

CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - WALLASEY

Wednesday, 11 December 2013

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	R Gregson (Chair)	
	Councillors	C Blakeley P Hackett AER Jones C Jones A Leech	I Lewis B Mooney S Mountney J Salter J Williamson
<u>Community Representatives</u>		L Collins K Harrison B Higgins	T Jones K Raybould
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillors	RL Abbey L Fraser P Glasman	P Hayes L Rennie S Williams
		Mr P Roberts	

8 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.

No such declarations were made.

9 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the Wallasey Constituency Committee held on 17 October, 2013, be approved.

10 UPDATE ON CO-OPTION OF COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Further to minute 6 (17/10/13) Caroline Laing, Constituency Manager, gave an update on the situation of the proposed co-option of a young person as the sixth community representative on the Committee.

She reported that a member of the Youth Forum had volunteered to take up this sixth place. If schools were approached it would not be possible to get a volunteer elected, who at the earliest would not be able to sit on the Committee until the February meeting. She requested that the Committee consider whether the co-option of the volunteer from the Youth Forum be agreed.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Mooney, it was –

Resolved (unanimously) – That Lewis Collins be co-opted as the sixth Community Representative.

11 CONSTITUENCY PRIORITIES AND SPEND

Caroline Laing, Constituency Manager, introduced a report which set out proposed priorities and processes related to spend for Wallasey Constituency Committee for 2013/14.

The 'Priorities and Spend' Task & Finish Group consisting of six elected members (Councillors Ian Lewis, Leah Fraser, Rob Gregson, Anita Leech, Adrian Jones and Pat Hackett) and two community representatives (Ken Harrison and Tony Jones) and the Constituency Manager (acting in an advisory capacity) had met to consider priorities for 2013/14. The Group was recommending that the Committee should focus on the following priorities:

- road maintenance
- road safety
- impact of welfare reforms (including food and fuel poverty and other determinants of health)
- reducing social isolation
- supporting voluntary, community and faith sector groups

In relation to Public Health funding, the Committee had received an allocation of £25,000, which was ring-fenced for tackling one or more priorities from a list of seven that were submitted as part of the bid. The Task & Finish Group had recommended that the following five priorities were focused upon for this spend in 2013/14:

- reducing first time entrants into the youth justice system
- reducing 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training
- reducing re-offending levels
- improving older people's perception of community safety
- increasing the proportion of physically active adults

The Task & Finish Group took the view that the remaining two priorities, reducing children in poverty and reducing social isolation, should be impacted upon based on the priorities set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

In respect of the £50,000 budget for 2013/14 to be split between a 'Problem Solving Fund' (£5,000); a 'Small Grants Fund', to be marketed as the 'Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund' (£15,000) and the 'Constituency Options' spend (£30,000) the report described the proposed process for the allocation of these budgets. Additionally, the proposed processes were given for the

£25,000 allocation from Public Health and the £10,000 allocation of the Love Wirral Grant.

Additionally a further £25,000 from the Public Health Outcomes Fund had been agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 10 December, 2013 (minute 120 refers). This would be added to the 'Wallasey Bright Ideas Fund' to be launched on 20 December.

Responding to comments from Members, Caroline Laing reported that a number of groups were contacted regarding the funding opportunities available and a mailshot would be going out to a number of people on a comprehensive database of individuals representing groups. She asked that all Members of the Committee do their best to notify groups that they are aware of who could apply through the various processes for funding.

The Chair then took each recommendation in turn and it was –

Resolved (unanimously) – That,

(1) The priorities set out in Section 3 of the report be agreed.

(2) The proposed processes set out in Section 4 of the report be agreed.

(3) The 'Priorities and Spend' Task & Finish Group meets week commencing 13 January 2014 and week commencing 3 February 2014, in order to achieve the timescales set out in the report.

12 **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE**

Caroline Laing, Constituency Manager, introduced a report setting out a proposed process for public engagement through the Constituency Committee.

At this early stage in the development of Wallasey Constituency Committee and as a starting point, there was an opportunity to bring together the efforts of the Council and Police in terms of public engagement.

The proposal was for the Constituency Committee to incorporate a public 'Have Your Say' meeting. In order to ensure that the Committee had adequate time to deal with its business, it was suggested that this was bolted onto the Committee and operated as an event an hour before each and every Committee meeting. It was believed that this would add value to the Committee meeting and vice versa.

Initially, this 'Have Your Say' meeting would be focused around the work of Merseyside Police. Where possible this would be attended by the Neighbourhood Inspector, but might from time to time be deputised by a

Neighbourhood Sergeant. An update would be provided by the Police about crime and disorder in the Constituency over the previous quarter, followed by a public question and answer session.

The report gave details of how the 'Have Your Say' meetings could be expanded and developed in the future to include the participation of wider Council services and partners. The format of the 'Have Your Say' meeting would likely develop over time and might include for example, a marketplace style surgery with a range of Council services and agencies available to the public, rather than one large meeting. A verbal update from these meetings could also be provided at the beginning of each Committee.

She also gave details of a proposal for a Public Question Time within the Constituency Committee meeting. This would allow members of the public to raise issues of concern with the Committee directly and / or seek answers to particular queries. In order to enable a comprehensive response at the meeting and to allow members of the public to participate who were unable to attend the meeting, questions would be required to be submitted in writing in advance of the meeting.

Inspector Peter Koloktroni was in attendance at the meeting and agreed that these were both good ideas for engaging with the public. Responding to comments from Members, Inspector Koloktroni stated that the 'Have Your Say' meetings were just one part of how the police engaged with the public and that surgeries were also held in each ward.

Members' comments on the report included the following:

- People were very community orientated and might not necessarily want to travel, for example, from Seacombe to Moreton, or vice versa, for a meeting.
- The Committee should not stifle engagement by requiring that questions from the public should be submitted in advance as people should have the opportunity at the meeting to ask questions without notice and the time period for questions during the meeting should be flexible.
- It was important to be as flexible as possible in the way the Constituency Committee operated as it evolved and try to encourage people to come along with issues important to their community.
- Some people might be put off by the title 'Committee', perhaps it could be given a different name such as Community Engagement Conference.
- It was absolutely vital to engage with the public and the Committee could look at best practice elsewhere to see how constituency committees operated in other authorities.

The Chair then took each recommendation in turn and it was –

Resolved (unanimously) – That,

- (1) The adoption of a ‘Have Your Say’ meeting prior to the start of each and every Constituency Committee be agreed.**
- (2) The development of the ‘Have Your Say’ meetings to include wider Council services and partners be agreed.**
- (3) The adoption of a Public Question Time but with some flexibility over both the time for questions and the need to give advance notice, be agreed.**
- (4) A further report is brought back to a future Committee providing an update on the wider community engagement framework and communications strategy for the Constituency.**

13 VENUES FOR NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee were invited to discuss venues for future meetings of the Committee.

The Chair suggested the need to move around more within the constituency and a suggestion was made of the meeting rotating around each ward in the constituency.

Resolved – That the next meeting on Wednesday 19 February, 2014, be held in the Millennium Centre, Leasowe.

14 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR

Councillor Leech raised the issue of deputies for the Task and Finish Groups and it was –

Resolved – That those members of the Committee not on a Task and Finish Group be designated as deputies for their respective group for those members unable to attend a Task and Finish Group meeting.