

## CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - WIRRAL SOUTH

Thursday, 2 February 2017

Present

Councillors

C Carubia  
P Gilchrist  
A Hodson  
D Mitchell  
C Muspratt  
T Pilgrim  
C Povall  
L Rowlands

W Smith  
A Sykes  
J Walsh  
W Ward  
I Williams  
KJ Williams

Community  
Representatives:

M Craig  
K Sutton  
P Wright

27 **MINUTES SILENCE**

Members stood in silence for one minute in tribute to Betty Smith, previous Mayoress and wife to Councillor Walter Smith.

28 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non pecuniary interests in connection with any items on the agenda and to state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

29 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from:

Councillor K Hodson

Community Representatives: Mal Wright  
Ray Squire

30 **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chair agreed to vary the order of business and opted to hear public questions after the Neighbourhood Inspector's update.

31 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 October 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

32 **UPDATE FROM MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

It was noted that the Committee would not be receiving an update from the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service as the Station Manager could not be in attendance at the meeting.

33 **UPDATE FROM MERSEYSIDE POLICE**

Georgina Minnery, the Neighbourhood Inspector introduced herself to the Committee and used the opportunity to explain the significant restructure and reorganisation of Merseyside Police. She informed Members that the restructure had been undertaken with the view to reduce the hierarchy within the Police Force.

Members were informed that local policing would be based from Bebington Police Station as of 10 February 2017, CID now operate from Birkenhead Police Station and response (999 calls), are based at Wallasey Police Station.

The Inspector reported that restructure had occurred smoothly and the response thus far to the restructure has been positive. Changes to the Infrastructure such as ICT systems will be put in place in the near future.

Members were informed that further to refurbishment works, Bebington Police Station will open Friday 10 February. An invitation was extended to all Members to attend the opening day.

**Questions and Answers**

Mr Hussain, local business owner enquired into options in place to introduce a 'one stop shop' for support and assistance from the Police in the Heswall area.

Inspector Minnery explained that, at present there are no plans in place but would welcome any suggestions.

Councillor J Walsh requested an update regarding an incident that had been reported at the previous Constituency Committee whereby concerns had been raised over young people throwing items from a bridge, located on the A41 (New Ferry Bypass). A 4G camera had been installed as a deterrent.

Councillor Walsh enquired as to whether there had been any further incidents of this nature.

Inspector Minnery responded by explaining that no incidents of this nature had occurred since the installation of the 4G camera.

Councillor J Williams reported that a vehicle had been abandoned on the Abbott Estate, Bebington. He informed that he had reported this on numerous occasions to no avail.

Inspector Minnery stated that she would enquire as to why this had not been dealt with.

Councillor Les Rowlands reiterated comments made at the previous Committee regarding issues in Heswall and requested that good relationships are maintained between Ward Councillors and Officers from Merseyside Police.

#### **34 WIRRAL SOUTH ONE TO ONE YOUTH COUNSELLING SERVICE**

Joanne Day, Operations Manager and Kate McDonald, Counsellor from Response were in attendance to report on progress within the service.

Members heard how the Response service is confidential and offers support to young people aged 16 -19. The service offers advice and support with issues such as: drugs and alcohol, homelessness and leaving care. A Counselling service is also available.

Referrals are usually through professional bodies, although individuals can self refer. Response works in conjunction with CAMHS to ensure service users are not accessing two services unnecessarily. If there are significant concerns regarding mental health then this can be escalated. Locations this service can be accessed are: Bebington Youth Club, Eastham Youth Club and Heswall One Stop & Library.

It was reported that since May 2016, 86 young people have accessed the service and 16 of which have benefited from therapeutic intense sessions.

Members were then informed that presenting issues were as follows:

- Trauma
- Parental alcohol/substance misuse
- Family breakdown
- Pressure from peers
- Self harm
- Suicide ideation
- Anxiety & Depression

- Bullying.

Impact of the service has been as follows:

- Reduction in self harm
- Reduced suicidal feelings
- Re-engagement with education
- Improved relationships at home and with friends/peer groups.
- Improved mental health and well-being.
- Young People are fully aware that they have a Counsellor to speak to as and when needed.

Three case studies were then explained to Members as a means to demonstrate outcomes delivered through young people accessing the service. This involved, intervention following self harm, suicidal thoughts, social media bullying, depression and anxiety. In all cases therapeutic counselling services were utilised and outcomes were very positive for the young people involved.

In response to the presentation, Councillor Ward informed the Committee that he had spoken to young people in New Ferry who had accessed the service and had had very positive experiences.

The Chair expressed her thanks on behalf of the Committee for an informative presentation.

## 35 **WIRRAL SOUTH PRIORITY UPDATE**

Racheal Musgrave, on behalf of the Constituency Manager, introduced a report to update Members on the Committee's priorities and their associated spend for 2016/17 and sought decisions in relation to priority driven spend.

Members were reminded that in December a budget proposal was brought to Cabinet suggesting a one year reduction in spend for constituency committees for 2017/18 totalling £250k in savings. Members were advised that, although at this stage, the saving option is a proposal, it is important that recommendations are made at this stage.

The recommendations were set out and explained clearly within the report. Some discussion was had regarding concerns and implications surrounding a lack of Government funding having impacted upon this Committee. The Committee discussed and voted separately on each recommendation.

### **Recommendation one**

Councillor Adam Sykes, regarding recommendation one, moved the following amendment, as follows:

“The Wirral South Constituency Committee calls for the proposal for reduction in spending on Constituency Committees to be withdrawn to ensure stability and continuity for our commissioned services. Given the Council’s support for devolution to the city region, this Committee feels that this should continue down to the constituencies and adequate funding needs to be in place to make this meaningful and not just paying lip service. “

Councillor Gilchrist endorsed the recommendation and requested that a further clause be included as follows:

“Cabinet be requested to honour the funding”

The amendment in its entirety as moved by Councillor Sykes and seconded by Councillor Gilchrist was put and it was :

Resolved (6:0: with 8 abstentions) That:

**The Wirral South Constituency Committee calls for the proposal for reduction in spending on Constituency Committees to be withdrawn to ensure stability and continuity for our commissioned services. Given the Council’s support for devolution to the city region, this Committee feels that this should continue down to the constituencies and adequate funding needs to be in place to make this meaningful and not just paying lip service and Cabinet be requested to honour the funding.**

### **Recommendation two**

With regards to recommendation two, Mr K Sutton, Community Representative raised concerns regarding the changes made to Wirral South Social Isolation Service. David Armstrong, informed the Committee that the organisation in question had approached the Council to inform Officers that they could no longer continue as an organisation and have since gone into liquidation and as a result a new provider was sought.

Councillor J Walsh also mirrored concerns, and requested that the Constituency Manager report back on details of new contracts awarded to the next Committee.

On a motion by Councillor Pilgrim and duly seconded it was:

**Resolved (14:0) That:**

**Progress made by and changes made to the Wirral South Isolation Service be noted.**

### **Recommendation three**

On a motion by Councillor Pilgrim and duly seconded it was:

**Resolved (14:0) That:**

**The progress made by the Wirral South Youth Counselling service be noted.**

**Recommendation four**

Volunteers were sought for one elected Member per Ward covering Wirral South to sit upon an evaluation panel to review the Wirral South Youth Counselling Service. The following Members volunteered for the role:

Councillor C Muspratt – Bebington Ward  
Councillor W Ward – Bromborough Ward  
Councillor P Gilchrist – Eastham Ward  
Councillor A Sykes – Clatterbridge Ward  
Councillor L Rowlands – Heswall Ward

On a motion by Councillor Pilgrim and duly seconded it was:

**Resolved (14:0) That:**

**Volunteers (one elected Member per ward) agree to sit upon an evaluation panel prior to the next committee to review the Wirral South Youth Counselling Service and agree (via delegated decision) if the contracted one year extension be adopted or not. Decision to be reported to the Committee on 27 April 2016 with volunteers as appointed by this Committee. Evaluation panel to convene no later than 4 weeks after the date of this committee.**

**Recommendation 5**

On a motion by Councillor Pilgrim and duly seconded it was:

**Resolved (14:0) That:**

**The Committee note the progress made in providing the Wirral South National Citizenship Service Bursary.**

**Recommendation 6**

With regards to recommendation 6, Members expressed concerns regarding the Open Spaces budget for 2016/17 (£15k) being allocated in its entirety to New Ferry Park, leaving Torr Park with £50k allocation via section 106 monies.

Councillor J Walsh, seconded by Councillor W Ward moved the following motion:

“The decision relating to the Open Spaces budget for 2016/17 be deferred for a decision to be taken at the next scheduled meeting of the Wirral South Constituency Committee.”

**Resolved (14:0) That:**

**“ A decision relating to the Open Spaces budget for 2016/17 be deferred to the next scheduled meeting of the Wirral South Constituency Committee.”**

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) The Wirral South Constituency Committee calls for the proposal for reduction in spending on Constituency Committees to be withdrawn to ensure stability and continuity for our commissioned services. Given the Council's support for devolution to the city region, this Committee feels that this should continue down to the constituencies and adequate funding needs to be in place to make this meaningful and not just paying lip service; and Cabinet be requested to honour the funding;**
- 2) progress made by and changes made to the Wirral South Isolation Service be noted;**
- 3) the progress made by the Wirral South Youth Counselling service be noted;**
- 4) volunteers (one elected Member per ward) agree to sit upon an evaluation panel prior to the next committee to review the Wirral South Youth Counselling Service and agree (via delegated decision) if the contracted one year extension be adopted or not. Decision to be reported to the Committee on 27 April 2016 with volunteers as appointed by this Committee. Evaluation panel to convene no later than 4 weeks after the date of this committee;**
- 5) the Committee note the progress made in providing the Wirral South National Citizenship Service Bursary; and**
- 6) the decision relating to the Open Spaces budget for 2016/17 be deferred for a decision to be taken at the next scheduled meeting of the Wirral South Constituency Committee.**

A Report by the Wirral South Community Representatives set out progress to date following the co-opting of five Community Representatives (com reps) to the Wirral South Constituency Committee (WSCC) on 15 October 2015. The report highlighted particular issues being experienced by the communities within the five wards and sought to bring them formally to the attention of this Committee.

Peter Wright, Community Representative provided a verbal update and summarised ongoing work within Wards located within the Constituency as set out within the report.

Members heard how Com Reps had continued to meet regularly during 2016 and would continue to do so during 2017. It was reported that considerable progress had been made during 2016 and that their aim was to make the strongest possible contribution in the next twelve months. Members were advised that the focus for 2017 was to build upon the platform created in the last twelve months and that their aim was to complete these discussions in Q1 2017/18 with all relevant stakeholders and decision makers.

**Resolved That –**

- 1) all Officers and Elected Members note issues raised by Com Reps and address these with Com Reps; and**
- 2) all Officers and Elected Members note the progress made by Com Reps in their local wards.**

**37 WIRRAL PLAN OVERVIEW REPORT 2016-17 QUARTER TWO**

A report of the Director for Health and Wellbeing provided the 2016/17 Quarter 2 (July – September) Wirral Plan Overview for the Committee to review performance against the Wirral Plan. The report set out the available data for a series of high level indicators which align the Wirral Plan Pledges. A summary narrative was also provided to describe progress in Quarter 2.

**Resolved That:**

**progress made in delivering the 2020 plan be noted.**

**38 PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER (APPROXIMATELY 20 MINUTES) INCLUDING RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED AT THE PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING**

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



## **Question 1 Ms Susan Brown**

### **Ms Brown raised the following query:**

The Council's publication, Wirral View, first circulated in October 2016 has not successfully reached every household in Wirral on a monthly basis, as was promised by local residents. She queried who is responsible for distribution and what would be done to rectify this issue. She also commented how she had provided postcodes to Council Officers of areas affected. Councillor Adam Sykes also sought clarification on this issue.

In response, David Armstrong, Deputy Chief Executive explained that due to commercial sensitivity he could not discuss specific details of the contract, however, it has been made clear to the company that this is unacceptable and measures are being put in place to combat this.

## **Question 2 – Mr Abbas Hussain**

### **Mr Hussain raised the following query:**

A Budget Option that will be brought forward to the Cabinet and Council in Feb and March is to introduce car parking charges across Wirral. The proposal, if agreed included charging on street and in country parks. Mr Hussain queried if the impact on small business owners, such as himself had been considered and analysed. He also queried how many new parking wardens would be employed as a result.

David Armstrong responded by making clear that, at present, options are proposals and there is no guarantee that Cabinet Members will resolve to implement car parking charges. He explained that the options had been put forward by Officers as a means to raise revenue for the Council in light of the £41 million savings that must be made in the next financial year.

In response to a supplementary question, David Armstrong made clear to the Committee that no equipment such as parking meters had been ordered in advance of a decision being made. He also explained that, at present, there is a small budget in place, allocated to parking across the Borough, therefore if enhancements had been made in certain areas such as Royden Park, this budget will have been utilised.

## **Question 3 – Dr Elaine Roberts**

### **Dr Roberts raised the following query:**

Regarding the proposed car parking charges, clarity was sought as to whether a traffic impact assessment had been conducted. Concerns were also raised regarding the likelihood of residents beginning to park in residential areas

causing road blockages. She also sought reassurance that the views of residents submitted in various letters, petitions would not be ignored. She also drew attention to letters from two local MPs opposing the proposals.

David Armstrong responded by stating comments raised had been mirrored by elected members and that all feedback would be collated and shared with Members and Officers.

#### **Question 4 – Ms Laurel Parkinson**

##### **Ms L Parkinson raised the following query**

In certain areas of the Wirral such as Thornton Hough broadband provision is notoriously slow and fibre optic is not available in the area. Clarity was sought over grants available as a means to improve this and if the Council are utilising this.

Councillor A Sykes, Ward Councillor for Clatterbridge informed the Committee that he had raised this issue with the appropriate Cabinet Member and had not yet received a response.

It was resolved that this issue would be chased up with the appropriate Cabinet Member.

#### **Question 5 – Mr Mark Craig, Community Representative**

##### **Mr M Craig raised the following query**

With regards to proposed car parking charges, Mr Craig advised that he had approached Bromborough Traders and they had voiced concerns particularly as they had already felt the impact of the Croft Retail Centre whereby car parking is free. He reiterated that a full impact assessment must be conducted in advance of proposals being implemented, should they be agreed.

In response, Councillor W Ward informed the Committee that he had moved a motion at a meeting of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee as follows:

#### **Minute 50 extract Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 24 January 2017**

*It was then moved by Councillor Ward, and seconded by Councillor Abbey –*

*“That this Committee requests officers to develop a full report which considers the impact on small businesses, traffic and the wider community to enable Councillors to fully scrutinise all aspects of the affects which may occur in an increase or implementation of parking charges.”*

*It was then moved as an amendment by Councillor Blakeley and seconded by Councillor Steve Williams, that –*

- “1. Committee notes the numerous petitions of objection, totalling over 15,000 signatures to date.*
- 2. Committee notes the level of public anger and opposition to these proposals.*
- 3. Committee recognises the potential damage the introduction of car parking charges will do to the already struggling town centre shopping areas.*
- 4. Committee also recognises that charging for parking in Country Parks, with an estimated drop in usage of 30% of users will have a detrimental effect on public health.”*

#### **Question 6 – Mr David Bird**

##### **Mr D Bird raised the following query**

With regards to Co-operatives a question was asked how the Council may improve contributions to Co-Ops given that there is no expense within the Council to set them up

Councillor Carubia informed that the Committee did not have the information to hand but would contact Mr Bird with an answer to his question.

#### **Question 7 – Mr John Lack**

##### **Mr J Lack raised the following query**

In regards to proposed car parking questions, concern was raised over the social impact with particular regard to issues of social isolation. He commented that in some circumstances, people will be paying just as much to park as they will to attend events.

A further comment was made by Kevin Sutton, Community Representative that business will be greatly affected and that residents will be forced to park on residential streets.

#### **URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR**

Mr R Johnstone, member of the Older People's Parliament addressed the Committee to inform Members of forthcoming events as follows:

Thursday 9 February 2017 – social event to address Social Isolation, St Werburgh's Church

Friday 24 March - Housing Event re: link between housing and health, St Ann's Church Rock Ferry, 12 – 3 pm.

40      **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee has been advertised as taking place at 6pm, 20 April, venue TBC.