

CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE - BIRKENHEAD

Wednesday, 14 June 2017

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| <u>Present:</u> | Councillor | G Davies (Chair) | |
| | Councillors | A Brighthouse WJ Davies S Foulkes C Meaden T Norbury J Stapleton P Cleary | B Kenny P Doughty A Davies S Kelly Wood J McManus |
| <u>Apologies</u> | Councillors | M McLaughlin P Davies | D Realey AR McLachlan |

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Legal Advisor to the Committee invited nominations for the appointment of the Chair.

On a motion by Councillor C Meaden, seconded by Councillor P Doughty, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor George Davies be appointed Chair of the Birkenhead Constituency Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

The Legal Advisor to the Committee then requested nominations for appointment of Vice-Chair.

On a motion by Councillor S Foulkes and seconded by Councillor P Doughty, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor Moira McLaughlin be appointed Vice-Chair of the Birkenhead Constituency Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

2 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests or any other relevant interest in connection with any items on the agenda and if so to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

3 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Davies, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin and D Realey.

4 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the minutes of the Birkenhead Constituency Committee held on 30 March, 2017, be approved.

5 **WIRRAL YOUTH ZONE, THE HIVE**

Stuart Barnes, Chief Executive of the Wirral Youth Zone, The Hive, gave a presentation to Members of the Committee.

He reported that the Hive had opened in April and that it was the eighth similar project in the country. It had been developed by a charity called On Sick Youth Zones who had formed a local charity – Wirral Youth Zone which was an independent charity with a strong private sector involvement.

Mr Barnes advised that a target had been set for twenty similar projects to be open by 2020 and it was believed that the Hive was the best facility for young people in the country. Twenty activities were provided at every session which included sports, boxing, a fitness suite, a climbing wall, arts, a multi media room, a music room, a salon, cooking, a skate park and a football pitch. It was hoped that the Hive would help young people achieve their potential and development in a safe supportive environment and employability and enterprise programmes were available. Members were informed that there was a joining fee of £5 per year with a charge of 50p per visit and that the facility was open on weekends, evenings, school holidays and Bank holidays.

Members heard that the Hive was already having an impact by way of positive experiences and that youths had been provided with confidence and self-esteem and that staff at the premises were polite and engaged with the young people.

Mr Barnes stated that there had been a projected target to gain 3,000 members within the first twelve months, however, this had already been exceeded with a membership of 4,200 from every ward across Wirral. He advised that sixty jobs had been created which was likely to increase and that 150 volunteers were expected by September. Mr Barnes expressed his confidence that there would be a reduction in anti-social behaviour in the area as other zones had seen a reduction of 52-77%. A young leaders project was also being developed to support young people to be fit for work and fit for life. Members were informed that young people had always been at the heart of the project by having had ongoing consultation and input and had influenced the design of the building.

Finally it was reported that there were 22 founder patrons on board by way of local businesses, there was ongoing consultation, collaboration and partnership with young people, local companies and other organisations and there was a common goal which was to support the future of the Borough's young people.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Barnes advised that there had been a lack of support in respect of transport, however extra funding had since been secured and that a mini bus would be travelling to areas where fewer young people were coming from. He advised that there were close working links with Magenta and it was also hoped that connections with Merseytravel would be pursued.

Members expressed their appreciation in respect of the potential reduction in anti-social behaviour in the area. Mr Barnes advised that there had been a reduction in the last three months. He believed that a positive relationship had been maintained with other local youth clubs and advised that there was no intention to compete with other provisions.

The Chair thanked Mr Barnes for his presentation in respect of the fantastic facilities that had been provided and requested that he report back in a year's time.

Resolved – That Mr Barnes be thanked for his presentation.

6 **WIRRAL SPORTS DEVELOPMENT POSITIVE FUTURES**

Two representatives from Birkenhead North Youth Project, Mr D Kevlin and Mr L Copson, gave a presentation to Members of the Committee.

They advised that the aim of Gautby Road Youth Club was to target young people who were causing anti-social behaviour. They informed Members that they had been employed to do outreach work and had started the youth club three nights per week which was funded by Magenta Living, also that they are community support workers as part of the ILM project. They reported that there had been 50 young people in attendance on the first session of opening and that they paid a sub to enter the building and had the option of a hot meal which was free of charge. Dan and Luke advised that there were a range of activities on offer which included sports development – karate, boxing, martial arts, DJ and rapping sessions, a computer room, hair and beauty, table tennis, gaming including FIFA tournaments, a pool table and dance sessions.

Members were informed that the project's principles were to work together to improve the area and the lives of children and to direct them on the right path in life. It was reported that there had been a reduction in anti-social behaviour

in the area. A social supermarket was also provided where food was sourced from Fair Share and free fruit and vegetables was donated by Tesco.

Mr Kevlin and Mr Copson referred to the In Bloom project and advised that they had taken over some land situated next to the premises and had personally worked to clear the land from overgrowth and debris and had installed planters. Children from the nursery and play scheme had also been involved.

The Chair thanked the representatives of the Birkenhead North Youth Project for their presentation.

Members expressed their thanks for the work that had been undertaken and hoped that the funding for this project would continue.

R Portbury, Merseyside Poilce, addressed the Committee. He thanked Mr Kevlin and Mr Copson for their extremely hard work in tackling the problems of anti-social behaviour in the area. He stated that funding was required for smaller youth clubs such as this.

Councillor McManus reiterated the thanks given to Mr Kevlin and Mr Copson for the dramatic improvement in the reduction of anti-social behaviour in the area and expressed her concern at the lack of funding available.

Colin Hunt, Sports Development Officer addressed the Committee and advised that the concept of a doorstep club was being developed which provided activities on the doorstep of where young people live. He reported that the number of calls received in respect of anti-social behaviour had been reduced to four from twenty four per week and also hoped that there had been a reduction in the number of fires that had been started.

Members discussed the necessity for projects such as the Birkenhead North Youth Project and the Hive to work together and the fact that they would all be seeking funding. Mr Barnes, Chief Executive of the Wirral Youth Zone, The Hive advised that he would work together with the Birkenhead North Youth Project in respect of funding.

Resolved – That Mr Kevlin and Mr Copson be thanked for their presentation.

7 **WIRRAL STRATEGIC REGENERATION FRAMEWORK**

Members were advised that this matter had been withdrawn prior to the meeting.

8 ENVIRONMENTAL GROT SPOTS CONTRACT

The Birkenhead Constituency Manager advised that there would be a continuation of the fund from the previous year and requested that should any hotspots on private land be identified, the team be notified by email.

Members discussed the definition of what would be considered as grot spots on private land and the Constituency Manager advised that it must be to the detriment of the environment, pieces of land that have gone downhill such as fly tipping and dumping.

Resolved – That the verbal report be noted.

9 BIRKENHEAD CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

The Birkenhead Constituency Committee Manager presented her report that provided an update on progress in relation to agreed schemes of work from the budget devolved to the Constituency Committee to date. The report also provided details of other Birkenhead Constituency Committee neighbourhood projects.

The Constituency Manager provided a verbal summary and update on progress for each item of report that included:

- Skip Fund, Community Partnership days and Clean-ups - 91 skips had been provided for 2016/17 and officer support had been given for over 36 Community Clear Ups and Action Days at the cost of around £11,880 from the skip fund budget. It had been estimated that roughly 108 tonnes of waste had been removed. A number of community partnership days had been planned for March and April and some dates still to be confirmed.
- The 'Community Pay Back' Team - A programme of alleyway week clearing and cleansing for Birkenhead had been delivered by the Community Pay Back team. They had completed over 60 jobs for the Birkenhead Constituency Committee.
- Birkenhead in Bloom 2017 - 16 awards had been won at the RHS North West in Bloom competition last year with Oxtou winning the cup. There were a number of proposed projects planned and the aim was to submit more applications and build on current projects.
- Food hubs and holiday food projects updates - Updates were provided in respect of St James Centre, Beechwood, Neighbourhood Planning, Volunteering Programme, Community Boxing Club, Rock Ferry Food Hub, Gautby Road Community Centre and Livingstone Street Centre.

A number of projects had been funded for 2017 which would be delivered during school holidays, before or after school.

- Improving Life Chances Community Pilots - The aims of the Improving Life Chances Steering Group were: Improving life chances for children; supporting families to be financially resilient; tackling the immediate impacts of poverty and supporting parents into sustainable employment. Task groups had been set up in Bidston and St James and Seacombe wards to target specific areas experiencing high child poverty. The aims and actions that had been established were set out within the report.
- BID team, Connectors and Assets update – The Business Improvement District Team were continuing their diverse town centre activity to support the retail area in Birkenhead and a programme of events had been set for 2017. The Community Connectors Project's target was to engage with 1,885 individuals across the specified wards and their role was to provide support for individuals to access local community activity to improve their wellbeing and as appropriate, their readiness for employment. The Birkenhead Assets Update referred to The Beechwood Centre which had taken over the Beechwood Community Centre and would be providing an expanded food hub, community café, soft play area, sports hall, community room, play scheme and much more for the local community. The Beaconsfield Centre was being operated by Neo café which had a food hub, youth club, residents association, bingo, advice and guidance, community garden and much more.

Resolved – That the progress and updates set out in the Constituency Manager's report be noted.

10 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

The Chair referred to a number of pre-raised questions that had been received by the Committee and the responses provided as appended to the minutes.

11 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR - MERSEYTRAVEL**

The Birkenhead Constituency Manager referred to the public feedback which had been sought on proposals for a modern Wirral bus network. She urged people to complete the online survey by 22 June 2017.

The Constituency Manager reported that there would be three drop-in events where members of the public could speak to Merseytravel staff about the proposals which would take place on 16, 19 and 21 June 2017.

Councillor Foulkes advised that Merseytravel was now a Sub-Committee of Liverpool Combined Authority. He referred to the levy which would hopefully be reduced and urged people to consider the proposals and make suggestions.

Members discussed the impact the proposals may have and the opportunity to challenge this and whether factual information would have to be provided.

Resolved – That the deadline of 22 June for completion of the online survey be noted.

12 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR - TRIBUTE TO LATE COUNCILLOR DENISE ROBERTS**

The Chair announced that a plaque would be unveiled and a tree planted at Tam O'Shanter Farm at 12.00pm on 17 June 2017 in memory of late Councillor Denise Roberts.