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CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - BIRKENHEAD

Thursday, 10 April 2014

Present:

Chair Rt Hon Frank Field MP

Councillors	A Brighouse	M McLaughlin
	G Davies	C Meaden
	P Davies	D Realey
	WJ Davies	D Roberts
	S Kelly	H Smith
	B Kenny	J Stapleton
	AR McLachlan	P Williams
	G Davies	C Meaden
	P Davies	D Realey
	WJ Davies	D Roberts
	S Kelly	H Smith
	B Kenny	J Stapleton
	AR McLachlan	P Williams

Also Present

Mr J Brace
Mrs L Brace
Mr P Barton
Mr D Hitchell
Ms B Call
Ms L Loughlin
Ms D Drake
Mr P Toosey
Ms D Ashton
Ms P Griffiths
Mr B Giles
Mr P Manley
Ms J Smith
Mr J Cocker
Mrs P Cocker
Ms T Blood
Ms A McNeill
Mr P Mearns
Ms M Grund
Ms M More
Mr M Rushton
Councillor M Patrick
Ms L Evans

18 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor J Crabtree
Councillor P Doughty
Councillor S Foulkes
Councillor T Norbury

19 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Phil Davies declared a non pecuniary interest in item 3 on the agenda – Constituency Manager's Update by virtue of him being a governor of Woodlands Primary School and a Non Executive Director of Lairdsid Communities Together.

Councillor Chris Meaden declared a non pecuniary interest in item 3 on the agenda – Constituency Manager's Update by virtue of her being a Non Executive Director of Lairdsid Communities Together.

20 **MINUTES**

The Chair reported that the Minutes would be amended and then signed.

21 **CONSTITUENCY MANAGER'S UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Neighbourhoods and Engagement that updated it on progress on the actions taken following its last meeting on 30 January 2014.

Attached to the report were 15 Appendices which the Constituency Manager presented to the Committee on an individual basis.

Appendix 1 – Report to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability dated 27 February 2014

Improving the environment had been agreed as a priority for Birkenhead in 2013/14 with a budget allocation of £20,000 for this purpose. The Constituency Manager had been tasked with developing a proposal on how to tackle the high levels of waste in alley ways at the Committee meeting on 30 January 2014 (Minute No. 16 refers.).

Appendix 1 informed of proposals the Cabinet Member had agreed to improve the local environmental quality of terraced housing areas by tackling alleyway dumping in a particular way. There would be two phases. Phase 1 – The Good Neighbour Campaign (All terraced households) and Phase 2 – Pilot Studies.

Members were reminded that the Council at its Budget meeting had allocated £400,000 to address the concerns of many residents over significant fly-tipping in many parts of the Borough. The allocation would be used to reinstate the monthly cleaning of entries. A two year programme was to be developed to tackle the issue of fly-tipping which was aligned with the work carried out in taking forward the Recycling and Waste Strategy. This allocation would reinstate monthly clean ups but the programme included a strategy and interventions to change residents behaviour in relation to this problem. The project details were outlined in the report to the Cabinet Member – Environment and Sustainability.

As a result of the Council's budget allocation the Constituency Manager had not progressed the proposal on how to tackle the high levels of waste in alley ways to avoid any duplication. However, a proposal was now being developed, to work in the Birkenhead area, to deal with pieces of land, of unknown ownership, which were considered 'eye sores' which were attracting litter and/or fly tipping. The Committee was informed that a reactive service to remove fly tipping in Birkenhead would be included in the service specification to be drafted.

Members were keen to explore the contractual arrangement currently in place with its contractor for waste collection, Biffa. A Member reported that Streetscene offered a waste collection within five days but the contractual arrangements did not provide a guarantee on this time period and it was considered unacceptable for people to have to wait three months for rubbish to be removed from their streets. It had not been negotiated with the contractor that rubbish would be removed as soon as it was reported. It depended on the seriousness of the dump. The Chair informed that he considered that the Council should ensure that its contractor delivered the service that it required.

Appendix 2 – Prosecutions for Waste Offences

The Committee noted that where any person was found to have not secured their waste, the Council could serve a legal Notice in accordance with Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Over the past five years there had been 192 section 46 notices served on households in Wirral. This was broken down by Constituency as follows:

- Birkenhead 157
- Wallasey 31
- Wirral South 4
- Wirral West 0

Members noted that to date there had been no fixed penalty notices issued or, prosecutions instigated. This was because although evidence could be found in the waste it was difficult to prove who was responsible.

The Chair informed the Committee that the Council could seek successful prosecutions with fixed penalties being imposed and to do this, investigations needed to be carried out, to establish who was responsible for dumping the rubbish.

The Committee noted from the report that it had now been agreed that where the Council found circumstantial evidence, arrangements would be put in hand to issue Fixed Penalty Notices and consider prosecutions if they remained unpaid.

Appendix 3 – Improving Services for Young People

Objective: To increase the Breastfeeding initiation rates in the Birkenhead Area

The Committee was informed that less than half of all new mothers initiated breastfeeding in Birkenhead (47%), compared to 74% in England. It had been proposed that a project be developed to increase Breast Feeding initiation rates in Birkenhead by developing an antenatal support programme specific to the area.

The Committee received a report that informed that historically support had been provided to mothers once they had given birth. This was accomplished through hospital support, health visitors and a service that Home-Start Wirral (voluntary sector organisation) currently delivered.

The report also informed that, through feedback from professionals, it was clear that at the point this support was offered, many women had already made their decision on whether to breastfeed or not. Their decision could often be made on family and peer advice and they would not accept any support or further consideration.

A Member informed that the crucial person was the midwife and that she had heard reports that caused her concern, in respect of the Midwife Service currently available in Wirral. Consequently, the Director of Adult Social Services had been requested to look into the situation and provide a report on his findings for the Policy and Performance Committee – Families and Wellbeing. The Member did not consider that this Service was working as well as it should.

The Constituency Manager informed that there would be a consultation exercise carried out to establish the barriers and why people were not supporting it.

The Chair informed that he did not believe mothers received the six visits they should in the first two years of their baby's lives.

Appendix 4 – Improving Services for Young People (Child Poverty)

The Committee noted that poverty was not a new issue and its causes and effects had been explored numerous times before. In particular reference was made to a report, 'The Foundation Years: Preventing Poor Children Becoming Poor Adults' published by the Independent Review of Poverty and Life Chances.

It had been proposed that a project be developed to work towards addressing high Child Poverty levels in Birkenhead and to reduce risk taking behaviour based on a model currently being delivered in Wallasey and Wirral West.

The Committee received a report that informed it that the Cabinet, at its meeting on 13 June 2013, had agreed to progress the Child Poverty Project Proposal (Minute No. 15 refers). Consequently, two of the four primary schools that had applied had been selected to become a Community Hub (one in Wallasey and one in Wirral West), enhancing the vital role of schools and creating a platform for them to act as a catalyst for transforming local communities. The only Birkenhead Primary School to submit an Expression of Interest was Woodlands Primary. It had been ranked third in the assessment process and unfortunately there had only been enough funding for two schools.

The Committee noted that the activities co-ordinated through this 'School Community Hub' were aimed at mitigating and reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation through a 'whole family' approach and a community-led programme of activity. It sought to enhance rather than duplicate pupil-centred interventions, for example those in place to narrow the gap in attainment.

The Committee noted that the two Schools were in the process of drafting action plans and would carry out asset mapping.

Appendix 5 – School Community Hub Initiative Expression of Interest

The Committee was informed that child poverty was calculated on the basis of the number of children in families in receipt of either out of work benefits, or tax credits where their reported income was less than 60% median income as a proportion of the total number of children in the area. Child poverty was higher in Birkenhead than in the other three Constituencies.

The Committee noted the content of Woodlands Primary School's expression of interest to be a Community Hub.

It was now proposed that the Committee could financially support (in partnership with public health) Woodlands Community Primary School to be a Community Hub and work in partnership to develop an action plan focusing on the prevention of risk taking behaviour for families in the Birkenhead area e.g. Becoming NEET, Drugs and Alcohol, teenage pregnancy. The project would cost £50,000 in total.

A Member proposed that all the Birkenhead Schools with high levels of child poverty be invited to Express an Interest again and this was agreed.

The Constituency Manager would write to all schools and lead on a selection process and formulating of an action plan. Councillors M McLaughlin and A McLachlan would provide support in respect of the process.

Appendix 6 – Improving Communications – Wirral Well

A proposal to develop the Wirral Well website (a health and wellbeing service directory operated by Voluntary and Community Action Wirral (VCAW)) to include support available for Digital Exclusion for residents of Birkenhead and to promote and increase the use of Wirral Well had been put forward.

The Committee received a report that informed that the Council had invested in Wirral Well and that VCAW recruited, trained and worked with volunteers to input data, research service provision and boost registrations to the site. Support for volunteers was offered to help them to progress into employment through volunteer co-ordinator and packages of learning. VCAW was also developing 'Wirral Well+' which was a resource for services and would enable practitioners such as social workers, GPs, fire advocates, etc, to identify provision for clients amongst other things. This would help in ensuring access by individuals who did not have web access and would allow the development and printing of a bespoke list of services suitable for that individual. Additional work was being undertaken on functionality including the insertion of searchable location fields, linked to maps.

The Constituency Manager reported that there was no marketing or promotion budget for Wirral Well. There was a need to publicise this resource across the Constituency through professionals, social sector and residents. This proposal was for marketing and promotion activity within each ward targeted at specific groups and in high footfall areas and the aim was that all residents were made aware of this resource. Promotional tools could include window displays in empty shops; information in community newsletters (such as the various Messenger publications, WALRUS, etc); small business card size information; pop up information stands; email notifications and other targeted promotion. The resources would be utilised by professionals who were engaging with residents e.g. health visitors, fire safety team, police officers.

As part of the community engagement plan for Birkenhead, and using the principles ABCD, Community Connectors would be recruited to inform people of Wirral Well and to consult with them on aspirations and assets for Birkenhead.

Members noted that the second part of the proposal was to fund an extension of Wirral Well. To date a number of exercises had taken place to map digital support across the borough, however this information had, in the main, been stored on spreadsheets which could quickly become out of date. It was reported that a workshop had taken place on 10 September 2013 that had discussed the potential to utilise the Wirral Well online directory to record and store digital support services across Wirral.

The Project would cost £5,000 and would ensure improved knowledge of Wirral Well and help reduce social isolation.

Appendix 7 - Improving Communication – A Birkenhead Publication

There was a proposal to develop a pilot of a local publication in Birkenhead. There would be a community based approach and the aim was to inform residents on matters that would interest them. Appendix 7 outlined the need and delivery mechanism to produce a publication.

The Committee was informed that a pilot publication was proposed, funded from the Committee's budget allocation for 2013/14. The long term aim would be to have a larger publication funded through public sector partners, grants and appropriate advertising as part of a community led 'News Hub' to gather and disseminate local news in appropriate formats.

It was proposed to run a pilot to produce three quarterly editions over a twelve month period. They each would be an eight page publication put together with a community focus. The Constituency Manager would finalise a service specification to be put out to tender. The total cost to the Committee would be £27,500.

The publication would be distributed to all households in Birkenhead (39,823 properties). The community would be used for distribution purposes, with incentives that would benefit community organisation e.g. local sports club, scouts group. It was also proposed this was managed on a ward basis, with ward Councillors recommending originations in their area.

Appendix 8 - Improving Communication – Birkenhead Publication Survey Monkey Questions

The Constituency Manager referred to Appendix 8 – Birkenhead Publication Survey Monkey Questions – February 2014 and the summarised responses. These informed that that often residents did not consider that they were

informed enough about local news and it was proposed that a monthly publication be produced that was non political and would include information that local residents would be interested in.

Members noted that a more detailed brief was in preparation and two steering groups were being established. One would oversee the content of the publication and the other would progress the financial stability of the publication so it could continue, if there was agreement, after the pilot ended.

The Constituency Manager reported that the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 included at Chapter 2, a 'Code of recommended practice on Local Authority Publicity'. As the Council was funding the publication it was important to comply with the guidance and a protocol would be written..

Community Engagement and Constituency Handbook

The Constituency Manager informed that an action plan would be drawn up to develop community engagement in Birkenhead to support the work and priorities of the Committee during the next Municipal Year. Also, the Constituency Handbook and Community Engagement Task and Finish Groups were merging together as their memberships were similar and Community Engagement was a section of the Handbook. Members would continue to explore this piece of work and provide feedback for the Committee. The Constituency Manager intended to circulate a draft copy of the handbook to obtain Committee Members views on its content.

Appendix 9 – Budget Summary March 2014

The Committee noted that Appendix 9 detailed a budget summary based on the proposals detailed in section 2.0 of the report.

Appendix 10 – Children and Young People's Department Early Years' Budgets (2014-15) spent in Birkenhead

The Committee noted that Appendix 10 detailed an overview of all services paid for through Children and Young People's Department, provided by the Director of Finance. Where it could be done accurately the overall budget had been proportioned to Birkenhead, for other Wirral wide services they had been averaged. There was still further collation to do with this as part of the Councils Future Council project which was now being progressed.

Appendix 11 – Public Health Spend – Children Services under 5's

The Committee noted that the services directly commissioned by Public Health were Breast Feeding Support and an antenatal support programme (Me Time, My Time). Appendix 11 included the proportion of spend of these services in Birkenhead for 2012/13 and 2013/14 and the outputs and

outcomes achieved/ monitored for the Health Visitor Service. A new specification was being written on this service to go out to tender for a new contract to start on 1 February 2015. The request had been made for the outputs to be gathered on a constituency basis.

Appendix 12 – Summary of Health Agencies Commissioning Children’s under 5’s Service

The Committee noted that Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was responsible to commission Maternity Services, Acute Services and Community Nursing. Appendix 12 detailed spend on Maternity Services on a Constituency basis. Further consultation was to be carried out to discuss support offered to expectant mums who do not access these services. The CCG was unable to provide a breakdown on Acute Services but this is being pursued. They could not provide a breakdown on Community Nursing, this was also being pursued through the provider (Wirral Community Trust) to detail spend and outcomes of this service.

The Committee also noted that NHS England was a new Area Team which formed in April 2013. It was responsible for the budgets provided to GP’s, Dentists, Pharmacists, Health Visitors and the Family Nurse Partnership.

Appendix 13 – GP’s Practice List and Budget

The Committee noted that Appendix 13 detailed the spend on GP’s which had been calculated from practice lists statements from January 2014 and multiplying the number of registered patients aged under 5’s by the Global Sum Price of £66.25 per person. Similar data and activity levels were being collated from the Business Support Unit in relation to dentists and pharmacists. This was not currently available in this format.

Appendix 14 – Overview of Health Visitors’ Service Spend

The Committee noted that Appendix 14 detailed current spend on Health Visiting (including the Family Nurse Partnership Service) on a constituency basis and an overview of the outcomes and delivery of this service. The next steps were for providers to breakdown the collation of outputs on a constituency basis. Currently Wirral had 71.8 Health Visitors as part of The Health Visitor Implementation Plan 2011-15 – ‘A Call to Action’; Wirral should have 84.8 by March 2015. Wirral currently used a system developed by Cowley and Bidmead (2005) to determine how the various teams were constituted and resourced, in terms of staffing.

Appendix 15 – Birkenhead Constituency Profile of Children aged 0-4 years

The Committee noted the content of this profile, produced by the Public Health Intelligence Team.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Constituency Manager be requested to continue to work with Local Members and particularly the Task and Finish Groups to progress the proposals detailed in the report to work towards the priorities identified at the Committee's meeting on 30 January 2014;**
- (2) the Constituency Manager be requested to monitor each project based on the proposal and update the the Committee on progress at its future meetings;**
- (3) the Constituency Manager be requested to continue to collate information to summarise overall in respect of all services spends, outputs, outcomes and report it to the Constituency Committee; and**
- (4) the Constituency Manager be requested to ensure that all the Birkenhead Schools with high levels of child poverty be invited to Express an Interest in becoming a Community Hub again.**

22 PAVEMENTS & GRASS VERGE PARKING - UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received a report in respect of pavement and grass verge parking which had been referred to it from the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee at its meeting on 27 January, 2014 (Minute No. 34 refers) where it had agreed that it should be considered by each of the Constituency Committee.

The Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee had noted that there were a high number of enquiries made to Streetscene which indicated the extent of the problem across Wirral, particularly in areas with narrow streets and no off road parking.

Councillor George Davies referred to the nine pilots and asked for Councillor Harry Smith's view on them. Councillor Harry Smith agreed to provide Councillor George Davies with the appropriate information.

A member of the public who lived in Bidston Road, off Bidston Hill informed that she had the use of a disabled bay but had to park on the pavement. She considered that it would be better if the road was one way. Councillor Harry Smith informed that before the road could become one way there would have

to be a consultation process with all the residents in Boundary Road and a high percentage of them would need to be in favour of the proposal. Councillor Harry Smith informed that he would instigate the consultation but was unsure of the exact percentage required to be in favour of a one way system so Officers would be asked to provide it.

A member of the public asked if Boundary Road could be widened and was informed that it would be expensive to do that and that the land in question was probably in the green belt.

A Member considered that a sensible policy on parking enforcement in relation to parking on pavements was required as it would be inappropriate for the Council to have a blanket ban on it.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report be noted.

23 **ROCK FERRY POSITION STATEMENT**

The Committee received a position statement on the deterioration of the Rock Ferry River Wall and Esplanade and a request for financial support for urgent repairs. Members noted that the River Wall and Esplanade were an important part of the Rock Park Conservation Area and formed a vital part of the Mersey Coastal Park Strategy which sought to open up public access to the waterfront from Rock Park to Eastham Country Park. This area provided an important and accessible leisure resource for the local community and was used regularly by walkers and cyclists as well as by those who visited the area. These activities also contributed to improving the health and well being of local people. The River Wall and Esplanade were listed structures and formed an important part of Wirral's heritage along with the properties in Rock Park. The area had been built between the 1830's and 1850's.

Members noted that although there had been some small scale repairs, the storms and high tides of Winter 2013/14 had seen a marked deterioration in the River Wall once again. Whilst, ownership of the River Wall structure was being explored there was an urgent need for further immediate repair work to improve the current condition. It was estimated that a sum of between £5,000 and £10,000 would enable the immediate repair works to be done to the River Wall and this would then provide time for ownership to be established and for external funding opportunities to be explored again. Some of this funding would also be used to repair the Esplanade as the Rock Park Estate Company did not have funding available for these repairs. Any works would need to be undertaken in consultation with the Council's Conservation Officers as the structure was listed.

A full refurbishment of the River Wall and Esplanade would cost approximately £2m and at the present time (and for the foreseeable future)

external funding was extremely limited and very competitive when it is available.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) £10,000 be provided from the Committee's budget allocation for 2014/15 to fund the urgently needed repair works to the River Wall and Esplanade at Rock Park to maintain this asset for the benefit of local residents in terms of their recreation, health and heritage;**
- (2) Officers be requested to continue to work with the local MP and Rock Park Estate Company to establish ownership of the River Wall structure; and**
- (3) whilst it is recognised that external funding is limited and very competitive every effort be made by Ward Councillors and Officers to identify and secure external resources to enable a long term refurbishment of the Esplanade.**

24 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS - 2014/2015

It was reported that the Council's Committee Calendar for the Municipal Year 2014/15 had been drawn up and the Committee was scheduled to meet at 6pm in Birkenhead Town Hall on the following dates:

- 24 July 2014
- 30 October 2014
- 29 January 2015
- 9 April 2015

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's meeting dates for the 2014/15 Municipal Year as set out above be noted.

25 URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR

The Constituency Manager reported on the following items of urgent business that had been approved by the Chair:

- NCS students - there had been an offer at the previous committee meeting for them to support with activities. They had supported at a charity event and they had been really helpful and would be invited to support again with developments in the Birkenhead Constituency.

- NEET Summit – was being held on 11 April, hosted at Wirral Metropolitan College. As prevention of NEETS was an identified priority for the Committee, feedback would be provided at the next meeting.
- The branding exercise being carried out by young people – had been completed for the Wirral Youth Zone which was to be called 'The Hive'.
- Copies of the logo were shared with the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the reports set out above be noted.

26 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION (NOT TO EXCEED 20 MINUTES)**

The Chair invited members of the public to ask questions.

Question 1 – Philip Barton

I am unclear how the proposals the Cabinet Member had agreed to improve the local environmental quality of terraced housing areas by tackling alleyway dumping in a particular way sits with the ERIC Service, bulky item collection?

A Member referred to the £400,000 that the Council had put back into the budget to ensure monthly cleaning of entries. The Group from the third sector would only look after Birkenhead.

Members informed that the ERIC Service could not be free and the £400,000 was earmarked to deal with fly tipping in alley ways. The ERIC Service was there to take away bulky goods and the Cabinet Member's initiative did not replace that Service.

The Chair considered that the Council should tie down its contractors to take away goods that had been dumped, as dumping was a very real problem.

Question 2 – Bob Giles

Referring to the Better Food Wirral Event which was very interesting, vending machines and the excessive consumption of fizzy drinks, were there any moves to make people aware of the excessive consumption?

A Member informed that the Council was in the process of restructuring its Leisure Centres and was removing all the vending machines and replacing them with Juice Bars which would provide healthy juices and smoothie drinks.

Mr Giles made the point that fruit juices did have high sugar content.

It was noted that water was also available in all of the Council's Leisure Centres.

The Constituency Manager informed that a Constituency Plan in relation to food was being developed for Birkenhead – What's Best for Birkenhead?

Question 3 – Lynn Evans

The Council's review of contract management was welcome. What was it doing in the background to ensure improvement and that we get what we pay for?

The Chair asked what resources did the Council put into letting its contracts.

The Strategic Director – Transformation and Resources informed that there was an internal Commissioning and Procurement Board which met regularly and was concerned with early intervention, domiciliary support services and looking at integration.

A Member informed that the Director of Adult Social Services was in the process of discussing low level support services and that Luncheon Clubs needed to be reviewed.

The Constituency Manager reported that there had been a lot of change and Members would discuss this at a half day session. A Member enquired whether there was a Schedule or Plan that the Committee could look at and the Constituency Manager undertook to find out and circulate relevant information.

The Chair informed that he and a Member had visited the Cavendish Centre which ran day services. He asked who had been awarded the contract and what it provided. He also asked to what extent were these points of contact to be devolved down, he considered that it was a question for the Chief Executive to respond to and requested that it be included in the Minutes of the meeting.

A Member referred to the work carried out in relation to commissioning and working with others. He considered that the Committee should look at the amount of money spent in the Constituency and the outputs that were achieved to establish if they represented value for money.

A Member asked if the Committee knew how many pensioners had been lost in Birkenhead over the winter period. The Chair proposed that Public Health Officers be asked to compare this year's figures with those of last year.

Pauline Cocker referred to the high levels of crime reported to the police; she considered that a lot of work needed to be done in the local community, if Birkenhead was to be a safe area in which to live.

A Member informed that he was holding a meeting with residents to discuss incidents of crime.

A Member referred to the distress caused to people at the Cavendish Centre. It was noted that the staff was very dedicated and ran the Centre on a shoe string compared to other Luncheon Clubs.

Another Member informed that the comments were very valid. There had been issues around the commissioning process. The Council was looking at how it could help going forward to provide services to vulnerable people in a deprived area.

A member of the public proposed the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan. He referred to the Neighbourhood Plans that Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council had adopted and to the different approach it had compared to that of the Council. Wirral's Local Plan did not mention Neighbourhood Planning at all.

A member of the public informed that with the help of the Rt Hon Frank Field MP, Devonshire Park was one of a vanguard of 17 communities advancing neighbourhood planning under the 2011 Localism Act. She reported that Devonshire Park was a victim of its own success because as it had progressed the neighbourhood planning the Government had kept changing things. Developers were targeting houses to convert into flats and bed sits whilst Devonshire Park wanted to protect family housing as part of the mix.

Neighbourhood Planning had been a positive experience. The community had come together to look at how Devonshire Park could look in the future. However, bringing the Neighbourhood Plan through the local authority planning process had been a nightmare with ever changing hoops and hurdles to negotiate.

Devonshire Park was the test community for Wirral Borough Council. The Neighbourhood Plan had been a good learning experience for the Council. A referendum needed to take place either this year or next. There had been a lot of frustration but it was considered that it was the beginning of something tremendously positive. People had a say over what would happen in the local area. Devonshire Park was willing to support and advise other communities who wanted to go down the Neighbourhood Planning route.

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