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CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - WIRRAL SOUTH

Thursday, 20 April 2017

Present:

Councillors

P Gilchrist
D Mitchell
C Muspratt
T Pilgrim

A Sykes
W Ward
I Williams
KJ Williams

Community Reps

M Craig
K Sutton
P Wright

M Wright
R Squire

41 **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.

42 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from :

Councillors: C Carubia
A Hodson
K Hodson
C Povall
W Smith
J Walsh

Inspector Georgina Minnery – Merseyside Police

43 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Assistant Director for Law and Governance submitted the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 February 2017.

Councillor C Muspratt requested that the minutes be amended to include a resolution that had been made at the previous meeting that the Committee make arrangements for a delegation be sent to speak to Government Ministers re: funding.

Kevin Sutton – Community Representative requested that the following amendments be made to the minutes:

Minute 35 – Recommendation Two

Mr K Sutton, Community Representative raised concerns regarding the Social Isolation Contract and in particular 3 points:

- 1) Why were members of the committee not informed that the provider of the contract had changed with effect from 1st October, 2016 and what were the reasons for the change of provider.
- 2) It had been brought to K Suttons attention earlier in the day that the GIFT were operating a small grant scheme of up to £200 for organisations in Wirral South as part of the contract and the first round had closed in mid January. No Members of the committee knew anything of the existence of this scheme.
- 3) The facts and figures in the Constituency Managers report on the progress and performance of the GIFT provider to date were now in a different format from previous reports and were misleading.

David Armstrong informed the meeting 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. He informed the meeting that it was not the intention of council officers to be misleading in the way it presented progress or information of the contract.

As no other members were aware of the above information or concerns which were mirrored by Councillor J Walsh he requested that the Constituency Manager prepare a full report on the Social Isolation contract to include details on the issues raised by the Community Representative and circulate the report to all members of the committee within 3 weeks.

The motion was recommended and approved.

Minute 35

The following to be included:

Question 8

Mr K Sutton raised the following query

With regard to the proposal to introduce car parking charges in Eastham Country Park Mr Sutton informed the Committee that Eastham Community Forum and local businesses and residents were against the introduction of any car parking charges in Eastham Country Park. The impact of this

displacement of traffic onto other roads and Levers car park had not been assessed by the Council as well as the impact on local traders and home owners adjacent to the Country Park. Many local residents use the Park on a daily basis for leisure and recreational activities and need to use their cars to access these facilities as it is not easily accessible by foot.

Councillor D Mitchell reported that he had raised the same concerns already with council officers.

Resolved – That subject to the above amendments the minutes be approved.

44 **UPDATE PROVIDED BY MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

In the absence of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, the Constituency Manager provided the Committee with an update.

Members heard how, In relation to the major incident on 25 March 17, in New Ferry, MFRS provided an operational response and assisted Merseyside Police and other agencies with the investigation

Members were then informed that rubbish set alight at the rear of Henthorne Road had extensively damaged sheds, garages and residential properties

It was reported that In March and April there have been 3 incidents of bins being set on fire in and around New Ferry Park but there is no particular pattern re. day and time.

Resolved – That Members note the update from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

45 **UPDATE FROM MERSEYSIDE POLICE**

It was noted that the Committee would not be receiving an update from Merseyside Police as the Neighbourhood Inspector could not be in attendance at the meeting.

46 **NEW FERRY INCIDENT UPDATE**

Following a major incident in New Ferry on Saturday 25 March whereby a building had collapsed due to a gas explosion, resulting in many casualties, two of which were seriously hurt, Bromborough Ward Councillors provided the Committee with an update.

Councillor Warren Ward spoke of the severity of the explosion and the impact on the Community. He commended the emergency services, volunteers and local residents who had worked tirelessly to assist and support the community. He explained how efforts needed to be continued to help rebuild the community. Thoughts were passed to the families that had been severely affected by the explosion, in particular those who remained in hospital.

Councillor Irene Williams also addressed the Committee to explain how the residents support had been phenomenal. She thanked all involved for all their hard work and support and wished the families affected best wishes.

David Armstrong, Director for Business Services informed the Committee that the Assistant Director for Environmental Services had been responsible for facilitating weekly meetings. The next would be at 5:30pm on Monday 24 April, St Mark's Church Hall, New Ferry and meetings would continue for at least another month.

Mark Craig, Community Representative extended his thanks to the Council and explained how residents were all very appreciative.

Councillor Christina Muspratt reinforced appreciation to the emergency services and asked if all Ambulances came from Wirral. In response, she was informed that some had come from Liverpool.

Councillor Phil Gilchrist expressed his thanks to Councillor Warren Ward who had been instrumental in introducing him and other Councillors to residents of New Ferry. He also extended his thanks to Council Officers who had been instrumental in assisting the Community.

Councillor Tracey Pilgrim informed the Committee that she would be meeting, with residents of New Ferry On Friday 21 April. She also expressed her thanks to Council Officers who had been proactive in assisting residents.

The Director for Business Services commended additional resources such as individuals from the Life Church, Aldi and New Ferry Village Hall for their fulsome response in providing food and shelter to those affected. He then acknowledged North West Construction for their efforts in instructing the clean up process. He also explained that the Council would reimburse any local organisations as appropriate.

Resolved – That Members note the update from Ward Councillors and the Director from Business Services.

47 **WIRRAL SOUTH PRIORITY UPDATE**

The Constituency Manager introduced a report to update Members on the Constituency Committee's priorities and their associated spend for 2016/17. The report also sought decisions from Members in relation to priority driven spend. Members were reminded that the work of Wirral South Constituency Committee contributes to a range of Wirral plan 2020 pledges and neighbourhood working is key to delivery of the plan.

The Constituency Manager drew attention to para 3.1.4 of the report that explained to Members how the WSCC currently holds £15,267 within its social isolation budget and it is proposed that this remaining amount should be used to provide the Wirral South Social Isolation Fund. Members heard how this fund would be open in the summer of 2017 and monies allocated by the end of September 2017 in the form of a small grants programme; maximum 2k per application.

Members were then informed how the Wirral South Engagement Officer had worked tirelessly on the "2016 Christmas Together Project" and the project is directly aimed at combating social isolation over the 2016 Christmas period in Wirral South.

The Constituency Manager then reported that following the recommendation from the previous committee, the Wirral South Youth Counselling Service Evaluation Panel met on Thursday 9 March and the incumbent contractor was given the opportunity to present their progress to date. During this meeting the Panel had agreed to extend the service for another 12 months from 1 June 2017.

The recommendations were set out and explained clearly within the report. The committee voted separately on each recommendation as follows:

Recommendation one

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

Resolved (8:0) That:

The committee note that the current Social Isolation Contract will cease on 31st May 2017

Recommendation two

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

Resolved (8:0) That:

The Committee agree to the provision of the Wirral South Social Isolation Grants Fund with the remaining funds for 2017/18 (£15, 267.28) allocated. Specific administrative details to be presented at the next committee, prior to launch.

Recommendation three

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

Resolved (8:0) That:

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

Recommendation four

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

Resolved (8:0) That:

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

Recommendation five

Councillor P Gilchrist led a discussion regarding the allocation of £18,281 funding to either New Ferry or Torr Park. The Committee heard how the total amount would be best spent on Torr Park as linked to the section 106 allocated funds.

Councillor W Ward then expressed his contention of how the full amount would be best spent in New Ferry Park especially in light of the major incident affecting residents of New Ferry.

David Armstrong informed the Committee that it would be unusual to spend funding linked to a planning application elsewhere and committed to making enquiries as to how the council might meet the gap in the expected park priority budget. A decision in relation to identifying the shortfall of £11,719 will be communicated to the constituency manager.

A discussion was had regarding the option to split the funding equally between the two parks.

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

Resolved (8:0) That

The Committee agree to split funding equally, allocating £9140.5 each to Torr and New Ferry Park

48 **WIRRAL SOUTH BUDGET SUMMARY**

A report by the Director for Health and Wellbeing provided an update on the Constituency Committee's end of year budget position and associated spend for 2016/17.

Paragraph 3.1. of the report outlined the projections for carry forward into 2017/18 under individual priorities.

The recommendations were set out and explained clearly within the report. The committee voted separately on each recommendation as follows:

Recommendation one

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

Resolved (8:0) That:

The committee note the projected budget position for 2017/18 (outlined in table one of the report)

Recommendation two

A discussion was had led by Councillor P Gilchrist regarding the need for Councillors and Community Reps to gain information on funding available so that resources can be best utilised.

Councillor C Muspratt reiterated concerns with regards to Bebington Ward road safety concerns and the difficulty to gain information on road safety. The Constituency Manager agreed to gain answers to this.

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

Resolved (8:0) That:

Those wards that have remaining monies (e.g. ITB/ Road Safety monies, Clean Up, Love Wirral) allotted to them meet with the Constituency Manager to agree a programme of spend in time to report back specific details to the next committee (21 June 2017)

WIRRAL SOUTH COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

A Report by the Wirral South Community Representatives set out progress to date following the co-opting of the 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 the committee.

Kevin Sutton, Com Rep for Eastham addressed the committee to raise concerns over resolutions set by the WSCC in previous Committees having not been met. He reported that Officers had not met with Com Reps despite resolving to do so. He questioned the role of the Com Rep and queried if they were being taken seriously. He made reference to the Eastham Social Isolation Contract and Christmas Together Project and informed the Committee about the hard work involved. Mr Sutton then informed the Committee that he had been informed that a small grant scheme was available for local communities linked to the Gift Network, this was not something that he had been made aware of before and would have proved useful in his endeavours.

The Chair assured Com Reps that their work had proved to be invaluable and resolved to ensure that a meeting would be organised to address any concerns.

Councillor Phil Gilchrist requested, in light of the recent announcement of the forthcoming general election, that resolution two be amended to ask that each ward and local action team has the best endeavours to meet within 6 weeks of this Committee. This was duly agreed by the Committee.

Resolved That –

- 1) the Chair and Vice – Chair meet with Com Reps within 4 weeks of this Committee.**
- 2) each Ward Local Action Team endeavours to meet within 6 weeks of this Committee; and**
- 3) all issues raised are noted by the Committee and subsequently discussed within the Local Action Teams.**

WIRRAL PLAN OVERVIEW REPORT 2016-17 QUARTER THREE

A report of the Director for Health and Wellbeing provided the 2016/17 Quarter 3 (October – December 2016) 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 3.

Resolved That:

progress made in delivering the 2020 plan be noted.

51 **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER (APPROXIMATELY 20 MINUTES)
INCLUDING RESPONSES 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 as appended to the minutes.

52 **URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair thanked Members of the Committee for all their hard work during the municipal year.

53 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee has been advertised as taking place at 6pm, 21 June, Venue TBC

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Wirral South Constituency Committee Questions Answered 20 April 2017

	Question	Answer
Question 1	A member of the public asked why the community connectors (employed by Involve North West) were not in operation within Bebington?	A response was sought post committee from the Lead Commissioner in Public Health: The funding received by the Council for action to tackle health related worklessness was linked to employment support allowance recipients and has been used to target those areas in the borough with high rates of worklessness through ill-health. The following link takes you to the Cabinet paper where approval was sought (item 14) to develop this service with the rationale for the areas targeted: http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/g5481/Public%20reports%20pack%2021st-Mar-2016%2010.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10
Question 2	A member of the public came to raise the issue of proposals to develop greenbelt in Thornton Hough	The general point was noted but it was explained that all objections would be dealt with via the formal planning process
Question 3	A member of the public came to raise the issue of proposals to develop greenbelt in Storeton Village	This particular location is subject to an active planning application. It was explained that all objections would be dealt with via the formal planning process.
Question 4	A member of the public raised concern that individuals displaced by the New Ferry blast were not being prioritised for social housing allocation	The Constituency Manager took the individual's details and contacted them asking for specific details of the individual in question

	Question	Answer
Question 5	A member of the public asked for more resources for volunteers in New Ferry (e.g. clothes rails and tables etc.)	David Armstrong committed to investigating this further
Question 6	A member of the public raised concerns that counselling provisions for those affected by the New Ferry blast were not adequate	The Constituency Manager has been working with David Ball and Inclusion Matters to provide further counselling opportunities.