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CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - WIRRAL SOUTH

Thursday, 15 October 2015

Present:

Councillor KJ Williams

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Councillors | C Carubia | W Smith |
| | Craig | Sutton |
| | P Gilchrist | A Sykes |
| | A Hodson | J Walsh |
| | K Hodson | Ward |
| | D Mitchell | I Williams |
| | C Muspratt | KJ Williams |
| | S Niblock | Wright |
| | Parr | |

In attendance:

Co-optees
Mr M Wright
Mr P Wright
Mr K Sutton
Mr R Squire

12 **PC DAVE PHILLIPS**

The Chair referred to the recent tragic death of PC David Phillips and the Committee stood in silent tribute to his memory.

13 **CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chair indicated that there were to be two items of Urgent Business which he had agreed to be taken during the meeting in relation to the Constituency Committees two year review and a request from Heswall Together.

The Chair indicated that the two items had been received after publication of the agenda and could not reasonably be deferred until the next meeting.

14 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tracey Pilgrim, Cherry Povall, Les Rowlands, Mr M Craig, Community Representative and Mr A Forshaw, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority.

In relation to concerns raised by Members to there being no representative from the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service in attendance, the Constituency Manager was requested to write to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Services

to raise the issue and seek assurances that a representative would be made available for future meetings.

RESOLVED:

The Constituency Manager be requested to write to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Services to ask why no representative was made available for the meeting and seek assurances that a representative would be made available for future meetings.

15 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

16 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 June 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

17 COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES - CO-OPTIONS

Further to a report submitted to the Committee on 18 June 2015 (minute 7 refers) the report by the Constituency Manager proposed a new approach to how the appointed community representatives interacted with the Committee.

The report also proposed a timeline for re-recruiting community representatives in line with the amended structure and role specification (not excluding those community representatives who were currently co-opted on to the Committee).

Members were nominated to sit on a Selection Panel to meet to assess the applications following an agreed time period during which the Community Representative roles would be advertised. Members of the Selection Panel suggested that the following applicants be co-opted as a community representative for the ensuing year;-

- **Mal Wright - Bebington**
- **Mark Craig – Bromborough**
- **Peter Wright – Clatterbridge**
- **Kevin Sutton – Eastham**
- **Ray Squire - Heswall**

RESOLVED:

That the following Community Representatives be co-opted on to the Committee for the ensuing year:-

- **Mal Wright - Bebington**
- **Mark Craig – Bromborough**
- **Peter Wright – Clatterbridge**
- **Kevin Sutton – Eastham**
- **Ray Squire - Heswall**

18 CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEES TWO YEAR REVIEW

A verbal report from the Constituency Manager set out information in relation to the Committee's two year review.

The Constituency Manager indicated that elected members had agreed to keep the three existing priorities:

- 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 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

Members discussed what they felt needed to change to improve the experience for all it was recommended that:

- All questions be asked and collated at the beginning of the question and answer session. Collated questions to be answered consecutively in sequence.
- Constituency Committee rotates alphabetically by ward each quarter (to a suitably sized location)
- February 2016 committee features a brief report showing how the Wirral South priorities match the Wirral 2020 vision (including key milestones and what success will look like)

- Representation be made in relation to elected members' involvement in future evaluation of Wirral South specific procurement exercises
- Elected members work closely with community representatives to ensure a joined up approach to problem solving.
- The Wirral South Parks Priority focus upon a dual location approach spanning 2016/17 and 2017/18 agreeing that Torr Park (Eastham) and New Ferry Park (Bromborough) be the locations of focus
- The Wirral South Constituency Committee constitution be reviewed with a view to giving community representatives the ability to vote on all issues (including financial decisions)
- An agenda setting meeting (featuring Chair, Vice Chair and one elected member from the remaining Political Party) takes place no later than 14 days after each committee to discuss and agree the agenda for the following committee. This will allow for arising issues to be presented and discussed in a timely fashion and relevant representatives asked to attend/present.
- A Chair's briefing take place one week prior to the upcoming committee (featuring Chair, Vice Chair and one elected member from the remaining Political Party)

Members felt that as the Community Representatives were part of the Committee they should be allowed to vote on all matters considered by Committee including financial matters.

The Legal Advisor to the Committee advised that in line with the Council's Constitution Co-opted Member would not be allowed to vote on financial matters but agreed to look into this further and report back to Members.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) **the recommendations as detailed above in relation to the Constituency Committees two year review be approved; and**
- (2) **the Legal Advisor to the Committee be requested to look at the issue of Community Representatives being able to vote on financial matters and report back to Members.**

19 **WIRRAL SOUTH UPDATE REPORT**

A report of the Constituency Manager provided the Committee with an update on progress in relation to the resolved priorities and allocated budget for the Wirral South Constituency Committee in 2015/16 and beyond.

The Constituency Manager updated the Committee on the following:

Improved Open Spaces

In relation to Dawstone Park, work with The Friends of Dawstone Park and colleagues in Parks had progressed since the previous Committee and details of the various planned and completed work and the remaining budget was detailed within paragraph 3.1.2 of the report attached. It was proposed that the Constituency Manager would continue to work with colleagues in parks, the Friends of Dawstone Park and the Wirral South Parks Task and Finish Group to complete the improvement works in the chosen location as soon as possible.

Since the last Committee, Mayer Park (the subject of the Committee's support in 2014/15) had had its green flag raising ceremony. Members of the Committee congratulated the Friends Group on their excellent work.

Gap in Youth Provision

Due to resource implications it had not been possible to release the opportunity to tender and establish an on-going service reflecting that of the pilot project with the expected launch date of the service in October 2015, but work was to continue with colleagues in the youth service and public health to ensure the service was commissioned as soon as possible.

Social Isolation

The evaluation had now been complete and letters were being drafted to the successful and unsuccessful bidders. The timeline for awarding contract was early November with contract commencement in December 2015 and a full presentation would be given to the Committee at its meeting in February 2016.

Your Wirral

The first tranche of funding for Your Wirral in 2015/16 closed at noon on the 14 September 2015 and the Your Wirral Assessment Panel met on the 6 October 2015.

The following projects had been granted funding (one further project has been asked to clarify an element of their application):

Bromborough Village Community Association – Christmas Trees
Christ Church Community Centre – Defibrillator
Eastham Community Centre – Children’s Play Area Project
Heswall District Business Association – Heswall Festive Christmas Lights
Higher Bebington Christ Church – Woodland Garden
Mid-Wirral Crime Prevention Panel – Wirral Escape Programme
Mockbeggar Morris – Morris Music
Wirral Cricket Club – Coaching Project

The remaining amount would be launched before the end of the calendar year.

Anti-Social Behaviour Funding

Historic evidence had now been analysed by the ASB team which highlighted various hotspots within Wirral South, a suite of options had been produced and shared with Members to be considered by the Wirral South ASB Task and Finish Group who were scheduled to meet on 27 October 2015 to discuss their approach in relation to the devolved budget (£15K). A full report would be submitted to the February Constituency Committee.

Community Clean Up Funding

Meetings had taken place with colleagues in the Waste and Environment Team to discuss proposals for the devolved budget. A number of options had been developed and a “Shopping List” of items that would add value to current services had been developed. Meetings to discuss this spend were to continue on a ward by ward basis, a full report would be submitted to the February Constituency Committee.

Love Wirral

At the last meeting (January 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 and L Rowlands

It was agreed that budget be split evenly between the five wards and meetings to discuss spend was to continue on a ward by ward basis.

General Engagement

The Constituency Manager introduced Wirral South’s new Engagement Officer, Shannon Kennedy, to get in touch with Shannon e-mail: shannonkennedy@wirral.gov.uk or phone direct on: 07771 938 871(during office hours only).

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The Constituency Manager be requested to continue 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 to include the delegated power to spend the relevant parks budget as in 2015/16;**
- (2) Members note the progress outlined within the report; and**
- (3) the Friends of Mayer Park Group be congratulated on their excellent work.**

20 UPDATE FROM MERSEYSIDE POLICE

Ross Meredith, the Neighbourhood Inspector was in attendance at the meeting and thanked the Committee for their mark of respect in relation to his colleague PC Dave Philips.

Inspector Meredith proceeded to provide the Committee with a verbal report on crimes and anti-social behaviour that had taken place in Wirral South in recent months. This included providing data particularly on auto crime, theft from vehicles, burglaries from, shops, sheds, houses, industrial premises etc. drug offenses and domestic violence, and making comparisons across Wirral.

Inspector Meredith informed of the recent and on-going projects which included; Operation Brookdale, Child Sexual Exploitation, Bogus official campaign and planning and preparing for Mischief Night, Halloween, Bonfire Night, Remembrance Parades and Christmas Drink Drive and Retail Crime prevention programmes.

In response to a request from Members at the meeting held on 18 June 2015 (Minute 9 refers) Inspector Meredith feedback to the committee on how many crimes had been solved in Wirral South in recent months and provided statistics re domestic violence and other matters.

RESOLVED:

That the Neighbourhood Inspector be thanked for his report.

At this point, Councillor Muspratt, declared a personal interest by virtue of her son's employment.

Following consideration of this item, Councillor Gilchrist moved the following additional resolution in response to a letter dated 13 October from the Police

and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside on their consideration to make possible cuts to Police Community Support Officers.

It was, resolved: (unanimously) that:

This Committee is extremely concerned to learn that the Merseyside Police are considering cutting the numbers of PCSOs or ending that service in its entirety.

The Committee considers the PCSOs to be an important element in reducing low level crime, reassuring the public and gathering information.

Whilst recognising the overall context this Committee requests the Police and Crime Commissioner to publish the other options under consideration, and to press the Home Secretary to re-examine the funding available to the Merseyside area.

21 **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION (APPROXIMATELY 20 MINUTES)**

The Constituency Manager indicated that as part of the agreed improvement to the Constituency meeting, all questions would now be asked and collated at the beginning of the Q&A session. Collated questions were to be answered consecutively in sequence.

Committee Members and members of the public in attendance at the meeting raised the following questions, issues, concerns and requests.

Question 1

A member of the public asked the following questions:

- (a) They had recently attended a meeting with local Police Officers and PCSO's and had heard that already PCSO's had been given notification of redundancy with effect from September 2015. He asked for clarification on the situation.
- (b) In relation the introduction of a CCTV system in Heswall, what were the timescales for implementation and would the system be monitored by Merseyside Police?
- (c) Heswall businesses had raised concerns regarding litter, especially after the weekend and especially near to licenced premises. Could the current arrangement with street cleaners be reviewed to incorporate Saturday/Sunday where businesses were seeing an increase in litter?

- (d) Litter bin in Telegraph Road opposite Heswall Library, request for more bins

Question 2

A Member of the public commented that they felt that the new arrangements for the Committee was much better and stressed the importance of the attendance of Community Representatives to the meetings.

Question 3

A member of the public asked the following questions:

- (a) In relation to recent incidents of Arson in Bebington Village, were there any planned operations by Merseyside Police to ensure there were no further incidents.
- (b) Had previously raised a problem with a sink hole at the junction of Cross Lane/Heath Road, utilities work had been undertaken and already it was showing stress cracks, concerned that the sink hole could re-appear.

Question 4

A member of the public asked the following questions:

- (a) What was the process followed for the election of Community Representatives?
- (b) Could the Council help with the on-going issues of parking around South Wirral Schools.

Answer

- (1a) Inspector Meredith indicated that no PCSO's had been issued with redundancy notices, the future of the PCSO's would be unknown until the Spending Review was published.
- (1b) The Constituency Manager indicated that he had attended a meeting and agreed to chase up the issues raised and respond in writing and copy in the relevant Ward Councillors. In relation to monitoring, the Assistant Chief Executive indicated that general CCTV cameras were not monitored by the Council unless they were on the public highway and that cameras monitored by Liverpool HQ were not done so consistently. Merseyside Police did have access to the systems and images could be used for evidence.

- (1c) Councillor K Hodson indicated that she had raised this issue with the Cabinet Member-Environmental Protection and would contact her again for a response.

The Constituency Manager indicated that he had spoken to the Waste and Environment Department and had received clarification that there should be a weekend presence from Biffa, therefore he would chase this up. In response, a member of the public indicated that the street cleaners do attend but it was usually Sunday afternoon which was too late as smashed bottles etc. from the Nightclub would be left lying on the street from Friday and Saturday night. The Constituency Manager agreed to chase this up as there should be a presence on a Saturday.

A Member commented that if it was the licenced premises where the litter was coming from, the premises could be called in for a review and condition could be opposed upon the licence to ensure that no bottles were taken from the premises upon leaving.

It was suggested that the Committee consider for the area to become a alcohol-free zone.

- (1d) The Constituency Manager suggested that this could be reviewed with Members.
- (3a) Inspector Meredith indicated that Officers had been working undercover and with the Covert Unit to tackle this issue and also improvements had been made to the CCTV system.
- (3b) A Member indicated that this issue is of major concern and suggested that this be escalated to Director Level to look at this as an urgent matter.

The Chair suggested that a site visit be requested so members and officers could meet to look at the site and source a resolution.

- (4a) The Constituency Manager indicated that this had been done at a previous meeting and advertising had been undertaken via the Council's website and he had tried to contact those contacts the he was aware of within the community. He further indicated that unfortunately he had been unable to appoint a youth representative and urged the public to let people know that there is a vacancy.
- (4b) A Member indicated that this was a big issue for a lot of schools and although enforcement such as the presence of the Camera cars alleviates the problem in the short term, people just return once they had gone. He suggested that the schools be asked to help get the message across in relation to this issue and indicated that he would

write to Headteachers and also request the camera car to be deployed in the area.

A Member indicated that all schools in Bebington were experiencing problems with parking and that he had received a number of complaints from residents. He suggested parking restrictions could be introduced to alleviate this on-going issue.

Following on from comments received from Members and members of the public, the Chair suggested and it was agreed that officers from the Highways Department be requested to attend the next meeting to give a presentation on the issue of school parking and possible enforcement measures.

22 **HESWALL TOGETHER**

The Chair and Vice Chair had been invited to discuss the request from “Heswall Together” and had agreed to bring this to the Committee as a matter of urgent business.

“Councillors request Officers show a commitment to working with ‘Heswall Together’ in the development and implementation of enhanced engagement. Influence and powers are used to facilitate support from Wirral Council when and where necessary in meeting the needs and aspirations of communities and residents”

Some Members indicated that as they felt that all communities should be supported in this way they could not support this request and suggested that the request be agreed to encompass all communities not just Heswall Together.

A Member commented that as the concept for Heswall Together was different to other communities the request should be agreed with the caveat that the concept be evaluated and if successful be rolled out to other areas within the Committee’s remit.

Following further debate, the following was agreed:

“This Constituency Committee recognises Heswall Together as a representative body for the local community and asks officers to take note”

RESOLVED:

That this Constituency Committee recognises Heswall Together as a representative body for the local community and asks officers to take note.

23 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is to be held on Thursday 4 February 2016 at 6:00pm, venue to be confirmed.