



Constituency Committee - Wirral South
Wednesday, 4 October 2017

REPORT TITLE:	WIRRAL SOUTH COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE REPORT
REPORT OF:	Director for Health and Wellbeing

REPORT SUMMARY

This report details progress to date following the co-opting of five Community Representatives (Com Reps) to the Wirral South Constituency Committee (WSCC) on 15 October 2015 and since the previous committee on 21 June 2017. This report also highlights particular issues being experienced by the communities within the five wards and seeks to bring them formally to the attention of the committee.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that:

Recommendation 1: The Committee note the progress detailed in this report

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To enable the work of the Constituency Committee to be focused upon the needs of the local area and to ensure projects commence as expediently as possible.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Recruitment of Community Representatives was agreed by the committee

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 OCTOBER 2015 – JUNE 2016

- 3.1.1 By the next meeting on the 4th October the Com Reps will have completed two years in office and it seems appropriate to quickly summarise the progress made by Com Reps during this time, including that since the last meeting.
- 3.1.2 Throughout the two years the group has met at a high frequency, at least once per month, on a needs basis. At the outset a number of development meetings were held, from which (Feb 2016) a discussion document titled 'Community Representative's Role and Responsibilities' was brought forward and approved. The document set out the importance of bringing forward local neighbourhood plans to inform the preparation of a Constituency Plan, the need for all parties to work together, and that community representatives had a key facilitating role. The Feb 2016 meeting resolved that a Task and Finish Group be established to draw up a South Wirral Constituency Plan consisting of all five Community Representatives and Cllrs Mitchell, Muspratt, Pilgrim, Rowland and I Williams. The Group has met twice and no discernible progress has been made.
- 3.1.3 Following the Feb meeting three meetings were held between Officers and Com Reps, the purpose of which was agreed as '*To facilitate good communication and good working practice in neighbourhood working between Officers and Com Reps in the best interests of WSCC neighbourhoods and specifically in identifying and meeting individual neighbourhood's needs and wishes*'. At the first of these meetings Com Reps identified three key issues: Defining Neighbourhoods, Working Together and Resourcing. At the completion of the three meetings no further meetings have been held. At the June 2016 meeting the Chair of the Community Representatives read from a prepared note on 'Empowering Locally?!' The note set out what had been achieved in the first nine months and proposed that local action teams be formed as required by the Constituency Model involving Elected Members, Officers, Community Representatives and residents The June 2016 meeting

then resolved that ward based meetings with the Com Reps, Officers and Members be scheduled (where necessary) within a month of this meeting.

3.2 JUNE 2016 – OCTOBER 2017

- 3.2.1 To provide a strong focus to the local action team's work Community Representatives decided in September 2016 to adopt the WSCC priority of social isolation as their top priority and prepared and submitted a series of three discussion documents to support their decision. These documents were not accepted on the basis that WSCC already had a contract with a third party and discussions would need to take place as to how these two separate strands could be brought together.
- 3.2.2 This was summarised in the report to the October 2016 meeting where a recommendation that, 'Further exploration takes place into how com reps can add value to the existing Wirral South specific approach to addressing social isolation. A detailed proposal to be developed via the existing constituency plan task and finish group and presented to the WSCC on the 2nd of February 2017', was approved. This was not completed.
- 3.2.3 At the February meeting Com Reps, in a summary of their work over the first year, advised that they intended to build on the platform they had created with the proposed formation of local action teams by setting out their thoughts and ideas for the year bringing them forward for consideration and discussion with all relevant stakeholders and decision makers.
- 3.2.4 By the April 2017 meeting the Com Reps had completed a plan for 2017-18 that they wished to bring forward for discussion. The meeting was advised that the plans principle aim was to tackle social isolation on a ward by ward basis through working with individual communities and building capacity. There were a number of secondary aims identified. It was resolved that the Com Reps would discuss the content of the plan with the Chair and Vice Chair and how best to take it forward within 4 weeks, that each ward team would meet within 6 weeks and that all issues raised would be noted by the Committee and subsequently discussed by the local action teams. At the meeting and on behalf of Com Reps, Kevin Sutton raised the concern that resolutions set by the WSCC in previous meetings had 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 we were being taken seriously. The Chair assured Com Reps that their work had proved invaluable and resolved to ensure that a meeting would be organised to address any concerns. A very constructive meeting took place and a schedule of meetings was agreed with the Chair and Vice Chair continuing to express their support for the Com Reps and their Plan.
- 3.2.5 Prior to the WSCC meeting on the 21st June notice had been received of a review of the neighbourhood working model and the question of the involvement of Com Reps was raised. This question was answered by Cllr Patrick at the meeting who advised that he had made it clear that Com Reps were to be involved. Since the last meeting the Com Reps have met with the Constituency Manager, at which support for their plan was discussed, and

then with the Chair, Vice Chair and the Constituency Manager to confirm support and to decide on the next steps. This final meeting did not proceed as anticipated when the Com Reps were told that it was the considered view that they had 'outgrown' the WSCC. It was clear that the Com Rep plan for 2017-18 could not be implemented and the plan has been withdrawn. The Com Reps appreciated the frankness of the meeting.

- 3.2.6 The Com Reps have also met with Cllr Patrick, a particularly valuable meeting, as a consequence of which, they are working with Rachael Musgrave, the leader of the Review mentioned above. Two very constructive meetings have been held and a third meeting is being planned to report back to Cllr Patrick. The Com Reps, based on their knowledge and experience over the last two years, have been invited to put forward an outline proposal and have done so. In addition, and at the request of Rachael Musgrave, the Com Reps attended a Community of Practice meeting at Royal Standard House. A very useful exchange of views took place and a further meeting will be scheduled. At this meeting a presentation was made by Wirral Connect where reference was made to a further upcoming door knock exercise in Eastham that was being arranged. This was similar to an earlier door knock event in that it was being arranged without reference to the Com Rep or the key community groups. This unfortunate situation has now been rectified and the Eastham LAT is pressing ahead with activities relating to the door knock and social isolation. Documentation is being discussed and agreed with emphasis on the community input. A Draft Framework to develop a strategy to tackle social isolation has been produced through the LAT and liaison with Elected Members, local community reps, etc.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Effective engagement will maximise social return on any constituency investment

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The arrangements help the Council to deliver on the Localism Act 2011 and Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 6.1 Increased engagement may result in better use of community assets

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Failure to engage at a local level may limit the Committee's ability to effectively tackle its priorities.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Elected members, community representatives and members of the public have the opportunity to participate in all Constituency Committees.
- 8.2 The neighbourhood working model strengthens the Council's relationship with the voluntary, community and faith sector.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2010-14/chief>

REPORT AUTHOR: *Shannon Kennedy*
Engagement Officer
telephone: (0151) 606 3076
email: shannonkennedy@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Wirral South Constituency Committee Committee	Feb 2016
Wirral South Constituency Committee Committee	June 2016
Wirral South Constituency Committee Committee	Oct 2016
Wirral South Constituency Committee Committee	Feb 2017
Wirral South Constituency Committee Committee	Apr 2017
Wirral South Constituency Committee Committee	June 2017