

# CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - WIRRAL WEST

Held at Holy Cross Church Community Hall, Church Lane, Woodchurch

Thursday, 16 July 2015

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	JE Green (Chair)	
	Councillors	T Anderson	G Ellis
		E Boulton	M Patrick
		P Brightmore	L Reecejones
		D Burgess-Joyce	G Watt
		W Clements	S Whittingham
		D Elderton	
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillors	J Hale	M Sullivan
		Tony Smith	

Twenty nine members of the public were in attendance, with the percentage attendance by ward of those who had signed in being as follows:

- Greasby, Frankby and Irby 25%
- Hoylake and Meols 13%
- Pensby and Thingwall 6%
- Upton 25%
- West Kirby and Thurstaston 31%

## 1 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Head of Legal and Member Services requested nominations for the appointment of Chair for the 2015/2016 municipal year.

On a motion by Councillor Wendy Clements, seconded by Councillor David Elderton, it was –

**Resolved (unanimously) – That Councillor Jeff Green be appointed Chair for the municipal year 2015/2016.**

(Councillor Green in the Chair)

On a motion by Councillor Jeff Green, seconded by Councillor Tom Anderson, it was –

**Resolved (unanimously) – That Councillor John Hale be appointed Vice-Chair for the municipal year 2015/2016.**

## 2 CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

Councillor Jeff Green thanked the Committee Members for their vote of confidence in re-electing him as Chair.

It was noted that apologies had been received from Councillors John Hale, Tony Smith and Mike Sullivan and from John Smith and Elise Wong.

## 3 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

## 4 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Constituency Committee held on 26 February, 2015.

Councillor Watt asked that minute 32 on page 9 of the agenda where reference was made to 'flooding that had occurred in December, 2014', be amended to read '... in December, 2013'.

Councillor Watt also suggested that the minutes should also state the venue in which the meeting was held.

Councillor Elderton asked that minute 32 on page 10 of the agenda, where reference was made to '... derelict toilets on Moreton Parade, Hoylake.' be amended to read, '...on North Parade, Hoylake.'

**Resolved – That, subject to the above amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February, 2015 be approved.**

In respect of minute 32, Councillor Watt raised the issue of a Second World War memorial plaque being erected in the sunken gardens in Hoylake and it was confirmed that the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment was looking into this, the Constituency Manager would find out further information and inform the Ward Councillors.

## 5 ADOPTION OF COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES / ARRANGEMENTS FOR VACANT POSTS

The Constituency Manager (Wirral West) reported upon the arrangements for the adoption of community representatives and for filling vacant posts.

A recruitment process would be undertaken between now and the October meeting for the five representatives. The current position was as follows:

- Greasby, Frankby and Irby – John Smith to continue in post pending the outcome of the recruitment process.
- Hoylake and Meols – Jackie Hall to continue in post pending the outcome of the recruitment process.
- Pensby and Thingwall – post vacant
- Upton – Elise Wong to continue in post pending the outcome of the recruitment process.
- West Kirby and Thurstaston – Dave Wade standing down following this meeting.

The Chair expressed his thanks on behalf of the Committee to Dave Wade for all his work with the Committee.

He requested that a letter be sent to all the retiring members of the Committee.

## **6 CONSTITUENCY MANAGER'S PROGRESS / BUDGET REPORT**

The Constituency Manager (Wirral West) presented her report on:

- Progress in relation to the use of the Committee's budget to date;
- An update on progress in relation to other activities being undertaken by the Wirral West constituency team;
- Items for noting in respect of local issues / consultations.

The report also set out the status of ongoing actions raised by Committee Services as a result of previous Constituency Committee meetings.

Taking into account the Committee's overall budget position in relation to 2013-14 and 2014-15, with a total allocation of £277,750.00, the total expenditure was £244,720.90 over the two years. All the remaining budget from years 1 and 2 had been carried over to be used in line with the purpose for which it was allocated.

The Chair thanked the Constituency Manager and the Constituency Engagement Officer for all the work they had carried out given the small size of the team and for all their work done with the voluntary, community and faith sectors. He was pleased that as a Committee resources identified had been spent on some excellent projects. The 'Stay Safe, Warm and Well' project, was just one such example, utilising a relatively small amount of money to make a huge difference within the community. He expressed thanks to both the Committee and the Constituency Manager for having the foresight to go ahead with this project.

Responding to a comment on the progress of the West Kirby Town Centre Plan, he suggested that a report be brought back to a future meeting on the progress of all Town Centre Plans for the constituency and that an officer from the Regeneration and Environment Department be present for this item.

**Resolved – That the progress and updates set out in the report be noted.**

## 7 **STAY SAFE, WARM AND WELL PROJECT EVALUATION - PRESENTATION / AWARD OF CERTIFICATES**

The Constituency Manager (Wirral West) gave a presentation to the Committee on the 'Stay Safe, Warm and Well' project.

4,000 leaflets and 60 posters, with up to date numbers were produced to distribute to relevant support groups and services. People were referred to additional support groups and services in a co-ordinated way using a single referral form. As a result of the campaign,

- 21 groups were visited and a total of nearly 300 winter warmth packs given out (fleece blankets, flasks, gloves etc.)
- Nearly 200 referrals to additional services were made as a result:
  - 42% of referrals were made to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service for services like Home Safety Checks
  - 24% of referrals were made to Energy Projects Plus for services like fuel debt advice
  - 20% of referrals were made to existing Council services such as Healthy Homes, Adaptations and POPIN
  - 14% of referrals were made to Age UK for services like befriending

Details were also given of the budget for the campaign with £3,243 spent and £2,407 remaining for the 2015/16 campaign.

Presentations were also received from some of the partner agencies involved, including Dominic Griffiths, Business Relationship Manager, at Energy Projects Plus who explained the work of his charitable organisation, based in Wallasey.

Steve Gadsdon, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, gave a presentation on the work of his organisation in the campaign. This included the provision of oil filled radiators and other equipment. The Service's Prevention Team had followed up referrals with tailored Home Fire Safety Checks, of which there had been 1,273 between October, 2014 and March, 2015. Referrals to other agencies had also been made, where appropriate, to deal with longer term issues (e.g. managing fuel bills, adaptations, assistive technology, befriending, health, social services benefits checks, etc.) and the provision of further risk reduction equipment, if needed.

He thanked the Committee for pushing this project forward and praised Jane Morgan and Helen Gallagher for all their work and commitment to the scheme.

The Chair thanked Jane and Helen for their fantastic work on this project, which he noted had also been cited as a case study in the new Wirral Council Plan, 'A 2020 Vision'. He also offered his and the Committee's thanks to Dominic, Steve and to other partners for all their work on the scheme.

Councillor Whittingham, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, thanked all those involved for their work on this project on behalf of the Administration and commented that this was what the '2020 Vision' Council plan was all about, achieving significant benefits to the community with a modest sum of money.

It was noted that a number of Age UK volunteers had given up their time to be part of the project and that they were unable to be in attendance at the meeting. These volunteers would be invited to the Town Hall to be presented with a certificate of thanks on behalf of the Committee.

**Resolved – That the thanks of the Committee be accorded to all those involved in the project.**

## 8 COMMUNITY FUND 2013-14 OUTCOMES

The Constituency Manager (Wirral West) gave a presentation on the impact of the Community Fund. 38 individual projects had been funded with grants up to a maximum of £1,000. Of these 38 projects:

- 33 projects had completed;
- 2 projects had not yet commenced but she was satisfied that they would be delivered;
- 1 project only delivered in part due to capacity issues and £737.33 grant returned
- 2 projects were unaccounted for.

Responding to comments from Members she acknowledged that there was an element of risk with such small grants but more follow up work would be undertaken with the Audit section.

She gave examples of projects funded in each of the five wards and outlined how they were contributing to the quality of life within the constituency, for example through:

- A lasting physical and environmental legacy;
- Improved community facilities;

- Development of horticulture projects which had multiple benefits;
- Supporting events which celebrated the area and promoted tourism;
- Improved outcomes for older and vulnerable people;
- Raised aspirations of children and young people.

A Member suggested that when the Committee or its panels looks at applications for grants it would be helpful to know of any applicants who failed to provide information about their projects.

**Resolved – That the presentation be noted.**

## 9 PUBLIC HEALTH GRANTS 2013-14 OUTCOMES

The Constituency Manager (Wirral West) gave a presentation on the impact of the public health grants. 18 individual projects had been funded with grants up to a maximum of £3,000. Of these 18 projects:

- 10 projects had been fully evaluated
- Unable to evaluate the remainder of projects at this time either because:
  - The project had been granted an extension;
  - The project organisers had not provided an evaluation report and/or
  - The organisation was no longer in existence.

She outlined the evaluation approach for each project including the five ways to wellbeing. Examples were given of projects funded in each of the five wards including the beneficiaries and outcomes. The projects evaluated to date had made a difference to people's health and wellbeing.

Projects of this nature could be instrumental in getting small-scale activity off the ground but, in delivering grant programmes, the Council needed to think carefully about sustainability (e.g. longer timescales for grant awards) and public agencies being ready to solve problems quickly in support of groups. Barriers were often overcome through groups networking together, and the local authority and partners could play an important role in creating opportunities for groups to link up and share resources.

The Chair thanked Jane Morgan and the team for all their work on these grants. The projects had made a real difference to people's quality of life.

A Member suggested that it had been very worthwhile to hear how these sums of grant money were being spent and asked that at future meetings of the Committee a project could be invited to give a presentation on how they were utilising their grant funding.

**Resolved – That the presentation be noted and that at future meetings projects which have received a grant from the Committee be invited to give a presentation.**

## 10 **CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE BUDGET 2015-16**

The Constituency Manager (Wirral West) reported upon the Constituency Committee Budget 2015/2016 and sought the views of the Committee as to the process for taking forward expenditure in relation to the Constituency Committee's budget allocation for 2015/2016. The budget was made up as follows:

- £15,000 for tackling anti-social behaviour;
- £40,000 Your Wirral Fund;
- £50,000 core Constituency Committee budget;
- £10,000 environmental budget.

The Committee was also asked to note that, for 2015-16, the Constituency Manager had been allocated an operational budget of £5,000 to be used to support core constituency engagement activities and for general expenditure.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour Budget**

The Chair suggested that with Upton ward and specifically Woodchurch being the constituency hotspot for ASB, the majority of funding should go to this area but with each ward having some resource to be deployed as necessary. He suggested the funding could be split £10,000 to Upton ward and £5,000 split between the other wards.

A Member suggested that there was a need to ensure that, when allocated, this funding augmented expenditure on any services rather than being used to replace it.

### **Resolved –**

- (1) That an ASB Panel be established (with representation from one member per ward, to be determined by the Committee) to make recommendations about the use of the Committee's budget and that it be used to augment services not replace them.**
- (2) That the ASB Panel is supported by the Constituency Manager and attended by the Head of Corporate and Community Safety and partners as appropriate, including Merseyside Police.**
- (3) That the Committee delegates decision-making in respect of this budget to the ASB Panel in conjunction with the Chair of the Committee given the need to expedite decisions quickly taking into account seasonal factors.**

- (4) That a report on progress and expenditure to date is considered by the Committee when it next meets in October.**

### **Your Wirral Fund**

The report of the Constituency Manager set out the terms to be adhered to in respect of this grant of £40,000 provided by Magenta Living, with a maximum grant of £2,500. An amount of £50,000 had also been ringfenced for Wirral wide projects (delivered in two or more of the constituency areas). With regard to this fund, decisions were taken by the respective Chairs of the Constituency Committees.

Councillors Jeff Green and Stuart Whittingham declared personal interests in this item due to them being Board Members of Magenta Living.

### **Resolved –**

- (5) That the process for allocating the Your Wirral Fund is the same as adopted in 2014-15, i.e. that a Wirral West Your Wirral Panel is established comprising one councillor per ward, that applications are welcomed in respect of all seven Your Wirral themes, and that the Chair (or deputy) represents Wirral West on the Wirral-wide Panel.**
- (6) That the Your Wirral Fund is opened for applications on Monday 20 July with a closing date of Monday 14 September and that the Wirral West Your Wirral Panel meets subsequently to review these applications.**
- (7) That the Committee considers the recommendations of the Wirral West Your Wirral Panel in relation to which applications should be funded at its meeting in October.**

### **Core Budget**

The Constituency Manager suggested that given the grant opportunities currently available to Wirral West groups, as detailed elsewhere on the agenda, it was proposed that the Committee defer the timetable for the Community Fund to take this into account (subject to the Committee's approval as to the continuation of the general approach set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report). This would enable groups to target their grant applications as effectively as possible working with the ongoing support of the constituency team. It was also proposed that a review of the process for allocating the Community Fund was undertaken to further develop the involvement of local communities in the decision-making process.



The Chair suggested that this deferment would enable the Constituency team to plan some more holistic events to engage with the community.

The Constituency Manager stated that Members would be consulted over a revised timetable with a view to re-opening the Community Fund after Christmas.

The Chair, having always found the Administration to be very reasonable, commented that he was sure any underspend could be carried over.

**Resolved –**

- (8) That the Committee agrees to continue with the broad framework now established in respect of the Community Fund, i.e. £10,000 per ward with an opportunity for local groups to bid for funding (and any remaining monies to be allocated at the discretion of ward councillors).**
- (9) That, in line with the Committee's aspiration of continuous improvement, the Constituency Manager and Constituency Engagement Officer review the process for allocating the Community Fund to further develop the involvement of local communities in the decision-making process.**
- (10) That the Committee is provided with an update on process and timescale for allocating the Community Fund when it next meets in October.**

**Environmental Budget**

The Constituency Manager reported that Council at its meeting on 24 February, 2015 had allocated £40,000 to support communities to help clean up their neighbourhoods, £10,000 per constituency.

**Resolved –**

- (11) That the constituency team undertakes consultation with residents and community stakeholders to identify locations or issues in the constituency which might benefit from the use of this funding and that this information is presented to the Committee in October alongside possible options for expenditure.**

**11 CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE BUSINESS CASE**

The Constituency Manager introduced a paper in respect of developing a business case to further develop the scope of the Committee as previously requested by the Committee. The Committee was asked to note that this

paper was now being considered by the Council's Strategic Leadership Team in respect of its approach to developing the constituency working model. A further update on this work would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee in October 2015.

The Chair welcomed the paper, stating that it was an indication of the maturity of the Committee that they were now able to look at some wider issues. The Chief Executive and Leader of the Council were keen to allow the Committee to develop this idea. In developing its scope the Committee would ask of the Authority where it could add value to the Council and its programmes.

**Resolved – That the Committee notes the progress made in respect of developing a business case and that this work is continuing.**

## 12 **UPDATE FROM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES**

The Chair invited the Community Representatives in attendance to provide a brief update in relation to local issues.

### **Hoylake and Meols Ward**

Jackie Hall MBE expressed the view that the Constituency Committee was more of a business meeting and that it did not discuss the issues relevant to Hoylake residents. Therefore a meeting had been arranged for 2 September in Hoylake at which those issues affecting Hoylake would be discussed. An initial response would be made to the Hoylake Golf Resort report, a report would be made on the Festival of Firsts and it was hoped that the disused toilets on the promenade would have been demolished.

In respect of the last issue raised, the Constituency Manager reported that she understood the demolition contractor would be on site in early August with the work completed within 3 weeks of that date.

### **West Kirby and Thurstaston Ward**

David Wade referred to the issue of signs on West Kirby playing fields which Councillor Elderton had resolved. He announced that a 'Jazz on a Summer's afternoon' concert would be held in Ashton Park on Sunday, 26 July, 2015.

With regard to developments at the West Kirby Medical Centre the Chair stated that the Committee should be provided with an update report.

In response to the comments made by Jackie Hall, the Chair commented that the Constituency Committee structure was not what all Councillors had wanted but was what all Councillors now had to work with.

**Resolved – That the comments be noted.**

## 13 COMMUNITY QUESTION TIME

The Chair invited questions from members of the public upon matters that were relevant to the Wirral West Constituency. Some questions had also been received in advance of the meeting –

- A resident, referring to a comment earlier, commented that devolution did not just stop at Councils but also went down to community and voluntary groups and then to individuals and the Chair acknowledged that this was indeed the case.
- A resident referred to funding raised for improvements in Coronation Park, Greasby and the time taken to progress this with the Council. He was surprised that a notice on consultation had not been placed in a more prominent position in Greasby and no consultation had taken place with the people involved in Coronation Park and local residents.
  - The Chair responded that there was a need for the Council to take into account the learning from the constituency grant programmes and issues and obstacles for groups.
  - Councillor Whittingham, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, commented that over the last five years the Authority had lost £151m in funding and as a consequence there were now less staff within the Council to look into such matters. The Chair commented that facilitating community-led activity should be prioritised by the Council.
- A resident referred to the Hoylake Golf Resort proposal to be considered by the Cabinet and queried how the Council would consult with all its residents and how it would take account of non-responses of those living in the southern part of the borough.
  - The Chair stated that he was unaware of how the consultation process would run but that local Councillors would undoubtedly have their own mechanisms for speaking with their own constituents.
  - Councillor Ellis commented that each part of the borough should have their own meetings for consultation as would be happening in Hoylake.
  - Councillor Whittingham commented that he did not have an answer as to how the formal consultation process would be undertaken but that he would find the information and pass it on to the Constituency Manager.
- A resident referred to the use of the word 'aspiration' in the Hoylake Golf Resort report.
  - Councillor Whittingham commented that he understood the use of the word in this context meant to create jobs and value in the economy.

- A resident had submitted a question about the Council Plan – a 2020 Vision, the cost of its production and who would see it.
  - The Constituency Manager stated that she would provide a written response, the 2020 Vision document was commissioned from an external designer at a cost of £2,400 as it was designed to be an interactive document, and therefore viewable on smart 'phones and tablets. A very small amount of documents had been printed, the Plan being available to view online.
  
- A resident referred to the current consultation on the Council's Allotment Strategy and stated that a lot of residents were not aware of it.
  - The Constituency Manager stated that costs were too prohibitive to send consultations out by post to everybody and that whatever consultations were taking place the Council always tried to ensure that copies were made available in libraries and in one stop shops. She would continue to work with departments and the community to try and ensure any consultations had as wide a circulation as possible.
  
- A resident referred to the issue of road safety in Trinity Road, Hoylake and the possibility of a 20mph speed limit.
  - Councillor Ellis responded that there had been lots of discussion on this issue and the possibility of road humps had been discussed but the Police and Fire authorities had raised objections. He would follow this up again and see what could be done.
  
- A resident had submitted a written question on the HYPE group and the award of funding from Constituency Committees.
  - The Constituency Manager stated that a written response would be supplied and that HYPE had been awarded £4,000 by the Wirral West Constituency Committee, a £3,000 public health grant in March 2014 and a Community Fund grant of £1,000 in February, 2015. They had not received any grants from any other constituency committees. She was satisfied that the Public Health grant had been used for the purpose awarded. With regard to the February grant she had been notified that the closure of the HYPE Shop at Eltham Green, Woodchurch was not a factor in the delivery of the project. All grants were monitored.
  
- A resident referred to an individual who had been living in a camper van for approximately 10 weeks on West Kirby promenade and asked if any bye-laws could be introduced to prevent this in future.

- Councillor Gerry Ellis commented that liaison had taken place with both police and social services and the situation had now been resolved.
- A resident had submitted a written question about an incident at the Hoole Road Hub regarding the length of time for an ambulance to attend to a lady who was requiring hospital treatment and the fact that when the ambulance did attend it had come all the way from Bootle.
  - The Chair stated that he would write to the North West Ambulance Service about this specific incident and response times and report back to the next meeting.
- A resident queried whether the proposed golf resort, would, as in other golf resorts discourage people from going off the resort once they were staying there.
  - The Chair responded that there was a need to see the full plans in terms of how the resort element would work. He understood, however, that the hotel element of the proposal would not be an all-inclusive one and that it would be unusual for the Council to mandate a business model.
- A resident, referring to the response earlier on the subject of the individual living in a camper van on West Kirby promenade, queried whether the same response would have occurred if the person had been living in Birkenhead.
  - The Chair responded that, as stated earlier, liaison had taken place with both police and social services and the situation had now been resolved.
- The Constituency Manager referred to two further comments from residents by email who were not in attendance and that responses would be provided in writing.

#### 14 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 29 October 2015, at a venue to be arranged, in the Greasby, Frankby and Irby ward.