

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL WEST CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

16TH JULY 2015

SUBJECT:	CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE BUSINESS CASE
WARD/S AFFECTED:	WARDS WITHIN THE WIRRAL WEST CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARY <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ GREASBY, FRANKBY AND IRBY▪ HOYLAKE AND MEOLS▪ PENSBY AND THINGWALL▪ WEST KIRBY AND THURSTASTON▪ UPTON
REPORT OF:	CONSTITUENCY MANAGER (WIRRAL WEST)
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CABINET MEMBER – NEIGHBOURHOODS, HOUSING AND ENGAGEMENT
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The paper at **Appendix 1** has been produced by the Constituency Manager in respect of developing a business case as previously requested by the Committee.
- 1.2 The Committee is asked to note that this paper is now being considered by the Council's Strategic Leadership Team in respect of its approach to developing the constituency working model.
- 1.3 A further update on this work will be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in October 2015.

2.0 RISKS

- 2.1 A detailed risk assessment has been developed to support the constituency working approach.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 Appendix 1 gives due consideration to a range of options for the development of constituency working.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation is undertaken with the members of the Constituency Committee as to the development and operation of the Committee.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 5.1 The constituency working approach has positive implications for voluntary, community and faith groups in Wirral West.

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

- 6.1 Appendix 1 makes reference to the need to fully understand resource implications in respect of taking forward constituency working.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Appendix 1 makes reference to the need to fully understand resource implications in respect of taking forward constituency working.

8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 An impact review relating to neighbourhood working can be found at the link below:

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

9.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct carbon reduction implications relating to this report.

10.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct planning and community safety implications relating to this report.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The Committee is requested to note the progress made in respect of developing a business case and that this work is continuing.

12.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 12.1 In order to ensure that the business case requested by the Committee is being progressed as required.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: BUSINESS CASE

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Meeting	Date
Wirral West Constituency Committee – Constituency Manager’s Report	3rd July 2014
Wirral West Constituency Committee – Constituency Manager’s Report	16th October 2014
Wirral West Constituency Committee – Constituency Manager’s Report	26th February 2015

APPENDIX 1

WIRRAL WEST CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE BUSINESS CASE

1. Introduction

The Wirral West Constituency Committee has requested that the Constituency Manager present a report which explores how the Council's constituency working arrangements have been implemented to date in Wirral West alongside a business case to further develop the scope of the Committee in respect of influencing and decision-making on matters relating to the constituency.

A proposed approach for the Constituency Manager to undertake this work was set out in a report to the Wirral West Constituency Committee in February 2015 and has involved:

- Reviewing the work undertaken by the Constituency Committee since it was established and current practice elsewhere in respect of area-based working;
- Ongoing discussions with SLT members, service leads and Constituency Manager peers in a variety of forums.

Since the establishment of constituency working in 2013, the focus for the Constituency Manager has been to work with the Constituency Committee and other stakeholders to:

- Deliver demonstrable outcomes for local residents which add value to existing services or improve responsiveness across organisational barriers;
- Encourage behaviour change and early intervention approaches;
- Promote resident involvement and social action in the context of the public sector's changing relationship with communities.

A review of constituency working to date, and the use of the Constituency Committee's budget, suggests that there is a robust foundation on which to build future activity and that constituency working should be one of the key building blocks for the Council's future strategy. Successes in Wirral West include:

- Developing effective small grant programmes for the constituency, which sustain valuable community-led activity whilst engaging a wider cohort of interested stakeholders through participatory budgeting – feedback from this exercise suggests that there is significant scope to further involve residents in decision-making and social action and to work with community groups to develop a more sophisticated approach to commissioning outcomes;
- Multi-agency projects delivering targeted engagement in the constituency area (e.g. increasing winter resilience for vulnerable groups, building networks of local assets).

A number of success factors have been evident where things have worked well. These success factors include:

- Clear and timely decision-making by the Committee, with an appropriate degree of flexibility for the Constituency Manager to deliver / implement decisions and ongoing support from Committee members;
- Community networks, partners and other stakeholders being effectively mobilised to participate in constituency projects with a common purpose;
- A high level of maturity in the working relationships between community groups and Council services in respect of improving local area (e.g. Friends of Parks groups).

There is also clear evidence of value for money where things have worked well (i.e. a relatively small input resulting in a high degree of impact), which should provide the benchmark for the further development of constituency working.

However, it should also be recognised that there are a number of barriers to success which include:

- Mixed messages being communicated to community stakeholders (e.g. constituency team messages differing from messages given by services or partners);
- Lack of prior consultation about initiatives which reference the Constituency Committee leading to limited planning time and low buy in from Committee members.

2. Business Case

The business case for developing the role of the Constituency Committee falls into three broad elements:

Element 1: Use of devolved budgets to deliver improved outcomes for local people set out in a Constituency Plan, with a focus on increasing the role played by communities in delivering these outcomes.

Each of the four Constituency Committees can now provide examples of commissioning or the delivery of targeted projects using devolved budgets which have been successfully developed to address constituency needs, e.g. the Stay, Safe, Warm and Well initiative in Wirral West.

For 2015-16, each of the four Constituency Committees has again been allocated a £50,000 'core budget' as well as £15,000 to tackle anti-social behaviour and £10,000 for local environmental projects, e.g. community clean ups. This represents 0.1% of the Council's overall projected expenditure in 2015-16. As indicated in Section 3 above, the use of these of 2015-16 budgets will be most successful when Council services are able to respond quickly to Committee decisions and where partner and community support is mobilised in support.

It is recognised that at its core this option will be about ensuring that the Council's diminishing resources are used to effectively to improve outcomes, building on the assets available in local areas. The role of the Constituency Committee and constituency team in understanding and interpreting local needs and mapping local assets provides a strong foundation for moving this forward.

Consultation undertaken with Wirral West residents in 2013 and 2014 suggests that there are a number of service areas which matter overwhelmingly to local people and that they would like to influence more, notably Streetscene, libraries and parks and open spaces. The Constituency Committee is ideally placed to mobilise the community to work with the Council on increased devolution in respect of these and other agendas.

Element 2: Devolving aspects of decision-making where this affects the constituency area

A number of local authority areas have devolved decisions to Area Committees where this solely affects the area, e.g. some aspects of planning or approving sale or lease of land or buildings within their area.

The devolution of decision-making to the Constituency Committee is the least developed aspect of the constituency working model to date. Based on examples from elsewhere, there is scope for area-based decisions to be devolved to the Constituency Committee where it is appropriate.

Element 3: Influencing the day-to-day delivery of services at the neighbourhood level to solve problems and target resources as effectively as possible.

Members of the Committee work with the constituency team on a day-to-day basis to address service issues and barriers and/or to identify local priorities for Council programmes of activity such as dog fouling campaigns.

In respect of further developing the Wirral West Constituency Committee's role in targeting the delivery of services, a key driver will be the consolidation of joined up working on a locality basis through the planned constituency service hubs. This will allow for ward councillors to work increasingly collaboratively with constituency teams to deliver solutions with staff and community members.

3. Conclusion

It is important to recognise that this paper takes as its starting point the development of the role of the Wirral West Constituency Committee but that successful implementation requires a clear set of agreed objectives for constituency working supported by organisational change and the consolidation of the public sector commitment to constituency working.

Within this context, the business case will therefore be further developed based on:

- Mapping financial, service and other **data and intelligence**;
- Identifying what **resources** will be required, noting that this may mean realigning existing (diminishing) resources than identifying additional resources and that this may differ from constituency area to constituency area;
- Giving consideration to any changes which might be required in respect of **governance arrangements** for the Constituency Committee;
- Promoting **community involvement**.