

# CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - BIRKENHEAD

Thursday, 27 September 2018

Present:

Councillor G Davies (Chair)

Councillors	P Cleary	S Kelly
	P Davies	B Kenny
	P Doughty	J McManus
	S Foulkes	C Meaden
	EA Grey	

Apologies

Councillors	A Brame	M McLaughlin
	WJ Davies	G Wood

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

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests in connection with any items on the agenda and if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

## 11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allan Brame, Bill Davies, Moira McLaughlin and Gillian Wood.

## 12 MINUTES

### RESOLVED:

**That the minutes of the meeting of the Birkenhead Constituency Committee held on 13 June 2018 be approved as a correct record.**

## 13 HOLIDAY FOOD AND SUMMER FEEDING BIRKENHEAD ACTIVITIES

A presentation was given by Emma Wilkes, Company Director of Neo Community Café. Members were informed that a Holiday Activities and Food Bill had been put forward to Parliament in January 2017 which had not been passed however the Government had pledged to carry out a pilot.

Twelve projects had received money, seven of which were across Birkenhead. These provided 145 days of activities and food and the aim was to support families and provide memorable summer holidays.

It was reported that the Department for Education had allocated £25,215.09 for all 7 projects. There had been 888 children involved in the projects during the summer and 9,938 meals provided. The Department for Education were surprised by the response and naïve of the need for these projects, therefore it was hoped that a tender would go out for the summer holidays next year and extend to other areas of Wirral.

Some of the activities carried out included visits to Alton Towers, Chill Factore, Flamingo Land, Gulliver's World and bowling. It was reported that the project was supported by the Steve Morgan Foundation and that a visit had been made by Steve Morgan himself. A number of figures were provided which included the provision of 6,597 packed lunches, 5,000 breakfasts, 673 hot meals, 123 crisis hampers and 152 free haircuts. A total of 3,969 hours had been worked by volunteers.

In respect of Gautby Road, 470 children had attended which resulted in the provision of 2768 packed lunches, 500 breakfasts, 15 trips (two of which had been residential), 700 hotdogs and burgers, 152 haircuts, 28 days of activities, 2880 staff hours, 1897 miles driven and 1082 hours worked by volunteers which saved £18,000 in staffing costs.

Members were informed that it had been a very successful summer with many children engaged. Gautby Road had linked up with Neo Community Café and St James Community Centre and that the highlights had been not just the visits but also the opportunity for the children to have lunch and breakfast together.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That all involved be thanked for their exceptional hard work.**

#### **14 BIRKENHEAD IN BLOOM**

Mr George Thomas of Beechwood Community Trust gave a presentation to Members.

He referred to the North West in Bloom Competition 2018 and thanked the many residents and organisations who had provided floral arrangements. He advised that 31 of these had been entered into the competition.

Mr Thomas notified Members about Big Local which was a Big Lottery Fund national initiative. It involved bringing together local people, talent, ambitions, ideas, skills, assets and energy into the area to inspire community action. A part of the Beechwood Estate, the Ballantyne Estate and Bidston Village had been selected as a Big Local area. He reported that the funding was a charitable endowment of £1m to be spent over 10 years and that an

independent organisation called Local Trust had been set up to help local areas decide how to spend their allocations.

Members were advised that local people and stakeholders had developed a Big Local Plan and that there had been a number of positive outcomes including drawing external funds to Birkenhead, improving the environment, involving schools, supporting numerous environmental pledges and it was also a platform for volunteer groups and a target to work towards.

Angela Murphy, Chief Executive, Tomorrow's Women addressed the Committee. She advised that Tomorrow's Women was a charity for women over 18 who wanted to make positive lifestyle changes and that over 180 agencies had been involved and formulated a timetable of activities. Six thousand women had registered who had come from referrals through GPs, Police or because they had heard about the charity and about 160 women a day attended. She informed Members that they had moved into St Lawrence's in 2012 and further to receiving funding a plan had been drawn and the area had been transformed which was now an additional learning space for horticulture. Ms Murphy was proud to announce that the Charity had been nominated to put their garden forward for the North West in Bloom competition.

John Booth from Oxton addressed the Committee and advised that initially 14 hanging baskets had been installed on lampposts in Oxton and an additional 7 had been provided by the Council. The baskets had been maintained by a team of five volunteers, there were 40 baskets in 2009 and 42 baskets in 2010. During 2012/13 it had become increasingly difficult to water the baskets therefore a self-watering system had been devised. An attempt had been made to replicate this in Claughton however this had not been viable therefore artificial plants had been installed.

Eve Openshaw addressed the Committee and advised that she was the founder of 'Wezzy Gardens'. She explained that she had initially approached the Constituency Committee in respect of a grot spot and after further research had found out that the area was owned by Liverpool Housing Trust which then led her to work closely with a number of groups. She advised Members that Westbourne Road had a high crime rate and antisocial behaviour but that this had since reduced. She advised that the garden had opened in August which was a safe haven and promoted health and wellbeing as well as social skills which had led her to undertake courses and gain qualifications. This had brought communities together and had been entered into the Britain in Bloom competition. She reported that Westbourne Gardens was self-funded and they relied on donations and recycled items from skips.

Sheila Henry, Woodlands Park addressed the Committee and reported that a partnership had been set up by the Police with the Council as women and children had been suffering racial abuse in the area. Funding had been

received from Birkenhead Constituency and YMCA and a fun day had taken place on 21 July 2018 where communities came together for a day of entertainment. She thanked Birkenhead Constituency for providing money for the community to work in partnership.

Richard Barley, Environmental Services Manager, Onward Housing gave a presentation to Members. He advised that Beechwood had created an idea to renovate the area with a new 'mediterranean' look. He advised that a boat had been upcycled from Thurstaston beach which had been sanded, painted and filled with flowers. Other improvements in the area included hanging baskets and three tier planting boxes that had been planted outside local shops and wild flowers that had been planted on grot spots. He advised that support and funding was available for an environment group which would hopefully be starting.

Alison Bailey-Smith, Williamson Art Gallery addressed the Committee and advised that the gallery had been refurbished a few years ago however a garden had now been developed which had been launched at the end of June. This was previously a large courtyard which had been disused and overgrown with weeds which had been transformed into a landscaped courtyard. She advised that the next step would be to raise money to install lighting in order that the area may be used at night and could be an outside exhibition space.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That all representatives be thanked for their presentations to the meeting and for their work in the Birkenhead in Bloom project.**

#### **15 BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY MANAGER'S REPORT**

The Birkenhead Constituency Manager presented her report providing an update on progress in relation to agreed schemes of work from the budget devolved to the Constituency Committee to date and other Birkenhead Constituency Committee neighbourhood projects in progress.

The Birkenhead Constituency Manager reported on progress in respect of the following –

- **Keeping Birkenhead Clean**

Members were provided with updates in respect of:

- Love where you Live Litterpick Kits
- Skip Fund, Community Partnership Days and Clean-ups
- Clean-up dates June – September 2018
- Operation Sparkle

- **Feeding Birkenhead**
- Beechwood Update
- Gautby Road Community Centre
- Livingstone Street Centre – BEE Wirral Council
- **Community Connectors Project**
- **Birkenhead First Activity Update: 2018**
- **Birkenhead Assets Update**
- **Pathfinder Project**
- **Rock Ferry Exhibition 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018**
- **Birkenhead Constituency Team Neighbourhood Engagement Update**

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the report be noted.**

#### **16 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

The Chair advised that a pre-raised question had been received by the Committee from Mr John Brace as follows:

*“The formula for calculating the minimum annual local housing need on which the current Local Plan consultation is based is published here [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/728247/How\\_is\\_a\\_minimum\\_annual\\_local\\_housing\\_need\\_figure\\_calculated\\_using\\_the\\_standard\\_method.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728247/How_is_a_minimum_annual_local_housing_need_figure_calculated_using_the_standard_method.pdf)*

*The formula states "Taking the most recent household projections".*

*On 23rd January 2017 responsibility for publishing the household projections moved from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to the Office of National Statistics, as you can read for yourself in the grey box on this page about the household projections (which is also hyperlinked from the formula) here <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/household-projections>*

*Therefore the household projection figures recently published by the Office of National Statistics are the most recent household projections and therefore the ones that should be used for the Local Plan.*

*Could you therefore please answer:-*

*a) after the publication of the new household projection figures recently by the ONS why the 6 week Local Plan consultation on the old figures wasn't abandoned,*

*b) why there is a report in the Wirral Globe today of Cllr Phil Davies writing to the Secretary of State for permission (which appears not to be required as the formula refers to the most recent figures) to use the new ONS figures,*

*c) due to the substantial drop in the household projection figures when the review of policies (that's a legal requirement stemming from the change in household projection figures) which would be likely to be carried out*

*and*

*d) whether the review referred to in c) will result in a further 6 week consultation on the Local Plan using the most recent ONS figures?"*

Councillor Phil Davies provided a verbal response and the Chair advised that a letter detailing this response would be sent to Mr Brace from David Ball.

#### **17 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR**

Councillor S Foulkes advised that a meeting had taken place that afternoon in the Miriam Centre where concerns had been raised in respect of the Clinical Commissioning Group's proposals for the future of Urgent Care provision on the Wirral which posed a threat to walk in centres. He also referred to a consultation document in respect of this.

Councillor Foulkes wished to raise the public profile and reported that petitions were available to collect signatures supporting opposition to the closure of these services.