

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL WEST CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

11TH FEBRUARY 2016

SUBJECT:	CONSTITUENCY MANAGER'S REPORT
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 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 This report sets out:

- Progress and recommendations in relation to activities which are being delivered using the Committee's budget for 2015-16;
- Progress in relation to other activities being undertaken by the Wirral West constituency team;
- Items for noting in respect of local issues / consultations.

2.0 CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE BUDGET 2015-16

2.1 This report provides an update on areas of expenditure relating to budgets carried over from previous years and the Committee's 2015-16 budget allocations. The report also makes a number of recommendations in order to facilitate effective budget expenditure in the coming months.

Update on areas of expenditure carried over from previous years

2.2 The Committee agreed at its meeting in February 2015 to use £5,000 of its Love Wirral allocation for 2014-15 to fund the **Special Places Project** aimed at celebrating places in all parts of Wirral West which are special to local people through the installation of benches. This project has been widely promoted and the response has been excellent to date. Over 30 suggestions have been put forward to the constituency team and an initial assessment by officers in Regeneration and Environment suggests that the majority of these would be feasible locations for benches.

- 2.3 The closing date for local people to submit their suggestions as to possible locations for benches is the end of February 2016. It is proposed that a Wirral West Special Places Panel is convened in March on the basis of one member per ward and that this Panel is given delegated authority by the Committee to agree which locations should be selected in conjunction with the Chair.
- 2.4 As noted in 2.2 above, the Committee made £5,000 available for this project and it was estimated at the outset of the project that this would fund around 10 benches in the constituency area. Once the locations have been fully assessed, it may be the case that there is a shortfall in the funding required given installation requirements. The proposal for meeting this shortfall to ring-fence a maximum of £2,000 from the Committee's environmental budget of £10,000 which has not yet been allocated to specific projects (see 2.16 below).
- 2.5 The Committee is asked to note that the budget previously allocated to the **Stay, Safe, Warm and Well Project** has now been used in its entirety in support of ongoing multi-agency working and the delivery of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service's Emergency Heating Programme. Over the winter months, MF&RS personnel are advising members of the public about safe heating methods, as well as providing equipment for vulnerable and elderly people to replace dangerous heating equipment. Vulnerable or elderly occupants who are identified as utilising dangerous or inadequate forms of heating are able to exchange this for an oil filled radiator from MF&RS as well as being given advice about staying safe and warm. MF&RS then provide a Home Fire Safety Check and other safety equipment as required and can refer occupants for help from partner agencies to deal with longer term issues, e.g. for help managing fuel bills, adaptations or other ongoing support. The project is also being supported by the British Red Cross, who have been providing out of hours service for vulnerable people identified by fire crews during the evenings, weekends and over the Christmas period. Information about the numbers of people supported will be made available in due course.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Budget

- 2.6 As previously reported to the Committee, the Council's February 2015 budget made provision for dedicated funding for Constituency Committees to identify actions for tackling issues of ASB.
- 2.7 The Constituency Committee resolved in July 2015 that an ASB Panel would 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. The Committee delegated decision-making in respect of this budget to the ASB Panel in conjunction with the Chair of the Committee and agreed that, given that Woodchurch is the constituency hotspot for ASB, the majority of funding (i.e. £10,000) should be utilised in Upton ward but with each ward having some resource to be deployed as necessary (i.e. £5,000 split between the remaining 4 wards).
- 2.8 The Panel met in September 2015 reached a broad agreement on a number of proposals for utilising the Committee's ASB which were set out in the Constituency Manager's report in November. Work is ongoing with the relevant officers, partner agencies and community stakeholders to progress these in conjunction with members of the ASB Panel and a detailed report will be brought to the next meeting

of the Committee. Amongst these proposals is work to re-invigorate and initiate Wirral West Neighbourhood Watch schemes by:

- Holding a workshop session with existing scheme co-ordinators to invite them to a workshop session to understand local challenges and opportunities;
- Developing a localised Neighbourhood Watch campaign to encourage new schemes;
- Working with councillors and partners to target particular areas and neighbourhoods as part of this campaign.

2.9 The Committee is asked to note that the Panel has authorised an item of expenditure from the £10,000 allocated to Upton (Woodchurch) at a cost of £1,200. This request was made as a result of ASB reports linked to the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Woodchurch which appeared to be peaking on Friday and Saturday evenings. Utilising the Committee's funding, a targeted intervention has been now been put in place to offer sports activities at the MUGA on alternate Fridays and Saturdays during the months of January and February. The anticipated outcomes of this intervention, which will be evaluated and reported to the ASB Panel and wider Committee, are:

- Positive engagement / early intervention with a group of young people in response to localised ASB issues;
- Intelligence gathering to support the work of the ASB team and other services;
- An understanding of how the MUGA might be utilised for future activities – the aspiration is to develop the use of this asset working with the local community.

2.10 The ASB Panel requested that promoting community involvement and engagement should be a clear focus for any activities delivered using the Committee's budget. In respect of Woodchurch, the Constituency Engagement Officer provides proactive support for the Woodchurch Partnership Community Safety group and co-ordinates multi-agency responses and action to issues identified by the residents who attend. This group will be kept updated on activities funded by the Committee and asked for feedback as to the impact of any local interventions.

2.11 In respect of ongoing partner activity to address ASB in Woodchurch over and above any interventions funded using the constituency budget, the Committee is asked to note that Merseyside Police patrols have increased in the area of Hoole Road because of complaints and issues with a small group of young people causing problems. Police patrols on foot, pedal cycles and quad bikes have been targeting this group and getting some good feedback from residents and businesses. As part of this action patrols are gathering evidence against a number of individuals with a view to using criminal anti-social behaviour orders against them.

2.12 A Dispersal Zone was also authorised for the area of Hoole Road on 26th January to 27th January and again from 30th January to 31st January. The Dispersal Zone (which can only be authorised for a maximum of 48 hours) gives police power to take young people home or order people who are causing problems to leave and not

return for 48 hours. Anyone breaching an order issued during a Dispersal Zone can be arrested. The Dispersal Zone is a strong piece of legislation and care needs to be taken to target it carefully. During the period of 26th – 27th January, 9 individuals were given direction to leave the area. Of these 7 were of the target group of young people and the other 2 were street drinkers who have previously caused issues in the area.

Core Constituency Committee Budget (Community Fund)

- 2.13 In relation to the Committee's core budget of £50,000, the Committee agreed in July 2015 that it would 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).
- 2.14 The Community Fund is currently open for applications with a deadline of Friday 26th February 2016. As for previous rounds of the Community Fund, local people will be asked to show their support for eligible projects by participating in a voting survey which will be made available online and in hard copy from 7th March to 18th March. During this period, an event will take place on 17th March at West Kirby Library to allow groups to promote their activities and network. Votes submitted at this event will be counted and analysed separately from the overall analysis in the interests of fairness.
- 2.15 Since the next meeting of the Committee is cancelled due to considerations of purdah, it is proposed that delegated authority is given to ward councillors to review the outcomes of the community vote and agree which projects should receive funding in their ward.
- 2.16 A report on the projects funded will be presented to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee, alongside an evaluation of the projects which received Community Fund grants in early 2015 and an evaluation of the Your Wirral projects which received funding in October 2014.

Environmental Budget

- 2.17 As reported previously to the Committee, at its meeting on 24th February 2015 Council allocated £40,000 to support communities to help clean up their neighbourhoods (£10,000 for each constituency area). The Constituency Committee resolved that the constituency team should undertake consultation to identify locations or issues in the constituency which might benefit from the use of this funding and develop possible options for expenditure.
- 2.18 Members of the Committee have been asked to provide ideas for locations or issues in the constituency area and a number of suggestions have started to come forward. The request for ideas is also being extended to groups who are already or who may wish to take targeted action to improve the local environment.
- 2.19 It is proposed that a Wirral West Environmental Panel should be established (on the basis of one member per ward) and given delegated authority in conjunction with the Chair of the Committee to agree expenditure relating to action to address hotspots in

the constituency and/or to encourage community involvement in environmental initiatives. It is proposed that this Panel gives consideration to using this funding equitably across the five wards. Should to the Committee agreeing to ring-fence £2,000 of the environmental budget to support the Special Places project, the environmental budget available will stand at £8,000.

- 2.20 In the interim, the constituency team is currently promoting the national anti-litter campaign, 'Clean for The Queen' that takes place on March 4th – 6th 2016. Clean for The Queen is being led by a number of litter charities from all over Britain and has the backing of several high-profile companies. The aim is to acknowledge the Queen's 90th birthday this year by encouraging groups all over the country to clean up their local area. It is appropriate timing as the first ever nationwide litter campaign took place in 1953, the year of the Queen's coronation, and led to the establishment of Keep Britain Tidy. Details can be found online at www.cleanforthequeen.co.uk and groups can register on this website if they are planning community clean up events in conjunction with the campaign. Local groups who register will be able to access free clean up packs and advice and support from the Council.

Road Safety Budget

- 2.21 A detailed report to the Committee in November 2015 set out the position in respect of the Constituency Committee's 2015-16 Integrated Transport Block (road safety) budget allocation (including 2014-15 underspend). The Committee resolved that the Road Safety Panel established in 2014 to make recommendations about the 2014-15 allocation should reconvene to identify how the funding available might be allocated to local schemes and that decision making in respect of the budget should be delegated to the Panel in conjunction with the Chair of the Committee.

- 2.22 The Committee is asked to note that the overall road safety budget allocation is as follows:

2014-2015 Allocation:	£77,750
2015-2016 Allocation:	£25,000
Total Constituency Allocation:	£102,750

- 2.23 As the final costs of schemes approved in October 2014 are now available, the table below shows how much of the road safety budget has been spent and how much can now be allocated to new schemes. This is based on the total amount of road safety budget being distributed equitably across the five wards (i.e. £20,550 for each ward).

Ward	Expenditure	Remaining Budget
Greasby, Frankby and Irby	£10,582	£9,968
Hoylake and Meols	£8,707	£11,843
Pensby and Thingwall	£15,162	£5,388
Upton	£18,103	£2,447
West Kirby and Thurstaston	£9,317	£11,233
Total	£61,871	£40,879

2.24 This budget information was presented to the Road Safety Panel when it met on the 26th January 2016 along with an extensive list of possible schemes. This list comprised relevant requests held by the Council's Traffic Management team along with issues raised directly with the constituency team. A 'shortlist' of schemes has been identified by the Panel as requiring further investigation and costing before any final decision can be made as to the allocation of this budget. The Panel will therefore be reconvened at a future date and their subsequent recommendations reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

3.0 CONSTITUENCY TEAM ACTIVITIES

3.1 Over and above the implementation of the Constituency Committee's budget decisions and related projects, the constituency team works with ward councillors, resident groups and networks, Council services and partner agencies on an ongoing basis to respond to local issues.

4.0 LOCAL ISSUES / CONSULTATIONS

4.1 As reported to the Committee in November, the constituency team co-ordinated a significant engagement project in the Autumn of 2015 in conjunction with officers from Regeneration and Environment in respect of the Council's proposals to alleviate flood risk in West Kirby. The constituency team is continuing to support this work and is working with local residents who are seeking to establish a community forum focused on improving flood resilience.

4.2 A number of Wirral / Wirral West organisations were amongst the 14 groups which been awarded grants as part of the first round of DONG Energy's community benefit fund (CBF), while work continues on the company's latest offshore wind farm. The grants form part of the community support associated with DONG Energy's Burbo Bank Extension project, located off the coast of Wirral. Each year, approximately £225,000 will be made available for community projects for the expected 25 year lifetime of the wind farm, across coastal areas of Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wirral and Sefton. The second round of applications is now open. More details can be found at www.grantscape.org.uk and the closing date for applications is 7th March 2016.

5.0 RISKS

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

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 This report sets out activities undertaken in relation to actions agreed by the Committee, all of which have been progressed with due consideration to a range of options.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation is undertaken with the members of the Constituency Committee as to the development and operation of the Committee. Ongoing consultation with the

local community as to issues for the area is a clear objective of the constituency working approach.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

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

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

9.1 The activities set out in this report are being delivered via existing resources and utilising the constituency budget as determined by the Committee.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no legal implications relating to the activities set out in this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 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>

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

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

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

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

14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended:

14.1 That the Committee notes the progress and updates set out in the Constituency Manager's report;

14.2 That the Committee establishes a Wirral West Special Places Panel on the basis of one member per ward which has delegated authority in conjunction with the Chair to agree locations for the installation of Special Places benches;

14.3 That the possible shortfall in the Special Places budget is met by ring-fencing a maximum of £2,000 from the Committee's 2015-16 environmental budget of £10,000;

14.4 That the Committee establishes a Wirral West Environmental Panel on the basis of one member per ward which has delegated authority in conjunction with the Chair to agree expenditure from the remaining environmental budget allocation and that the Environmental Panel gives consideration to allocating this funding equitably across the five wards;

14.4 That the Committee gives delegated authority to ward councillors to agree which projects should be awarded a Community Fund grant following the community vote.

15.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

15.1 In order to ensure that actions requested by the Committee are being progressed as required.

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APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Meeting	Date
Wirral West Constituency Committee – Constituency Manager’s Report	12th December 2013
Wirral West Constituency Committee – Constituency Manager’s Report	6th March 2014
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
Wirral West Constituency Committee – Constituency Manager’s Report	16th July 2015
Wirral West Constituency Committee – Constituency Manager’s Report	12th November 2015