

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>CONSTITUENCY MANAGERS UPDATE</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>WARDS WITHIN THE BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARY.</b>  <b>BIRKENHEAD AND TRANMERE BIDSTON AND ST JAMES CLAUGHTON OXTON PRENTON ROCK FERRY</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>HEAD OF NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENGAGEMENT</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Section 2.0 of this report provides an update on progress in relation to agreed schemes of work from the budget allocated and devolved to the Constituency Committee to date, it includes proposals for the remaining budget that is uncommitted.
- 1.2 Section 3.0 of this report details updates from other actions agreed at the previous Constituency Committee meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

### 2.0 UPDATE ON BUDGET FOR BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

#### 2.1 Constituency Committee budget 2013/14- £50,000

The committee were given a budget of £50,000 in 2013/14 to 'kick-start' work on the new neighbourhood working model with a focus on tackling inequalities. Below is an update on each of the schemes of work that were agreed by the committee to be developed utilising this budget allocation to deliver against identified priorities:

1. £20,000 was allocated to 'Improving Communication' through the development of a community publication for Birkenhead.

**Update:** A tender process has been carried out to appoint a provider to deliver this service. The closing date for submissions is 20<sup>th</sup> October and the evaluation of them will take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. The 12 month contract start date is 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014.

**Actions:** The Constituency Manager will manage the contract and a report on progress will be provided at each Constituency Committee meeting.

2. £20,000 was allocated to 'Improving the Environment' through the development of a service to improve sites in Birkenhead that have been left open, poorly maintained and/or disused, therefore looking unsightly in the area often attracting litter and fly tipping (dumping of waste illegally). It was also discussed to use this funding to deliver a reactive fly tipping service; this is referred to in point 2.5 of this report.

**Update:** A tender is currently being advertised with a closing date of 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and a 12 month contract start date of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 to appoint a service to improve poorly maintained sites in Birkenhead.

**Action:** Members of the Constituency Committee have been asked to submit proposals of schemes of work to be considered to be carried out within this contract.

3. The committee to have a clear overview of current spend and delivery on public services within Birkenhead through the appointment of an expert to collate, evaluate and analyse the existing data. Due to the size of this task it was agreed by the committee to initially carry out the task on spend for services of children aged under 5.

**Update:** There has been collection of some of this information (primarily spend is from Public Health, Wirral Council and Clinical Commissioning Groups) which was presented to the Constituency Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014. There have been no further developments on this work due to the introduction of the Future Council project. Future Council project was established to help meet the future budget challenges and as part of the project Wirral Council has conducted a comprehensive review into all of its services (82 service reviews), the report states 'Every part of the Council has been scrutinised to ensure every pound is spent effectively and every service is as efficient as it can possibly be'. The challenge with this task set by Birkenhead Constituency Committee was that the data required was not available; Future Council will aim to provide the data and intelligence required from services they provide.

Prior to Future Council starting the Chair of the Constituency Committee and Constituency Manager had a series of meeting with Liverpool University and an Audit Manager from KPMG, they are able to offer support to analyse the data.

**Action:** There is a meeting with the Future Council team and the Chair of the Constituency Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014 to discuss the findings and the information available from the service reviews. Following this a further meeting will take place with Liverpool University and KPMG to discuss next steps to the function they can provide to evaluating the data.

## 2.2 **Public Health outcome Fund 2013/14- £25,000 (plus a further £25,000)**

The committee were given this budget allocation to deliver against specific priorities identified by Public Health. It was agreed by the committee to utilise the funding to focus on one priority of 'Reducing the Impact of Child Poverty'. It was agreed to develop a 'Community Hub' at a local primary school based on a model

that has been delivered in two other sites in Wirral through the Child Poverty Working Group. All primary schools in Birkenhead with over 50% of pupils living in areas of high income deprivation were invited to submit an Expression of Interest to this project, two schools will be offered a grant of £25,000 each to achieve the outcome that 'Children are Ready for School'. They will utilise the funding to:

- Provide high quality service provision and interventions for children below statutory school age that will have a positive affect on Childrens' intellectual and social /behavioral development prior to school entry.
- Work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop at home and in the community, delivering the key message and understanding that what parents do is more important than who parents are.
- Build on the strengths and well-being of the local community; mapping what resources are available for parents and children and help families learn about and use resources and services available within the community

Based on the proposal Public Health agreed to offer a further £25,000 to this project.

**Update:** One expression of interest was received and an interview is being carried out with this school on 21<sup>st</sup> October to discuss the proposal in more detail and for the panel to decide if they will receive the funding. The panel consists of:

- Councillor Moira McLaughlin
- Councillor Ann McLachlan
- Birkenhead Constituency Manager
- Public Health Manager
- Chair of the Child Poverty Working Group
- Director, Birkenhead Foundation Years Project

**Action:** This panel will form a Task and Finish Group to monitor the developments to evaluate the impact of this project and provide updates to the committee at each meeting. There is funding to award £25,000 to two schools, as only one was received the Task and Finish group will use their local knowledge and understanding to discuss and progress which other schools to approach to develop the hub in another area.

### 2.3 Voluntary Sector Support Fund- £25,000

On December 10 2013 the Director of Public Health presented a report to Cabinet recommending £100K be administered through the Constituency Committees" aimed at supporting the voluntary sector in Wirral, Birkenhead received an allocation of £25,000. Below is an update on each of the schemes of work that were agreed by the committee to be developed utilising this budget allocation:

1. £15,000 was allocated to increase Breast Feeding initiation rates in Birkenhead by developing an antenatal support programme.

**Update:** Appendix 1 contains the second quarterly report submitted by Home Start, the provider of this service for the period of July- September 2014.

One of the challenges highlighted with this service was low referral rates and ensuring all pregnant women were aware of the support available. A significant development to overcome this challenge is that the Hospital Trust midwifery service has agreed to an information sharing protocol being set up between them and Home-Start Wirral which would mean that the provider would get the contact details of every pregnant Wirral woman and they will then contact them at 28 weeks of pregnancy to offer them information/support. It has also been agreed that a information sharing protocol will be established with the Health Visiting Service and that they will do an automatic referral to Home Start when they do their antenatal visit. They don't at the moment and very few antenatal referrals are received from Health Visitors.

2. £5,000 was allocated to increase and develop the use of the Wirral Well website through improved and targeted promotion.  
**Update:** The artwork and content has been agreed through market testing with residents and the following products will be purchased to promote the website
  - Banner stands
  - Leaflet Vinyl's for shop windows
  - Fold out credit card
  - Stickers

An engagement plan has been written and will be implemented through the Birkenhead Engagement Officer and Community Action Wirral.

3. £5,000 of this budget was allocated to support with the development of a local publication detailed in point 2.1 of this report.

#### 2.4 **Constituency Committee budget 2014/15- £50,000**

The Constituency Committee were given a further £50,000 to develop schemes of work to deliver against agreed priorities.

It was agreed by the committee to use £10,000 of this allocation to give a grant to Rock Park Trust Company to carry out the repairs to the Esplanade.

**Update:** The specification for the works has now been agreed and the Rock Park Trust Company who are currently inviting tenders with the intention of completing the works before winter.

The Priorities Task and Finish group met on 12<sup>th</sup> September to discuss proposals for the remaining £40,000, in attendance were Frank Field MP, Councillor P Davies and Councillor S Kelly. The proposals discussed and recommended to the committee are:

1. An allocation of £2993.24 to improving the environment by increasing the signage in Birkenhead to act as a deterrent for environmental crime and increase awareness of enforcement proceedings, Appendix 2 details the proposal.
2. An allocation of £35,000 to be allocated for a service to aim to reduce anti social behaviour. An overview is included in Appendix 3, this would be developed to be advertised for an organisation to tender to deliver a creative service that will engage with young people to deliver against the outputs suggested.

3. An allocation of £2000 to develop Community Researchers in Birkenhead to increase the engagement with residents to offer greater knowledge sharing for improving public service provision.

The recommendation for the remaining budget is for the committee to consider and approve the proposals detailed above to be implemented.

## 2.5 **'Love Wirral' Funding 2014/15- £10,000**

Love Wirral was a borough wide campaign that was launched in June 2013 to encourage people who live, work and visit Wirral to take pride in our local environment. As part of this campaign a Love Wirral grant scheme was launched in October 2013. This grant scheme aimed to encourage existing and new groups to get involved offering a small amount of funding for projects to be developed to improve the local area and encourage people to take pride and responsibility in keeping their part of Wirral clean and attractive and a pleasant area for them to live, work and visit. The grant was split equally across the 4 constituencies, £10,000 to each.

On reviewing the grant process the following points were highlighted to determine was a grant process the best use of this funding allocation:

- The funding was limited to £500 per application; this meant a lot of the projects were short term with no long term impact or sustainability.
- Many of the proposals required specialist installation and removal (e.g. planters), this was causing additional revenue implications for Wirral Council or community groups.
- Due to the assessment process not including technical expertise some of the projects could not be delivered due to health and safety implications, resulting in groups feeling frustrated and disadvantaged.
- The small projects required a lot of Wirral Councils technical services staff time to advise, this meant some time delays with a lot of the projects, again resulting in frustrated community groups.

Based on the above points being highlighted in has been agreed that for 2014/15 each Constituency Committee will have an allocation of £10,000 that they can use how they wish to, they do not have to follow a grants programme but can devise a scheme that will work towards Improving the Environment.

It was discussed and agreed by the Priorities and Budget Task and Finish Group on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2014 to recommend to the Constituency Committee to utilise this funding to deliver a reactive fly tipping service to Improve the Environment. Appendix 5 details an overview of the criteria, delivery and costings for this service.

## 2.6 **'Your Wirral' 2014/15- £75,000**

The Constituency Committee was informed at the previous meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014 that 'Your Wirral' funding has been devolved to the Constituency Committees for 2014/15. It is a small grants programme that has been in operation since 2007, it is a strand of the Community Fund that came into being as a result of the Value Added Tax (VAT) return generated by the housing stock transfer from Wirral Council to Wirral Partnership Homes, now Magenta Living. The report on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014 stated that Birkenhead Constituency Committee was given an allocation of

£75,000 for 2014/15 with the recommendation to offer a Community Grants application process in Birkenhead to deliver against identified priorities.

It was discussed at the July committee meeting and recommended from the committee that better use of the funds would be to support those struggling to pay their rent as a result of the Bedroom Tax and consequently faced eviction. The action following the meeting was a letter was sent from the Chair of Birkenhead Constituency Committee to the Joint Working Group of 'Your Wirral' requesting the budget allocation can be used for this purpose. The Joint Working Group acts an accountable body for the fund and is composed of representation from Wirral Council and Magenta Living. The request from the Chair was considered at a meeting of the Joint Working Group on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and a written response is being sent back to the Chair of the committee, MP Frank Field. This will be discussed at the committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October.

## 2.7 **Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme 2014/15- £77,500**

The Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme for 2014/5 agreed by Cabinet on 13 March 2014 (minute 178 refers) provides an allocation of £77,750 to each Constituency Committee to be distributed in relation to two objectives; Improving Road Safety and Promoting Active Travel and Health (£38,875). This was discussed at the Birkenhead Constituency Committee meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and it was agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group to provide recommendations for this budget, the group agreed from self nominations w Councillor G Davies, Councillor S Kelly and Councillor D Realey. All members of the committee were asked to submit proposals to be considered to meet the objectives of this funding; these were collated and to presented to the Task and Finish group on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014. The group were to be supported by an officer from the Council's Traffic & Transportation Division to advise on the costs and feasibility of schemes.

**Update:** Councillor S Kelly was the only member of the Task and finish Group in attendance (the Road Safety Manager and Constituency Manager were also present.) therefore decisions on the recommendations could not be made. There was a detailed discussion regarding the submitted proposals and how to progress utilising the funding. Based on the proposals and the timescales to use this funding (it must be spent by March 2015) the following recommendations are being made to the committee:

1. To split the funding into 2 allocations:
  - £32,000 to promote active travel by increasing the volume of dropped kerbs and some cycling infrastructure. Appendix 6 details requests for dropped kerbs that have been submitted.
  - £45,750 to schemes of work to improve road safety e.g. parking issues, speeding reductions.
2. To re establish the Task and Finish group with a minimum of 5 members of the committee. The group will be supported by the Road Safety Manager for Wirral council. It is suggested to invite representation from Merseyside Police to discuss input to the road safety issues and how they could support developments and WIRED (Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Diversity). Due to timescales of this funding allocation it is proposed this

working group has the authority to prioritise use of funding and implement the schemes outside of the Committee meetings. An update report will be provided at the committee meeting in February 2015.

### **3.0 Other Updates**

3.1 The Handbook Task and Finish Group met on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014, in attendance was Councillor G Davies, Councillor M McLaughlin, Councillor A Brighthouse and Councillor T Norbury, Constituency Manager and Engagement Officer for Birkenhead. This meeting focused on developing Community Researchers in Birkenhead as detailed in the handbook and discussed at the committee meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014. It was agreed to recruit Community Researchers specific to research topics and to engage with community organisations that have a specialism in the identified topics. A pilot piece of research is being developed with the National Citizenship Service (NCS) to pilot the Community Researchers Project using young people to research what it is like to live in Birkenhead. A questionnaire has been developed with a number of young people from the NCS course which will help to gather the opinions of fellow young people online and via a number of 'listening surveys'. It was decided the next piece of research will be with Black and Ethnic Minority groups to enhance understanding of this community group in Birkenhead.

3.2 It was resolved at the Birkenhead Constituency Committee meeting on 24th July 2014 The Constituency Manager, on behalf of the Chair be requested to write to the Chief Executive of Wonga Loans to request information as to how many loans had been issued in Birkenhead and were they checked to see if they were on the electoral Register.

**Update:** The letter was sent to Wonga but it was returned, the contact details have been checked and it is the correct registered address for the company therefore this is being followed up by MP Frank Fields Office.

3.3 It was resolved at the Birkenhead Constituency Committee meeting on 24th July 2014 that the Neighbourhood Inspector for Birkenhead is requested to provide a progress report on the Seven Beats Project to the next meeting of the Committee.

**Update:** This report is at Appendix 7.

### **4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

4.1 All resource implications detailed within this report are related to budgets aligned or devolved to the Birkenhead Constituency Committee for their recommended use,

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed for each of the proposals.

### **7.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 This report has no direct carbon reduction implications.

## **8.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 This report has no planning and community safety implications.

## **9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee are asked to:

9.1 Note and approve the content of the updates detailed at 2.1-2.3 related to specific schemes of work and approve for progress to continue.

9.2 Consider and approve the recommendations for the remaining spend of the 2014/15 budget allocation as detailed at 2.4.

9.3 Consider and agree the proposal detailed at 2.5 for use of 'Love Wirral' Funding.

9.4 Consider the response from the Joint Working Group in relation to the 'Your Wirral' funding and agree actions to progress.

9.5 Consider and agree the recommendations related to the Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme and appoint a minimum of 5 members for the Task and Finish Group.

## **10.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 To continue to progress the targeted schemes of work identified within the constituency to develop the new approach to neighbourhood working.

**REPORT AUTHOR: Dawn Tolcher, Constituency Manager (Birkenhead)**

Telephone: (0151) 691 8295

Email: [dawntolcher@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:dawntolcher@wirral.gov.uk)

## **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX 1 - Antenatal Breast feeding Project Quarterly Report (July-September 2014)

APPENDIX 2 - Proposal to increase the signage in Birkenhead

APPENDIX 3 - Proposal to reduce Anti- Social Behaviour in Birkenhead.

APPENDIX 4 - Proposal to develop Community Researchers.

APPENDIX 5 - Proposal for 'Love Wirral' funding.

APPENDIX 6 – Requests for Dropped Kerbs in Birkenhead.

APPENDIX 7 - Seven Beats Project Performance Overview



