordinator's report.

The next meeting of the Older People's Parliament will be on 4 September 2009 at 11 am in Wallasey Town Hall. A Crime & Respect event for the over 50's will take place at St Werburgh's Parish Centre, on Friday, 14 August 2009.

**Minute Decision:**

**Resolved: That Inspector Peter Kolokotronie, John Davies, Alistair Bardsley, Martin McEwan, Mike Collins and Margaret Testo be thanked for the updates.**

**7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - THURSDAY 8TH OCTOBER 2009**

**Minute decision: Resolved: That the next meeting of the Area Forum be held on Thursday, 8 October 2009 in Leasowe at a venue to be confirmed.**

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution and closed the meeting of the Area Forum at 8.45 pm.