

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SOUTH CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

16 OCTOBER 2014

SUBJECT:	WIRRAL SOUTH PRIORITIES UPDATE 2014/15
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>BEBINGTON</u>▪ <u>BROMBOROUGH</u>▪ <u>CLATTERBRIDGE</u>▪ <u>EASTHAM</u>▪ <u>HESWALL</u>
REPORT OF:	CONSTITUENCY MANAGER (WIRRAL SOUTH)
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR GEORGE DAVIES NEIGHBOURHOODS, HOUSING & ENGAGEMENT
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report details the progress relating to the resolved priorities for the Wirral South Constituency Committee for 2014/15 and beyond.

2.0 PRIORITY SETTING

2.1 At its meeting on 25 February 2014, Council agreed to fund the four Constituency Committees with £50k each. This was to “enable the new approach to Neighbourhood Working to be further developed.”

2.2 On Wednesday 9 April 2014 Wirral South’s Elected Members were invited to attend a priority setting session. The objective of this session was to produce a set of proposed themes that could be presented at the first Wirral South Constituency Committee of 2014/15 for consideration.

2.3 Based upon the findings of the above priority setting session three main priorities were proposed and resolved at Wirral South’s first Constituency Committee of 2014/15, 25 June.

2.4 These priorities were:

- Improved Open Spaces; to increase the number of green flag parks in Wirral South year on year
- Gaps in Youth Provision; to work with the internal and external partners to identify and rectify any existing gaps in provision of youth services in Wirral South
- Tackle Social Isolation; Identify the various groups affected by social isolation in Wirral South, establish the evident gaps in provision throughout the Constituency and aim to either support existing providers or commission a new piece of work

It was resolved that each of the priorities above should be allocated £15k each, thus leaving £5k of core budget to support various engagement initiatives.

3.0 PRIORITY PROGRESS

3.1 Improved Open Spaces

3.1.1 Since 25 June Wirral South's Constituency Manager met with representatives from the Wirral South Park's Team, including the Senior Manager of Parks and Countryside Services. Discussions were held in an attempt to highlight the most suitable location on which to focus the Committee's efforts throughout 2014/15. Based upon this discussion and a subsequent site visit it was decided that Mayer Park was the most suitable location based upon a number of factors, not least the existence of an enthusiastic and active "Friends Of" group plus the overall infrastructure being in acceptable condition.

3.1.2 On 6 August a representative group of Elected Members for Wirral South were brought together forming the 'Parks Priority Task and Finish Group' (see appendix 1 for meeting notes). At this meeting the proposal to focus upon Mayer Park in 2014/15 was discussed. Members agreed that this proposal was both acceptable and logical. To add context to this decision the main judging criteria for the Green Flag Award are contained below:

- A welcoming place
- Healthy, safe and secure
- Well maintained and clean
- Sustainability
- Conservation and heritage
- Community involvement
- Marketing
- Management

3.1.3 At the task and finish group meeting on 6 August 3 initial proposals were made based upon the recent site visit:

- i. Installation of new bins
- ii. Arboreal work (removal of old tree stumps which require specialist equipment)
- iii. Installation of a small fence to make a "kick around" area safer as it currently opens on to a main road

It was agreed that these proposals be recommended to committee on 16 October 2014 (see recommendation 13.1). Since initial discussions took place The Parks manager for Wirral South has purchased a stump chipper (to remove tree stumps) and has committed to removing the existing stumps in Mayer Park as a priority for the area. With this in mind no monetary contribution is requested from the Committee for this item.

One further issue was discussed in relation to remedial works needed in Mayer Park:

- iv. Removal of vegetation currently growing in and causing damage to the roof of Pennant House

Although the above issue would not traditionally be seen as a parks issue it was very much felt (on the opinion of an existing 'Green Flag Awards' judge that this would detract from any attempt to attain the award in question based upon the one of the eight main award criteria: 'Conservation & Heritage'. Members felt that it was more appropriate that existing budgets held by Wirral Council's Asset Management section be used to address this issue. As such (in his role as Chair) Councillor Gilchrist commenced correspondence with the aforementioned team.

Since the aforementioned correspondence works have begun to remove the offending vegetation from the roof of Pennant House. Further repair work (including repairing failing stonework) has also been undertaken.

Other initiatives have already commenced or are scheduled to begin within the park based upon increased partnership working between the existing 'Friends Of' group and Wirral South's Parks Manager. These include:

- Edging of existing paths (carried out by volunteers)
- Surveys of trees (to highlight issues with death and disease)
- New flower beds at main entrance
- Revitalised rose bed
- Adaptations to hedge heights to increase lines of sight
- Proposals to refurbish existing but dilapidated ironwork gate

The 'Parks Priority Task and Finish Group' also recommended an amendment be made to the current parks related priority to ensure an element of inclusion was added moving forward. There was an appetite to ensure that any park receiving Wirral South's attention and related funding should strive to be accessible to all (see recommendation 13.2). With this in mind Wirral South's Parks manager has been tasked with supplying quotations to install an accessible swing in Mayer Park, footpaths have also been surveyed to ensure they are wheelchair friendly.

It is recommended (see recommendation 13.3) that a shortlist of possible locations for the Committee's focus in 2015/16 is presented at the January Committee.

3.2 Gaps in Youth Provision

3.2.1 Since 25 June Wirral South's Constituency Manager has engaged directly with the Youth Support Team Manager for Wirral South in an attempt to produce a list of proposals to present to the committee. Based upon the key parameters of the above priority (i.e. "To work with internal and external partners to identify and rectify any existing gaps in provision of youth services in Wirral South") the following proposals were agreed for presentation (see appendix 2 for full details):

- i. **Diversions Activities**
2 x excursions to mountain biking facility in Delamere Forest for 14 young people to encourage engagement in focussed locations experiencing existing anti social behaviour
- ii. **Education in Theatre**
20 x themed performance/workshops aimed at equipping young people with the tools to deal with both abusive relationships and bullying
- iii. **Extension of 'The Lads' engagement programme**
Doubling the provision for Wirral South from 14 to 28 for young Men completing the above development programme
- iv. **One to One Counselling Services**
Offering a one to one counselling service to young people within the Wirral South Constituency footprint until 31 march 2015

The above proposals would cost a total amount of £10,567, just slightly more than two thirds of the Committee's youth budget for 2014/15. If the above proposal is resolved then the Constituency manager will work with Youth Support to compile a list of further initiatives in relation to the remaining budget. The aforementioned list will be presented to Committee in January (see recommendation 13.5).

3.3 Social Isolation

3.3.1 Since 25 June members of the Wirral South Public Service Board have been investigating ways in which the issue of social isolation could be addressed. Based upon the evidence on the subject it is clear to see that there are a number of elements of our communities that could feel socially isolated, for different reasons.

Based upon the evidence related to Wirral South's aging population it was proposed within the Public Service board to investigate existing programmes that addressed social isolation within the older population. Following a number of different conversations with external partners, the Alzheimer's Society's "Dementia Friendly Communities" model (see appendix 3) was seen to be an appropriate method of addressing social isolation in both those with dementia and their Carers.

Members of The Wirral South Public Service Board met on 4 September to discuss the opportunity of setting up “Dementia Friendly Communities” in Wirral South. Utilising existing evidence from the Wirral South Profile (produced by Public Health) and with support from the Alzheimer’s Society it was proposed that Heswall be recommended as a pilot location for this initiative (see recommendation 13.6).

It is further proposed that Wirral South promotes 2015 as its year of “Dementia Friendly Communities” engaging stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors in its delivery. This initiative should be almost fully self-sustainable; based upon the commitment of existing partners. It may be that a small element of financial support is required from Wirral South’s £15k budget (allocated to Social Isolation) to promote events etc.

- 3.3.2 Further work continues with colleagues in Adult Social Services to identify ways in which the Wirral South Constituency Committee can support carers within the five wards. This work stream will require further attention over the coming months with the aim of having a detailed proposal developed for presentation and approval in January (see recommendation 13.7).

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 4.1 Failure to agree project spend expediently may result in a loss of funding allocation in future years and an inability to deliver tangible improvements within 2014/15.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Careful consideration has been given to the best way to distribute this funding to help tackle the Constituency’s priorities.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Existing evidence from the Wirral South Profile Document (produced by Public Health) has been used to inform the formulation of Wirral South’s priorities. Feedback from communities to Elected Members has also factored into the priority setting process. Wirral South’s Community Representatives have been consulted upon the proposals relating to their allocated theme.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 The overarching proposed model for neighbourhood working will strengthen the Council’s relationship with the voluntary and community sector.
- 7.2 Tackling the priorities of the Constituency will benefit communities directly.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 8.1 This report has implications for the expenditure of budget allocated to Wirral South Constituency Committee.
- 8.2 Funding may assist in greater use of and/or access to community assets.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The arrangements will help the Council to deliver on the Localism Act 2011 and Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

Yes an impact review can be found at the link below (Progressing Neighbourhood Working). A specific EIA related to the grants fund itself will be carried out should the relevant recommendation be approved.

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/chief-executives>

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 This report may have positive community safety implications dependent upon the allocation of spend determined by the Constituency Committee.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that:

- 13.1 The Committee agree to the spend associated with the following improvements to Mayer Park
- Installation of new bins
 - Installation of a small fence to make a "kick around" area safer as it currently opens on to a main road

- 13.2 The Park Related Priority for Wirral South be amended to encapsulate the wishes of the task and finish group regarding increased access for those with a disability. The updated Priority should read:

“Improved Open Spaces; to increase the number of green flag parks in Wirral South year on year and ensure accessibility is improved in each chosen location.”

- 13.3 The Constituency Manager continues to work with Colleagues in the Parks and Countryside Service and members of the ‘Parks Priority Task and Finish Group’ to produce a shortlist of locations for consideration in 2015/16.
- 13.4 The Committee grant delegated powers to the existing and representative ‘Parks Priority Task and Finish Group’ to ensure budgetary spend can be agreed and improvements made as expediently as possible, thus maximising the potential for applying for the Green Flag Award within 2014/15.
- 13.5 The Constituency manager work with Youth Support to compile a list of further initiatives in relation to the remaining youth budget for 2014/15. The aforementioned list be presented to Committee in January.
- 13.6 Members note the progress made in relation to initiating a “Dementia Friendly Community Pilot” in the Heswall area and approve an initial allocation of up to £1000 between now and January 2015 to allow the project to proceed in a timely manner.
- 13.7 Notes the progress made in relation to the identification of ways in which the Wirral South Constituency Committee can support carers within the five wards with a proposal being presented in January.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 14.1 To enable the work of the Constituency Committee to be focused upon the needs of the local area and to ensure projects commence as expediently as possible.

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REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Wirral South Constituency Committee	25 June 2014

Appendix one: 'Parks Priority Task and Finish Group'

**Parks Priority Task & Finish Group
Wirral South**

Wednesday, 6 August 2014

Present	Councillor	P Gilchrist (Chair)
	Councillors	C Muspratt
		C Povall
		I Williams

	Constituency Manager	Fergus Adams
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Apologies	Councillors	L Rowlands
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1) MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors C Muspratt declared non pecuniary interests by virtue of being the Treasurer of friends of Mayer Park, a community group who feature in the plan for 2014/15.

2) SCENE SETTING

FA outlined the events that had led up to this meeting. On Wednesday 9 April Wirral South's Elected Members were invited to attend a priority setting session. The objective of this session was to produce a set of proposed themes that could be presented at the first Wirral South Constituency Committee of 2014/15 for consideration.

A parks related priority entitled "Improved Open Spaces; to increase the number of green flag parks in Wirral South year on year" was devised at the above meeting and agreed at the Committee on the 25th of June 2014.

3) Progress since the 25th of June 2014

FA explained that he had met with Mary Worrall (Senior Manager Parks and Countryside Services) and discussed possible locations within Wirral South that would benefit from our assistance in achieving a green flag award in 2014/15 (as per our agreed priority). Mayer Park was highlighted as the most promising location, given that it already has an active "friends of" group and plans in place for improvements.

Following the above conversation a site visit was arranged with representatives from the "friends of" group, Mary Worrall and Kevin Callaghan (Parks Manager Wirral South). A number of issues were identified that would need to be improved in order for a judge to deem the location suitable for a green flag award. The main criteria are listed below.

A welcoming place
Healthy, safe and secure
Well maintained and clean
Sustainability
Conservation and heritage
Community involvement
Marketing
Management

4) Other locations for consideration

Elected Members discussed future locations for consideration within the priority. It was agreed that FA would collate a list in collaboration with Parks staff (see action 1 below).

This preparation work may mean Wirral South can deliver more than one new green flag award in Wirral South for 15/16.

5) Next steps to ensure the priority is achievable within timescale

The timeline for action was discussed. It was noted that with the next committee being in October waiting for full committee sign off (October 16, 2014) to commence any works would delay investigations and preparations that could be progressed..

As the relevant budget has already been agreed (June 25, 2014) it was deemed acceptable by all present to agree the proposed work/spend. This could then be formally reported in October.

The areas recommended for immediate attention following the site visit were as follows:

- a) Installation of new bins
- b) Arboreal work (removal of old tree stumps which require specialist equipment)
- c) Installation of a small fence to make a "kick around" area safer as it currently opens on to a main road
- d) Removal of vegetation currently growing in and causing damage to the roof of Pennant House

Members were happy to agree items a, b and c above but it was felt that item d should be referred to asset management for their attention (see action 2 below).

It was also discussed that members would like to see an element of inclusion added to the priority moving forward. This would reflect an appetite to try and ensure that young people with disabilities were able to interact with play areas in the parks receiving the committee's attention.

A full report is proposed for the October Committee giving specific costs and progress.

Further conversations will take place shortly with parks in an attempt to identify plausible locations for 2015/16.

6) Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that progress be made on the following items:

- v. Installation of new bins
- vi. Arboreal work (removal of old tree stumps which require specialist equipment)
- vii. Installation of a small fence to make a "kick around" area safer as it currently opens on to a main road

6.2 It is recommended that a full report be brought to the Wirral South Constituency Committee (October 16, 2014) detailing progress so far and proposals to further the priority

Actions from 6/8/14		
1	Collate list of locations (in collaboration with parks) that could be considered for attention in 2015/16	FA
2	To contact David Armstrong and request remedial works (outlined in 'd' item 5 above) be carried out on Pennant House	Cllr PG
3	Check if there is any limitations re. smaller parks applying for Green Flag Awards	FA

Appendix 2: Proposed Spend Re. Gaps In Youth Provision

1) *Diversiory/Incentive Activity*

Aimed at addressing a current issue with young people in the New Ferry area (predominantly in the park/shorefields area). Although these young people do engage with the youth services in the area there has been an increase in criminal damage. The proposed project mirrors a recent successful initiative in the Woodchurch using the prospect of attendance at a mountain biking facility in Delamere Forest as a reward for modified behaviour. It is important to note that this initiative not only acts as diversion/incentive but affords youth workers the opportunity to further engage with the individuals in question. Example costs are outlined below:

- 14 young people + 2 staff @ £15 per head = £240
- £100 for instructor
- £50 for mini bus =

Total: £390

2) *Expansion of The Lads Personal Development Project*

This is an 8 week project aimed at 13-19 year olds, referred for attendance based upon existing issues. The project is currently programmed to run from September 2014, with 14 individuals from Wirral South attending. Further funding would allow a further 14 individuals to attend in the spring, thus doubling the existing impact for individuals and communities in Wirral South in 2014/15. The programme culminates in a residential element at Oaklands. Example costs are outlined below:

- 14 young people plus 4 staff @ £104 per head = £1872
- Contingency money = £100
- Mini Bus and fuel = £150 (includes fuel for a minivan that we own)

Total £2122

3) *Theatre in Education*

Pieces to tour Youth Units/other relevant venues in South Wirral. These cover various subjects from abusive relationships to bullying. Attendees are also offered follow up workshops in which they receive signposting to further support and advice where necessary. These sessions cost between £200 to £400 depending on the scale. Example costs are outlined below:

IF YOU LOVED ME per performance and after show workshop: 'If You Loved me You Would' is a play which explores healthy and unhealthy relationships. It enables young people to see, and, understand the full spectrum of relationship abuse. A follow up workshop facilitated by company members offers young people the opportunity to check their understanding, and where to seek advice or support if they, or, someone they know are in an abusive relationship

- 6 ACTORS/performers X 3 HOURS X £9 p/hr - £162.00
- 2 tech workers x 3hours x £9 per hour- £54.00
- Transport x 1 people carrier- £55.00
- 1 transit van for set and lighting- £50.00
- Fuel- £10.00
- 1 Level 2 worker x 3 hours x £15p/hour- £45.00

TOTAL £376.00

‘BECAUSE’ per performance and after show workshop ‘Because’ explores the bullying spectrum, including cyber bullying. Young people will learn about the impact of bullying behaviour on others. The follow up workshop helps young people understand the consequences of bullying behaviour and where to get help and support.

- 5 x peer educators x £15 per show- £75.00
- People carrier- £55.00
- Fuel- £10.00
- 1 level 2 worker x 3 hours x £15 p/hr- £45.00

TOTAL £185.00

4) *Pilot offering one to one counselling sessions offered in Wirral South* (delivered by Response in two locations -Eastham Hub and Children's Centre in Bromborough)

On average Response have up to 50 young people on the waiting list for counselling. We know that young people need immediate support, waiting for long periods to see someone can exacerbate the problem. They are unable to note early signs of low mood or stress and by the time they ask for help, the need is critical.

Response have put in place a drop in (in Birkenhead) to help reduce the waiting time for young people which young people have found very helpful. Our statistics show that 16% of the young people using the service are from Wirral South. Therefore is it important to extend services in these areas to help reduce the need for costly intervention at a later stage. To have counselling services in the South Wirral Locality will ensure that the reach is extended to many young people who feel travelling into central Birkenhead a barrier and prefer a local service.

The counsellor will operate within the Wirral South area offering a counselling service. The counsellor will deliver this service during the operational opening times of the Hub and the local Children’s Centre. A typical counselling session will last for 50 minutes. Response will provide 3 x 3hrs counselling sessions per week for young people between Oct 2014 – March 2015. These young people will all be from Wirral South and will either be on an existing waiting list or signposted via gateway.

- Staff costs (Counsellor) 10 hrs per week @ £11.4637 + 22% on costs

- £14.70 per hour for 30 weeks (300 hours) = £ 4410
- £450 travel costs = £450
- Non Managerial supervision £30 per hour (met by Response) = £000

Total £ 4860

Given the information above if the Wirral South Constituency Committee spent only **£10,567** of its agreed £15K youth provision budget it could:

- Facilitate heightened engagement with 14 young people based upon an existing issue related to criminal damage etc. - **2 x events total £780**
- Double the impact of the Lads' Personal Development Project in 2014/15 (meaning 28 young males are involved rather than 14 as currently funded) - **£2122**
- Provide 10 performance and after show workshops (one of each theme per Ward e.g.) - **£2805**
- Provide ongoing counselling within Wirral South from October 2014 to March 2015 - **£4860**

Dementia-friendly communities

