

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SOUTH CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

18 JUNE 2015

SUBJECT:	WIRRAL SOUTH PROPOSALS REPORT 2015/16
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 a number of proposals to progress the resolved priorities and allocated budget for the Wirral South Constituency Committee in 2015/16 and beyond.

2.0 BUDGET BREAKDOWN 2015/16

- 2.1 At its meeting on 24 February 2015, Council agreed to fund the four Constituency Committees with £50k each, see below:

“Constituency Committees - £200,000

Labour introduced Constituency Committees in 2013 as part of a new Neighbourhood Working agenda. We have been impressed with the work each committee has done to enable local people to have a greater influence over how the Council spends its funding at a local level. When we started this programme we allocated £50,000 for ‘seed corn’ funding, focussed on tackling poverty and deprivation, which we hoped would be matched by other public agencies. Cabinet

will continue to devolve funding to each Constituency Committee, however, we would request the Acting Chief Executive to undertake an evaluation of the work of Constituency Committees, and to report back to the Cabinet on what additional activities may be devolved and how far each Committee has tackled deprivation in the Borough and whether there is a case for weighting the funding going forward based on levels of deprivation.”

- 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 are (amendment made to “Open Spaces” priority, see resolution 2 of minute 21 Wirral South Constituency Committee, 16 October 2014):
- 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
 - 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. The Priorities were agreed for 3-5 years.

- 2.5 Breakdown of confirmed budget for 2015/16:
- Core Budget (to be broken up into 15K per priority and 5K for general engagement)
£50K
 - Operational Budget
£5K
 - Your Wirral Fund
£35K
 - Anti Social Behaviour (see 4.2)
£15K
 - Community Clean Ups (see 4.3)
£10K
 - Love Wirral (carried forward from 2014/15)
£10K

- Local Transport Capital Funding and the Integrated Transport Block (carried forward from 2014/15 much of this is committed)
£76,416
- Core budget from 2013/14 (much of this is committed)
£38,720.50
- Priority related budget carried forward from (2015/16)
£32,619.79
- General Engagement (carried over from 2014/15)
£5K

Total Budget 2014/15: **£277,756.29**

3.0 PRIORITY PROPOSALS 2015/16

3.1 Improved Open Spaces

3.1.1 At its last meeting of 2014/15 the Wirral South Constituency Committee resolved that Dawstone Park in Heswall be the location of focus in relation to this priority for 2015/16 (Minute 32, resolution 2 refers).

3.1.2 Since the aforementioned committee the Constituency Manager has met with the Wirral South Manager for the Parks and Countryside Services and the newly constituted “Friends of Dawstone Park”. The possible improvement items to be considered by the Parks Task and Finish Group for 2015/16 were discussed. Site visits have taken place and a “wish list” produced by the friends group. This “wish list” has been sent to Wirral’s Landscape Architect and approximate costings and relevant comments re. feasibility have been added (see figure one).

Figure One:

Dawstone Park Approximate Budget Projections		
Item	Cost	Status
		Await technical inspection form Landscape Architect to establish feasibility re. gradient and ability to adhere to Disability Discrimination Act
1. Path to play area	£2,500	
2. Park signs :-		
a) one large,	£860	
b) one small	£350	
3. Repairing gates (3 sets)	£5,500	
4. Waste bins (replace 4; relocate 1)	£1,800	4 new bins
5. Notice Board (similar to Heswall Hall)	£1,300	As per Mayer Park details
Total	12310	
Remaining	£2,690.00	

3.1.3 It is proposed (recommendation 13.1) that the Constituency Manager continues to work with colleagues in parks, the “Friends of Dawstone Park and the Wirral South Parks Task and Finish Group to progress the improvement works in the chosen location as expediently as possible.

3.2 Gaps in Youth Provision

3.2.1 In November 2014, a pilot project (funded via the Wirral South Constituency Committee) was launched to deliver counselling services Wirral South. The service was delivered via Youth Support by Response.

During the period from November to March 2015 the Response counsellor engaged with 25 unique individuals for therapeutic counselling, each receiving on average 6-8 sessions. Counselling sessions were delivered either through regular and planned one hour sessions or via a weekly ‘drop-in’ service, which can be accessed as and when required by the young person.

Referrals to the counselling service came from Response, Schools, GPs, and South Wirral Youth Hub ‘Drop-in’. The age of young people accessing the service was 12 to 17 years old. The two venues used for this project were Bebington Children’s Centre and South Wirral Youth Hub.

The presenting issues included - Relationship issues; low self-esteem; Anger; self-harm; bereavement; low mood/depression; low confidence; learning difficulties; suicidal thoughts; self-image; stop smoking; bullying.

Response engaged with 68 young people to give advice, guidance and support on a weekly basis or as and when required at the Youth Hub. Response also delivered brief interventions, including advice on further support, to young people who attended the productions delivered by Wirral Youth Theatre (see Appendix one for further detail).

3.2.2 The initial pilot was established to assess the uptake of the service and to highlight what the level of need was for the service in the future. Although the pilot has now ceased data suggests that there is an obvious need for the service to continue. The youth related priority for Wirral South states:

“...To work with internal and external partners to identify and rectify any existing gaps in provision of youth services in Wirral South”.

Evidence suggests that this particular initiative has done exactly what the priority was established to do for the young people of Wirral South. With that in mind it is proposed that the existing 2015/16 budget for gaps in youth provision be used to commission and establish an ongoing service reflecting that of the pilot project (see recommendation 13.2).

It is envisaged that (subject to approval) the commissioning project take place over the summer of 2015 with the objective of launching a service no later than October 2015. The service can be commissioned in such a way that there are possible extensions at end of term to allow continuation for a set period of time.

3.3 Social Isolation

3.3.1 Social isolation is a significant problem within our society and one that we should all be concerned about. Whilst most of us are fortunate enough to have family, friends and neighbours to provide us with a reliable social network, there are some for whom regular social interaction is non-existent.

There are a number of Groups that may be at higher risk of social isolation within our society but for the purpose of this contract the main areas of focus are:

- Older people
- People from black and ethnic minorities
- People who have substance misuse problems
- Carers

(for further information relating to social isolation and its effects on the above social groups see appendix one: SOCIAL ISOLATION ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH FOR WIRRAL 2012-2013)

3.3.2 Since the last constituency committee (Jan 2015) the Constituency Manager has been in discussions with both the Director of Public Health for Wirral and the Senior Public Health Manager for Wirral South to establish a possible joint proposal to tackle social isolation in Wirral South. These discussions led to a commitment from the Director of Public Health to contribute £15k towards a jointly commissioned piece of work within Wirral South.

3.3.3 Total funding for the project is as follows: £50K to commission a service aimed at tackling social isolation in Wirral South (£15K Public Health, £30k Wirral South priority budget for 2014/15 and 2015/16 combined, £4,831.03 underspend from Public Health and Wellbeing Fund and £168.97 from Wirral South's operational budget).

3.3.4 Discussions continue in order to produce a draft Invitation to Tender document for the aforementioned piece of commissioning. The draft aims of the commissioned service are:

a) Tackle existing social isolation within the above strands of the communities in Wirral South

and

b) Prevent further social isolation within the above (3.3.1) strands of the communities in Wirral South

3.3.5 The draft outcomes of the proposed service are:

- An evidenced based reduction in existing levels of social isolation for the following groups within your relevant ward/wards:
 - Older people
 - People from black and ethnic minorities

- People who have substance misuse problems
 - Carers
- An evidence based programme of work to prevent further social isolation for the following groups within your relevant ward/wards:
 - Older people
 - People from black and ethnic minorities
 - People who have substance misuse problems
 - Carers
 - Develop new/support existing groups working towards becoming a dementia friendly community (at least one per ward). Utilising the 'Dementia Action Alliance' structure developed by the Alzheimer's society

3.3.6 In order to allow for an increased localised buy in to this tender and to encourage inclusion of smaller organisations with existing local knowledge it is proposed to break up the contract into five lots, one per ward.

Organisations can tender for lots relating to individual wards or a number of wards up to and including the total number of five.

Any tenderers bidding for more than one ward should graduate their tender so that a decision can be made during evaluation to award less than their total wards tendered for.

Collaborative applications will also be considered to ensure organisations that may specify in work relating to one particular element of the community are not excluded.

3.3.7 Recommendation 13.3 seeks approval for further development of this proposal. It is envisaged (if resolved) that the service could be in place by October 2015. The service will be commissioned for an initial 18 month period with the opportunity for extensions built in.

4.0 OTHER FUNDED WORKSTREAM PROPOSALS

4.1 Your Wirral

4.1.1 Further Your Wirral funding has been devolved to the Constituencies Committees for 2015/16. 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.

4.1.2 It is important to note that 2015/16 is the final year of the Your Wirral funding and the no further allotment will be allocated to the constituency committee to administer.

4.1.3 Grants are available to voluntary and community sector (not for profit) groups across Wirral. The Fund rests with Magenta Living. A Joint Working Group acts

an accountable body for the Fund and is composed of representation from Wirral Council, Magenta Living, elected members and Board members of Magenta Living. Previous applications were evaluated by representatives from Magenta Living and Wirral Council then signed off for payment or withdrawn by the Joint Working Group. Payments were made to successful groups by Magenta Living.

- 4.1.4 Once again a total of £250,000 is available for 2015/16. The amount allocated is determined by the number of Magenta Living housing units within each Constituency (outlined below). £50,000 is available for projects or activities that are delivered in two or more constituencies or across Wirral.

Area	Number of units	Allocation
Birkenhead	4683	£75,000
Wallasey	3214	£50,000
Wirral West	2430	£40,000
Wirral South	1888	£35,000
Wirral Wide	12215 (Total)	£50,000

- 4.1.5 To be eligible for funding, applications must fit within one or more of the seven themes, which were agreed by the Joint Working Group in line with the charitable objectives of the Community Fund Deed they are:

1. Creating an attractive and safe environment
2. Contributing to community economic regeneration
3. Preventing crime or reducing the fear of crime
4. Providing employment and training for local people
5. Benefiting local people who face discrimination
6. Improving community facilities
7. Engaging communities to improve quality of life

- 4.1.6 It is recommended that the assessment and allocation process continues in 2015/16 as it did in 2014/15 (i.e. one councillor per ward plus a representative from Magenta Living sit upon an assessment panel. The fund for 2015/16 will open 20 July 2015 and close at noon 14 September 2015. This will allow time for assessment to be made and allocation to be reported at the following committee in October 2015.

4.2 Anti Social Behaviour

- 4.2.1 At its meeting on 24 February 2015 Council agreed to:

“Provide dedicated funding to Constituency Committees to tackle ASB - £60,000

In support of the constituency committee process and to engage the committees in tackling ASB in their areas, it is proposed to make available a fund of £60,000 to be split equally amongst the 4 Constituency Committees. The ASB team would work with the Constituency Committees and produce action plans to tackle ASB in their area. Constituency Committees will be offered a menu of ASB prevention and intervention activities to enable them to choose what they feel would benefit their areas. Some examples on this menu are – Youth alcohol testing programmes,

additional youth provision, sports development workers, enhanced household security campaigns, and increased CCTV camera provision.”

4.2.2 Initial discussions have taken place between the Constituency Manager and the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Team. The ASB Team have been tasked with analysing historic evidence to highlight the various hotspots within Wirral South throughout the year. Based upon this analysis they have been requested to produce a number of recommendations aimed at addressing each one to add value utilising the devolved budget (£15K).

4.2.3 Recommendation 13.6 requests volunteers (preferably one per ward) to sit upon an ASB task and finish group for Wirral South to convene as expediently as possible to assess the proposals. It is also recommended that said group be given delegated powers to spend the relevant budget. The delegated decision is necessary to allow for projects to be implemented in time for the summer holidays.

4.3 Community Clean-ups

4.3.1 At its meeting on 24 February 2015 Council agreed to:

“Community Clean-ups - £40,000

There have been a number of examples during this year where individuals and communities have come together to help clean up their local areas. We applaud the commitment and pride shown by individuals and communities and would wish to support them to continue to do so. We therefore propose allocating £10,000 to each of the four constituency committees to enable local groups to pay for the cost of skips to be provided to support these local clean-ups. Constituency Committee managers will work with staff from the Council’s waste team to quickly develop processes for this option to be introduced.”

4.3.4 Similarly to the ASB budget (4.2) the Constituency Manager for Wirral South has met with colleagues in the Waste and Environment Team to discuss proposals for this devolved budget. A number of options are being developed currently and a “Shopping List” of items that will add value to current services is being developed. Recommendation 13.7 proposes that this budget be split evenly between the five wards and delegated decisions be made by each relevant group of members. Said decisions to be reported back to the constituency committee in October.

4.4 Love Wirral

At the last Constituency committee (Jan 2015) it was agreed that a “Love Wirral” task and finish group be set up (minute 31 refers), comprising the following members:

- Councillors P Gilchrist
- C Muspratt
- S Niblock
- T Pilgrim
- L Rowlands

The group was tasked with developing proposals in respect of the devolved £10K Love Wirral funding. It was agreed electronically that the budget be split evenly between the five wards. As such recommendation 13.8 proposes the constituency manager meet individually (where necessary) with each representative to finalise relevant projects and that the task and finish group have the delegated power to spend and report back to committee in October.

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.

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 Constituency Manager continues to work with colleagues in parks, the "Friends of Dawstone Park and the Wirral South Parks Task and Finish Group to progress the improvement works in the chosen location as expediently as possible (this includes delegated power to spend the relevant parks budget as in 2015/16).
- 13.2 Members agree that the existing 2015/16 budget for gaps in youth provision be used to commission and establish an ongoing service reflecting that of the pilot project (with the aim of launching the service in October 2015).
- 13.3 Members agree to the commissioning of a service aimed at tackling existing/preventing future social isolation in Wirral South based upon the outline in section 3.3 of this report.
- 13.4 The Your Wirral assessment and allocation process continues in 2015/16 as it did in 2014/15 (i.e. one councillor per ward plus a representative from Magenta Living sit upon an assessment panel).
- 13.5 Members note the Your Wirral fund for 2015/16 will open 20 July 2015 and close at noon 14 September 2015.
- 13.6 That a Wirral South Anti Social Behaviour Task and Finish Group be established (comprising of one member per ward) with power to make delegated decisions on spend re. the associated £15k budget for 2015/16. Volunteers required.
- 13.7 The "Community Clean Up" budget of £10K be split evenly between the five wards and power be given to make delegated decisions on spend to be reported back to the constituency committee in October 2015.
- 13.8 The members of the Love Wirral Task and Finish Group (see 4.4) work with the Constituency Manager to finalise relevant projects for the associated budget and that the task and finish group have power to make delegated decisions to spend power to spend and report back to committee in October.

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

SOCIAL ISOLATION ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH
FOR WIRRAL 2012-2013)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Wirral South Constituency Committee	25 June 2014
Budget Council	24 February 2015

Appendix One: Response Counselling services in Wirral South

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Overview

In November 2014, a pilot project was launched to deliver counselling services in the South Wirral area. During the period from November to March 2015 the Response counsellor engaged with 25 unique individuals for therapeutic counselling, each receiving on average 6-8 sessions. Counselling sessions were delivered either through regular and planned one hour sessions or via a weekly 'drop-in' service, which can be accessed as and when required by the young person.

Referrals to the counselling service came from Response, School, GP, and South Wirral Youth Hub 'Drop-in'. The age of young people accessing the service are 12 to 17 years old. The two venues used for this project were Bebington Children's Centre and South Wirral Youth Hub.

The presenting issues included - Relationship issues; low self-esteem; Anger; self-harm; bereavement; low mood/depression; low confidence; learning difficulties; suicidal thoughts; self-image; stop smoking; bullying.

Response engaged with 68 young people to give advice, guidance and support on a weekly basis or as and when required at the Youth Hub. Response also delivered brief interventions, including advice on further support, to young people who attended the productions delivered by Wirral Youth Theatre.

Outcomes & Impact

The impact of counselling has included:

- A young person feeling more able to talk more about feelings and does not hide "real self" from the world.
- Young person has found alternative coping strategies to self-harm and has reported self-harm has reduced, and feeling more positive about the future
- Young person feeling more confident to make a new circle of friends and take up new hobbies as had previously felt isolated and unattached.
- Improved relationships at home with mum and siblings. Accepting self and attendance at school improved. Sleep improved with increased energy, concentration. Increased confidence and made new friends.

Case Study 1: Bebington Children's Centre

- Young Female aged 15
- Presented to the GP as was self-harming by cutting wrists, she was feeling angry, stressed and sad. GP suggested she attend Response for counselling.
- Young person attended 4 counselling sessions and talked about feelings of loneliness as doesn't feel accepted by society & 'not feeling good enough' Spoke about 'scary' suicidal thoughts at night when can't sleep, this affects attendance at school, and is often too tired from lack of sleep to attend.

- Worked on self-esteem, special qualities and focused on young person recognising what she's good at and being kind to self as well as developing relaxation techniques.
- YP attended last session and entered room by saying 'I'm back'. YP was now sleeping better which has increased her motivation & concentration in school. Attendance in school has improved and YP has been able to make new friends which has increased confidence and she is now looking forward to the future. Comment from YP following evaluation ***"all of this change from talking - Amazing!"***

Case study 2: South Wirral Hub – 'drop in'

- Young male aged 17
- Presented at South Wirral Hub 'drop- in' as was struggling with anger and finds it hard to control anger at home with Mum which is causing problems with the relationship and may result in him leaving home.
- YP referred to Response housing team for advice as under pressure to move home.
- YP uses drop-in service at South Wirral Hub when feels the need to. He has attended 5 times during Jan-Mar 2015 and uses the space to explore feelings as he recognises that he keeps these inside a lot and looks after others more than himself – working on self-esteem to improve this. Also working on anger management techniques in sessions.
- YP likes the flexibility of the drop in service and also knowing that there is a counsellor he can talk to on a weekly basis, if needed, as this helps him feel supported especially at this time of a lot of change and uncertainty.
- YP open to Response housing service and family accessing support through 'Team Around the Family'. YP is happy living with Dad at present.

Below are some comments from individuals whom have accessed the service:

"It's great I now feel I have got somewhere to come when I need to talk to someone, I'll definitely use the drop in service"

"Don't usually talk to anyone about how I'm feeling so being able to talk has helped me put things into perspective"

"I feel this is a space I am able to speak and explain how I feel"

"I'm getting to know myself better; I'm beginning to like myself"

"I now realise I ignore the good bits about me – there is lots of good things"

"It's been a journey"

"I never knew counselling would help me"

"I feel in a good place now"

"I'm beginning to accept me"

"I can finally sleep better, it's changed my life"

A mum of young person reported that young person has made a real change since coming to counselling and can't believe that she is the same girl.

Recommendations

- As part of the exit strategy, Response will work with Youth workers to bring young people to Response so they are aware of services available to them should they need to access in the future
- The pilot project will end at the end of May 2015, and time is given to review and evaluate the project