

YOUR SAY 

 **WIRRAL**



**Leasowe Moreton
Saughall Massie
Area Forum**

**Papers for the forum meeting
Wednesday 25th February 2009**

**Eastway Community Centre
Knutsford Road
Moreton
CH46 8TN**

7.00pm – 9.00pm

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Code of Conduct for Area Forum Meetings.

Indicate to the Chairperson when you would like to speak

Let invited speakers finish what they have to say

Respect others right to be heard

Do not use abusive or offensive language

Do not make any discriminatory remarks

Do not have private conversations while meeting is in progress

AGENDA

1. Welcome introductions and apologies
2. Area co-ordinators report
 - **Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**
3. Local Development Framework
4. Public Question Time.
5. Partner Updates
 - **Streetscene - Integrated Transport Block Funding**
 - **Primary Care Trust**
 - **NHS Foundation Trust**
 - **Merseyside Police/Community Safety**
 - **Fire Service**
 - **Older Peoples parliament**
6. Dates of future meetings

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Information

We are very pleased to announce that the new Local Strategic Partnership website is now live.

We would really appreciate it, if you could browse the website and let us have your views. Some areas of the website are still under development, it is expected that the site will be fully operational by March 2009. Your input and ideas would be really helpful, particularly at this initial stage.

The website address is <http://wirral-lsp.org/>. Please can you inform as many people as possible.

- Maxine Joynson 0151 691 8266 maxinejoynson@wirral.gov.uk

Section One

Minutes

**Area Forum (Leasowe, Moreton and Saughall Massie)
16 October 2008**

Present	
Chair	S. Mountney
Ward Councillors	C Blakeley, IO Coates, I Lewis, SD Moseley
Community Representatives	Mrs J McLear, B Seddon
Lead Officer	Russ Glennon (Head of Corporate Policy)
Streetscene Manager	Chris Jones
Area Service Co-ordinator	Tracey Smith
Merseyside Police	Inspector Peter Kolokotroni.
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service	Tony Mooney
Wirral Primary Care Trust	Dr Mantgani
Council Officers	Phil Dixon [Environmental Health Officer]
Apologies	Cllr. RL Abbey, J Borlase [Faith Representative], Bruce Martin (Faith Representative)

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- Minute 6 Partner Updates
- Minute 7 Date of next meeting
- Minute 8 Any other business.

Minute 1 – Welcome, introductions and apologies

The Chair welcomed Forum members and 8 members of the public to the meeting of the Leasowe, Moreton and Saughall Massie Area Forum in Moreton. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Abbey, Jason Borlase and Bruce Martin.

The Chair invited Forum members to introduce themselves.

Minute 2 –Area co-ordinator's report – minutes of last meeting and matters arising.

The format of the Area Co-ordinator's report had been changed to incorporate updates under the relevant section on projects funded by CIF and the PCT in 2007/08.

There is a balance of unallocated funding of £19,878.86 available for projects in Leasowe, Moreton and Saughall Massie. Voluntary and Community Sector groups are invited to submit applications by the closing date of 12 noon on Monday, 10th November 2008.

The minutes of the meeting of the Area Forum on 2 July 2008 were included on pages 4-10 of the Area Co-ordinator's report. It was pointed out that the contribution by the PCT to a new Health Park in Pasture Road should read £150,000, not £150 as stated in the minutes [page 7, 4th paragraph under Public Question Time].

Mrs McLearn pointed out that the Leasowe Estates Tenants' Association, not the PCT, had started a new community garden in Twickenham Drive. Community health workers provided by Wirral PCT Health and Wellbeing Team have become involved.

Matter arising:

Large Gardens Register: Roger Calvert had been asked to investigate a proposal by Councillor Moseley for the Council to maintain a Large Gardens' Register for people to use to grow produce.

A suggestion was made that property owners would be likely to want reassurance that the individuals who come on to their property are trustworthy, and the Council would be unable to give that reassurance. Funding has been made available to employ a part-time Development Officer for two years. A person has been appointed and will take up the post in November.

Councillor Moseley advised that Large Garden schemes have been trialled and have worked well in other areas. She made a formal request for the proposal to be taken forward and investigated.

Minute decision:

Resolved: That –

- i the minutes of the Area Forum meeting of 2 July 2008 be confirmed as a true record, subject to the amendments highlighted;
- ii the proposal by Councillor Moseley for the development of a Large Gardens Register be taken forward and investigated;
- iii the Area Co-ordinator be thanked for her report.

Minute 3 'You Decide'

The Chair reported that in December 2007, Wirral was one of 12 authorities that became involved in a pilot scheme for a new project called 'You Decide'. Wirral Council has allocated £250,000 new money to be spent on extra council services in Wirral's 11 area forums. Following a marketing campaign in September 2008, a Borough-wide survey was conducted in October asking residents which additional council services they would most like to spend the money on.

Each area forum has been given an allocation £20,000 of new money to spend on extra council services. 239 residents in this area had responded to the survey.

The Chair added that the feedback from members of the public has been collated. The priorities for this area are concerned with cleanliness, additional litter bins, sport and youth activities for young people, and road safety issues. For Moreton West and Saughall Massie, an additional four benches and four associated litter bins and community sports officer to work with young people. For Leasowe and Moreton East two benches, a community sports officer to work with both boys and girls, and an solar panelled road sign to show the speeds of vehicles.

A member of the public referred to a reference in the Older People's Parliament report to an event at the Arena for Olympics 2012, and the pots of funding available to support young people. He suggested that the balance of funding is used as match funding to support the initiative.

A technical and financial appraisal of the viability of the proposals put forward by each Area Forum will be undertaken, and a report will be presented to Cabinet in December outlining how best to use the money that is available.

The results of 'You Decide' will be published for all eleven area forums in January 2009, with a Press release and detailed presentations at area forum meetings.

The Chair apologised to the member of the public who did not know about the survey, explaining that the scheme had been publicised in the local Press.

Minute 4 Feral pigeons

Phil Dixon, Environmental Health Officer, gave a presentation on Pigeons. He showed photographs of the birds and commented that in the right location they can be an attractive and appealing bird; adding that an urban environment is precisely the wrong location. Using pictorial illustrations he showed ways in which flocks of pigeons can cause significant problems because they are in the wrong location. Apart from droppings deposited on properties, people can be quite frightened by large flocks of birds. He gave the following information:

- Lethal methods of controlling these birds are trapping, baiting, and shooting.
- Non-lethal methods are dovecotes and feeding control.
- The most effective and humane way of controlling the local populations is to remove the food sources.
- Any method used to control the flocks must be sustained. Adult birds produce two young birds every seven weeks, and the flocks will quickly re-establish.
- Wirral Council does not have a Control Strategy. To be effective any strategy that is introduced would have to be comprehensive, sustained, Borough-wide, and expensive. Preliminary costings indicate that such a scheme would cost anything between £70,000 to £120,000 a year to implement. The control methods introduced in Trafalgar Square in London costs in the region of £250,000 to maintain.

Councillor Coates commented that she would prefer to see the idea of dovecotes being used.

Questions from members of the public:

Q I live in a block of flats and another resident regularly feeds the birds. The influx of birds is affecting other residents' way of life. Can any action can be taken to discourage the person from feeding the birds?

A There are a lot of complex issues that need to be taken into account before you serve notice on that person. As an alternative, the person could be approached informally to explain the problem and the damage that can be caused. There is the potential to apply legislation under the Litter Act, but you have to decide how far you proceed with the prosecution against people who feed birds and there are people in the Borough who will continue to feed birds.

Q What would the cost savings be if you introduced this measure? If the birds are damaging buildings. If you control it, you would have cost savings by introducing these measures.

A I'm not sure that it would be possibly to identify or recover that. Droppings affect buildings, but whether you can make an assessment of the economic viability of that, I don't know. Cleaning up after the birds is actually the responsibility of the owner of the premises and it is to their advantage to protect their property from the birds.

Minute decision: Resolved: That Phil Dixon be thanked for the presentation.

Minute 5 - Public Question Time

Issues raised by members of the public –

Q Last year, the Council commissioned a study and report on the Cultural Services Department. Is it complete yet? Is it going to be publicised and if not, can it be presented at this and other Area Forums so that people have an opportunity to see the results?

A [Cllr Blakeley]: The study has been completed and a report is being presented to Cabinet this evening. The report, which has several attachments, is in the public domain and is on the Council website. The changes relate to public libraries and nothing else.

Russ Glennon offered to pursue the suggestion that something is taken to Area Forums.

Q There has been an increase in the number of youths climbing on the roofs of buildings. Last week, children were seen climbing on the roof of the Police Station. Has any action been taken to discourage this?

A [Insp. Kolokotroni] Young people do climb on the roofs of buildings around the area of Moreton Cross. It started with one and now there are about 14 individuals who climb buildings and jump from one to another. They say it is a sport and a way of expressing themselves and they are not doing anything wrong. We have set up a meeting with agencies on 4 November to look at those individuals and see what we can do. Damage has been caused to some of the buildings and it is a problem for the area. We are trying to bring in some diversionary activities that will help in solving the problem.

Q United Utilities are refusing to bring forward plans to increase the capacity of the drainage system in Leasowe. One family is living in a caravan in Meols.

A We are hoping to have a meeting with United Utilities. We had to go to the Wirral Globe to highlight the problem. There have been a couple of meetings at Clare Mount School. We invited them to come along and explain to the residents what they are doing. They refused that request. Reeds Lane is a bad area and is susceptible to flooding. The water tables are rising and the flood levels are higher.

Chris Jones reported that in an effort to alleviate the flooding problem, from 1 October anyone who wants to change their garden to hard standing for vehicle parking has to apply for planning approval.

Minute - Partner Updates

Police: Inspector Peter Kolokotroni, Neighbourhood Inspector for Moreton and West Wallasey, reported that figures to the end of September 2008, compared with the same period last year, show a reduction of 257 offences. There has been a slight increase in robbery with nine offences this year compared with one offence for the same period last year. Theft from parked unattended vehicles increased slightly in the Moreton East and Leasowe ward. Contributory factors were vehicles left insecure overnight and vehicles with personal property and Sat. Navs. left on display. In August, three males were arrested for robbery from business premises and a male was arrested and charged with an offence of threatening people with a blank pistol near Moreton Shore. Last night, a male was arrested in Hoylake after entering a property carrying an axe and demanding money. The

modus operandi was similar to that used in a previous incident. Two males are being held in custody and they will be interviewed concerning both incidents.

Wirral's performance is judged against 15 similar areas in the country. Wirral has come out top for reducing all crime, and fourth for reducing incidents of robbery. Anti social behaviour is the lowest in Wirral in the past four years.

There have been several successful drug seizures over recent months as a result of information received from the public. Three cannabis factories were discovered in the Moreton and Leasowe area. Several people have been arrested and a further person has been arrested at an address in Moreton.

The Police have responded to reports from residents of youths causing annoyance and under age drinking in the Moreton West and Saughall Massie areas.

Acting on information received from members of the public, and working with local councillors and partner agencies, an operation was set up on licensed premises in Pasture Road. The outcome had been that the licence had been revoked.

PCO's have been involved in truancy sweeps with the LA, which have resulted in a number of young people being returned to their schools. The PCO's are also involved in providing diversionary activities for young people in the area, and that will continue.

Inspector Kolokotroni urged members of the public to continue to report information to the Police. The emergency number '999' should be used if there is a threat to life or a crime is in progress. Information about a crime can be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers by calling the Freephone number 0800 555 111.

A member of the public raised a question about dangerous dogs. He stated that dogs can be quite frightening to people and every dog should be kept on a lead, particularly in busy areas.

Inspector Kolokotroni replied that the Police work with the RSPCA and take action in instances where it is believed that a prohibited breed of dog is being kept and used for fighting purposes. The Police rely on receiving information about where these dogs are kept.

PCT

Dr Mantgani reported that in the 2006/07 Healthcare Commission Annual Health Check, Wirral Primary Care Trust and the NHS Foundation Trust both earned the maximum score of 'excellent' for quality of services and 'good' for use of resources. Wirral PCT is rated in the top nine out of 152 PCTs across the country; only one PCT scored higher in assessments on almost 100 key health standards.

The only area where the PCT is not meeting its targets is in relation to pre-bookable appointments. GP Practices are doing well with telephoned access, appointments and enabling patients to speak to a doctor, but they are not meeting national targets in pre-bookable appointments. The PCT is working with GPs to ensure they reach the targets of 40% of all appointments being pre-bookable, and that patients can get access to a GP within 48 hours. The PCT is also working with GPs to extend surgery hours in the evening. Currently, each GP has to offer half-an-hour evening opening for every 1,000 patient population. The PCT is initiating a scheme that will double that figure so that surgeries will remain open on an increased number of evenings in the week.

The consultation on proposals for St Catherine's Hospital has ended and a report has been submitted. The early indications are that there has been overwhelming support for the proposals.

The PCT is working with the Hospital Trust to improve the stroke service so that people can access treatment within four hours, and to provide a local service within Wirral so that people do not have to access services in other areas.

Older People's Parliament: Roger Cliff Thompson, OPP representative for the Liscard area, reported that the Parliament has 44 members. Associate members are being sought to join the Parliament. Anyone over the age of 50 is eligible to become an Associate Member. Copies of a report on the Parliament's activities for the period June to October 2008 were available at the area forum.

Mr Thompson described a situation where a person was employed by a school as an invigilator. When the person reached the age of 70, the school told them that they could not continue because they no longer complied with insurance requirements. The Parliament had challenged the decision on the grounds of ageism, and the school has reinstated the person.

Jack Cuffe, the Chair of the Parliament, has written to the Home Office about Pensions, but it appears that the Home Office has lost his letter.

Fire and Rescue Service: Tony Mooney drew attention to the report on pages 16-18 of the Area Co-ordinator's report. He highlighted the initiatives –

Winter Warm Campaign - The Charity arm of the Fire Service has secured funding to PAT test electric blankets and to replace those that are condemned, free of charge. Events will take place between 10 am and 2 pm, on Thursday, 16 October at Rock Ferry Library, and on Friday, 17 October, at Wheatland Lane, Seacombe.

The Bonfire Strategy introduced in 2007 had resulted in a 70% reduction in the number of bonfires requiring attendance by the Fire Service, and a decrease in the illegal sale and storage of fireworks. The Fire Service is working with its partners in the Police, Trading Standards, the Probation Service and the Community Safety Team to implement the strategy again this year. Operational fire crews are visiting all the schools and talking to targeted age groups about the dangers of fireworks and inviting them to take part in a poster competition. An iPod will be offered as a prize for the winning poster and the posters will be used in next year's campaign. The crews will also be visiting places where there are reports of an accumulation of combustible materials in the run up to bonfire night, and they will remove materials where there is a danger to life or property. The crews are also visiting premises that are licensed to sell fireworks to give advice on safe storage.

Minute decision:

Resolved: That Inspector Kolokotroni, Dr Mantgani, Roger Cliff Thompson and Tony

Mooney be thanked for the updates.

**Minute 7 - Date of next meeting: WEDNESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2009
at a venue in Leasowe.**

Minute 8 – Any other business

Letter of appreciation: The Chair read out a letter received from The Observatory School to thank the Area Forum for the CIF grant. The funding had enabled the students to access a wide range of activities they would not normally have the opportunity to participate in due to the costs involved. The funding and the opportunity to take part in activities had been a huge incentive to the students.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution and closed the meeting of the Area Forum.

Section Two

Local Updates

Area forums provide an opportunity for people who live or work in Wirral to have a greater say on local issues and be more active in decision making and shaping local services.

They involve local ward councillors, police, Wirral Primary Care Trust, fire safety representatives along with community representatives and officers from various departments of the council. Forums also provide information about current services, how they can be accessed and ultimately raise awareness of local council initiatives.

Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team- September 2008 – January 2009

In addition to ongoing enforcement action against the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour, specific activity has included:

Graffiti busting campaign given green light (September 2008)

A new anti-graffiti campaign was launched as part of Wirral's strategy to tackle anti-social behaviour and improve the environment and quality of life for local residents. This new approach saw a partnership between the Council's Streetscene service, Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Together Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder based in Tranmere; working closely with Wirral Youth Offending Service and Probation Services and supported by Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service. This wider service for the first time allows homeowners, tenants and small business to have general graffiti removed for free. The Council's tough stance on removing racist and other offensive graffiti within 24 hours remains. A key element of this new approach is a detailed strategy that focuses not only upon the prompt and effective removal of graffiti, but also gathering intelligence on the perpetrators and taking robust enforcement action, coupled with strengthening preventative work in schools targeting the peak age group for committing graffiti of 14-17 years old. Information campaigns and reward schemes will also feature as part of the new approach.

Anti-Social Behaviour Advice Surgeries

A six-month programme of advice surgeries for residents in the private sector suffering with anti-social behaviour concluded in October 2008. This saw the Anti-Social Behaviour Team's Respect Bus taken into communities and staffed with Enforcement Officers who took complaints directly from the public and provided comprehensive advice.

Community Mobile Police Station relocated to Birkenhead (October 2008)

The station, a 40 x 12 x 10 foot converted shipping container, was relocated to north Birkenhead to tackle anti-social and criminal behaviour. The specially made unit is equipped with a public enquiry desk and a wide range of literature for community safety, support groups and local activities and is a partnership between Wirral Council and Merseyside Police. The unit is managed by a Community Development Officer, who is based within Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team, and whose role it is to co-ordinate multi-agency activity within the deployment area.

Parents 4 Parents support group launched (October 2008)

A new support group run by parents for parents with children engaged, or at risk of engaging, in anti-social behaviour, was launched with the support of Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team. The group provides a friendly non-judgemental atmosphere for parents to share experiences and be given support; offering a ear to listen or a shoulder to cry on if needed. The group specifically offers a weekly drop-in service; speakers on relevant topics; signposting to services and one-to-one and group discussions. The group is run by four committed parents who have come together, with the support of Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team's parenting service, to provide a route for parents who want help and support from other parents who understand the difficulties of dealing with difficult behaviour by children and young people. Parents 4 Parents can be accessed by contacting Bobbie Crawford (Parenting Co-ordinator) or Alison Sendall (Parenting Support & Intervention Worker) on 606 5773 or 606 5757.

'Sportsmobile' launched to tackle anti-social behaviour in hot spot areas (October 2008)

The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Sports Development Unit launched an exciting new project aimed at preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour; the 'sportsmobile'. The vehicle is equipped with sporting equipment, staffed by Sports Development Workers, and deployed into hot-spot areas to divert young people from anti-social behaviour. A lighting rig on the roof allows for dark and poorly lit spaces to be floodlit. Seventeen young people, who were successful in winning a photograph competition run by Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team at last year's Wirral Show, were adorned on the vehicle.

Wirral Family Intervention Project celebrated a year's successful operation (November 2008)

Launched in 2007, the Family Intervention Project (FIP) was created to work with the most problematic families engaged in anti-social behaviour, by both challenging unacceptable behaviour and providing and co-ordinating support and interventions to address the underlying causes of their behaviour. In the last year, more than 30 families have been referred and more than 80% of the families allocated to Project Workers have engaged with the service. Complaints of anti-social behaviour across the families has reduced by 71%. School attendance has also improved. The project has recently recruited for additional Project Workers due to the demand for the service. The FIP is delivered on behalf of the Council by registered charity Action for Children (formerly NCH). The project delivers support to families through outreach work in their homes and through dispersed tenancies.

Respect Watch Scheme for Bidston Rise (November 2008)

Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team, in partnership with Merseyside Police and landlord Wirral Partnership Homes, has designated the Bidston Rise area of Birkenhead as a Respect Watch Scheme area. The initiative is designed to protect residents who have already suffered at the hands of anti-social individuals and includes a Local Lettings Agreement with residents. The scheme will run for 12 months and covers over 400 properties within this area.

New powers to tackle anti-social behaviour (December 2008)

Community safety partners in Wirral received significant new powers to tackle anti-social behaviour. New Closure Order powers came into force nationally that enable a property where persistent disorder is reported to be closed temporarily. The powers work in a similar way to current 'Crack House' Closure Order powers that allow premises, where the misuse of Class A drugs is causing serious disorder to local residents, to be closed for a period of time. The new Closure Order powers for persistent nuisance or disorder allow for any premises to be closed for a three month period where there is significant and persistent disorder or persistent serious nuisance to a community. The powers, which are available to both police and local authorities, are tenure-neutral and therefore apply to any tenure, including owner-occupied properties. Premises can also include residential properties, common areas adjacent to properties, factories, shops, pubs and clubs, public buildings, community centres or halls and car parks. Properties closed can remain sealed for a further three months, up to a maximum of six months, but other interventions will be used alongside the power to resolve the problem in the longer-term.

Joint Community Safety Team report

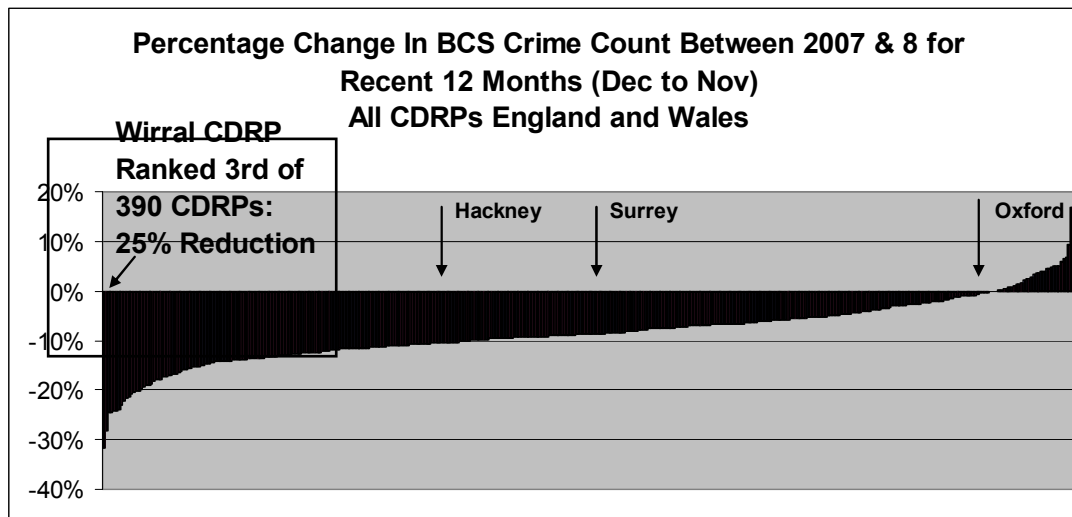
Assessment of Wirral Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

The Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) framework was introduced in April 2008 and applies to all police forces in England and Wales. It covers key services delivered by the police working on their own or in partnership, complementing (but not substituting) performance arrangements being developed by other partners. These are used to assess and monitor performance to the public and, critically, to help partners in England and Wales deliver and improve performance against national and local priorities.

Crime rates can change as a national trend due to environmental factors such as improved security. It has therefore been increasingly important to measure performance against other areas using the same criteria with data which is as recent as possible.

Local Area Agreements have been made between Wirral Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and Government Office. Local measures, as well as the '198 National Indicator' measures have been used to monitor and ensure improved performance. Overall performance is monitored by APACS measures

British Crime Survey Comparator Crime is a measure taken from a basket of crime categories. Although this is no longer a target, it is still monitored in Wirral as it reflects the trends measured nationally by the British Crime Survey. Government Office targeted reductions of 20% by March 2008 were met and surpassed.



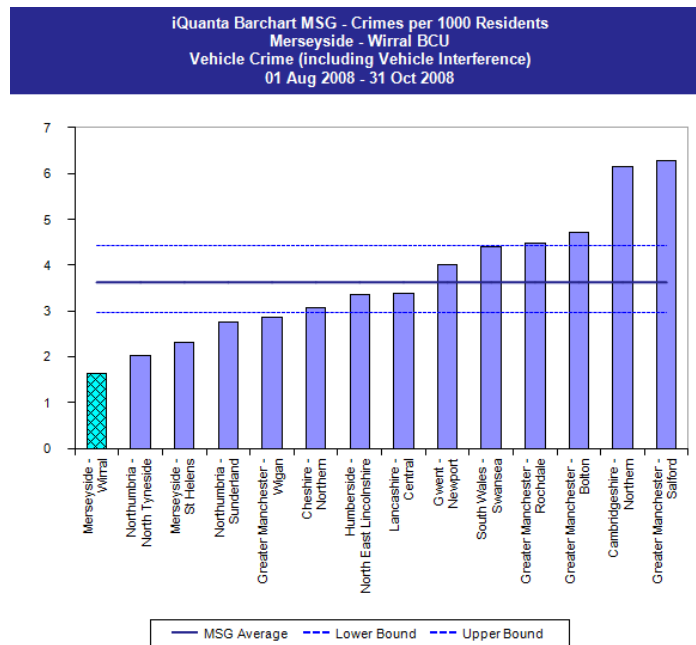
Theft of a Vehicle

Despite being a stretch target, performance has been sufficiently dramatic that the Partnership is confident the target of 941 car thefts in 2009/10 will be easily met.

Success in reducing the rate of car theft has meant that the forecast for 2008/9 is to be less than 600 crimes. This equates to a 75% drop in the annual number of thefts from vehicles in the three years since the target baseline.

Comparable statistics are not available for theft of a vehicle, but when measured together with **Theft From A Vehicle** and **Vehicle Interference** and compared to demographically similar areas:

Wirral has the lowest vehicle crime rate per population in our most similar family;

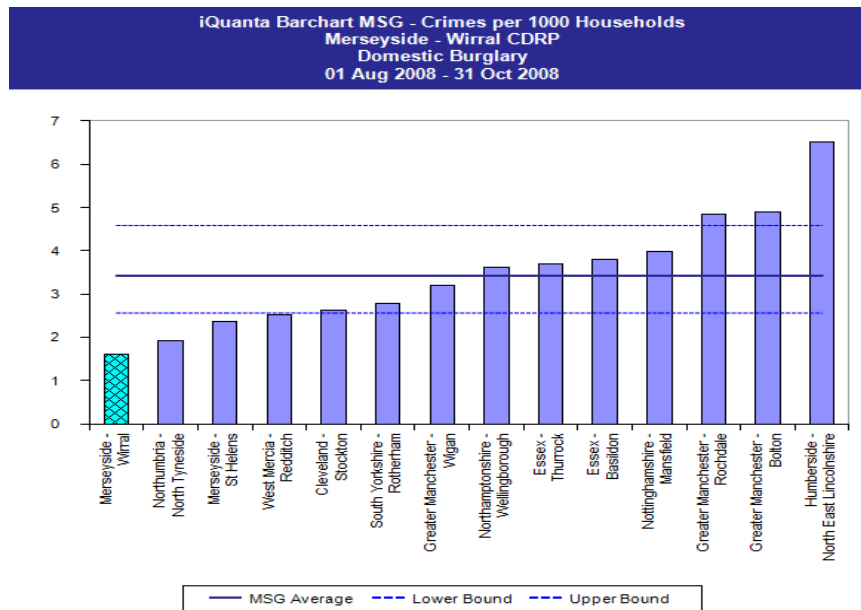


Burglary

This stretch target is for domestic burglary. Performance has been consistently beyond targets every year since they were set. The target for 2008/09 is 1500 burglaries whilst the year end projection is only 837. This means that the final target of 1205 burglaries in 2009/10 will also be achieved. This has meant the rate of burglaries for Wirral has been reduced 67% over four years from 2539 to 837.

Compared to demographically similar areas:

Wirral has the lowest domestic burglary rate per population in our most similar family;



Domestic Violence

There are two LAA Stretch targets for domestic violence. The first is to increase the number of crimes reported to the Police, and the second to reduce the number of victims reporting abuse who have previously reported in the past twelve months. These two targets are specifically aimed to promote reporting this 'hidden' crime and thus enable victims to access support more easily. The support is provided as a package by a wide range of agencies coordinated to reduce the likelihood of repeated victimisation. One of the difficulties in combating domestic violence has been the high incidence of under-reporting and hence the cycle of abuse being allowed to continue.

The LAA target is to increase the number of domestic violence victims reporting to the Police from 3325 in 2006/07 to 5522 that is projected to be achieved by 2008/09.

- This is a 66% increase in two years.

The LAA target to decrease the victims reporting to the Police who have reported in the previous 12 months is also forecast to be achieved by the end of 08/09. This achievement would mean repeat victimisation is reduced from 43% to 26%.

These two LAA targets have been met through the dedication of a wide range of agencies increasing their commitment and care for victims, focussed and coordinated through the MARAC process.

AREA FORUMS – FEBRUARY 2008 CYCLE OF MEETINGS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

REVIEW OF ALLOCATION OF INTEGRATED TRANSPORT FUNDING TO AREA FORUMS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report is at the request of the Council's Cabinet, which met on 4th September 2008. It invites your Area Forum to give comment as to whether or not it wishes to receive de-centralised funding in 2009/10 of a proportion of the Local Transport Plan Capital Budget known as the Integrated Transport Block.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 At the Cabinet meeting held on 12th June 2008, a report was considered on the de-centralisation of Integrated Transport funding to Area Forums. Cabinet subsequently agreed to continue the allocation of funding to the two Forums for Heswall/Pensby/ Thingwall and Bromborough/Eastham for the current year 2008/09.

2.2 The success of this initiative piloted in 2007/08 in these two Area Forums, was also reported upon with the Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transport Services welcoming the positive feedback.

2.3 Cabinet resolved (inter alia).

- the positive consultation feedback from the two pilot Forums and strong support for the continued de-centralisation of funding in future years be noted; and
- officers be requested to consult the remaining nine Forums in the next cycle of meetings to determine if they wish to receive de-centralised funding for 2009/10 based on the success of this pilot initiative.

3.0 REPORT

3.1 For the Heswall, Pensby and Thingwall Forum, the improvements introduced in 2007/08 were as follows:

- a pedestrian refuge at Barnston Road near to its junction with Border Road.

3.2 For the Bromborough and Eastham Forum, the improvements introduced in 2007/08 were as follows:

- contribution to a Traffic Calming scheme at Winstanley Road, New Ferry;
- direction signing at the junction of Bebington Road/Howell Road;
- lowered kerb crossings at Tarvin Road, Kelsall Avenue and Delamere Avenue.

3.3 For the remainder of the Integrated Transport allocation apportioned between the remaining nine Forums, a variety of highway improvements were introduced focusing on improved pedestrian facilities and speed reduction measures as set out in the Walking and Cycling Capital Programme 2007/08 approved by Cabinet on 28th June 2007 (Minute 93 refers).

- 3.4 The total budget for the Integrated Transport block is £180,000. Apportioned across the eleven Area Forums this would equate to around £16,300 per Area Forum. This is the value of the budgets this financial year which both Heswall, Pensby and Thingwall and Bromborough and Eastham are allocating to schemes similar to those carried out in 2007/08. Officers will report verbally on these schemes at your meeting.
- 3.5 This funding and the rationale behind its use is not to be confused with the “You Decide” initiative. The Integrated Transport Block is a composite part of the Local Transport Plan Capital Fund and can only be used to bring about improvements to the movement of traffic and pedestrians and to assist in enhancing road safety.
- 3.6 The “You Decide” initiative however can be used as community-based funding to a current financial ceiling of £20,000 per Area Forum. This means that should each Area Forum choose to have their own individual share of £16,300 as previously mentioned, the “You Decide” monies could be added to the Integrated Transport Block allocation making a total allocation of £36,300. This level of funding would clearly enable schemes of a greater degree of complexity and cost to be introduced.
- 3.7 Where any identified traffic management engineering schemes cross Area Forum boundaries, neighbouring Forums could combine their funds together to facilitate an even larger scale scheme, for example $2 \times £36,300 = £72,600$, which would fund a large area speed reducing scheme or possibly a set of traffic signals.
- 3.8 In arriving at a decision on the way in which the Integrated Transport Block is distributed, it must be borne in mind that there is no guarantee of the “You Decide” initiative funding being available in subsequent years.

4.0 SUMMARY

- 4.1 During the last financial year and being similarly piloted this year, two of the eleven Area Forums decided that they would prefer to benefit locally by having part of the LTP Integrated Transport Block decentralised and put at their disposal for consideration of local schemes. This arrangement was reached based on a similar consultation exercise to this held in 2006.
- 4.2 It has been accepted by the Council that this initiative has proved popular and that officers now consult with the remaining nine Area Forums to determine if they wish to receive decentralised funding for 2009/10.
- 4.3 The sum of money is in the region of £16,300 per Area Forum and can typically be used to provide lowered kerb crossings, modest local signposting and road lining schemes. In some instances depending upon physical constraints it may be possible to provide for a central road island to help people cross the road and/or introduce pedestrian safety barriers.
- 4.4 Should you Area Forum decide that it wishes to go along with this approach, this will be reported back to the Cabinet.
- 4.5 The alternative to not decentralising the funding is for it to be administered centrally as now and for larger, more expensive schemes to be put in on a Borough-wide basis based on a priority assessment so some areas will benefit but others would not.
- 4.6 Those two Area Forums currently holding their own budget receive officer input to guide them in their decision making process and this would be made available if the initiative was expanded to cover all Area Forums.
- 4.7 Should Area Forums decide to have their own de-centralised share of Integrated Transport funding, there is no restriction of neighbouring Area

Forums combining funding or providing match funding from “You Decide” or other sources.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The overall works, estimated to cost in the region of £180,000, will be financed from the 2009/10 Transport Capital Programme. The decision to be taken is whether or not each Area Forum wishes to have a one-eleventh share of around £16,300.

6.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no additional financial or staffing implications arising directly from this report. Staff will assist in any decision-making process. Future maintenance costs will be met from the Highway Maintenance Revenue Budget.

7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None directly from this report, however some schemes can have a positive effect on assisting disabled, visually impaired persons and persons with prams and pushchairs to cross the road.

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Introducing traffic calming features will ensure that vehicle speeds are moderated at all times.

8.2 Typical schemes in the programme are designed to support the Council's endorsement of the Local Transport Plan.

9.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None arising directly out of this report.

10.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific planning implications arising directly from this report.

11.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific human rights implications arising directly from this report.

12.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no specific anti-poverty implications arising directly from this report.

13.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no specific social inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

14.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

14.1 This report has implications for all Wards.

15.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 No specific background papers have been used in preparation of this report other than Cabinet minutes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Area Forum is requested to:

- (i) Note the type of traffic management schemes which can be funded through the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block allocation;
- (ii) Provide views as to whether or not it wishes to receive a decentralised one-eleventh share of the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block Allocation equating to approximately £16,300 per Area Forum to carry out scheme(s) of a traffic management/road safety nature in the local area.

**DAVID GREEN, DIRECTOR
TECHNICAL SERVICES**

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

The Fire Service on Wirral is delivered through 6 community fire stations located at Birkenhead, Bromborough, Heswall, Upton, West Kirby and Wallasey. We are committed to innovative and imaginative change in order to help make our communities safer and stronger. We are also committed to integrated working with other authorities, agencies and the voluntary sector to improve public safety and well being. We have an **Integrated Risk Management Plan** which is a local strategic plan that outlines the measures intended to be taken to continue the modernisation and improvement of services to the people of Merseyside. Past and current I.R.M.P can be viewed online at www.merseyfire.gov.uk or copies of the latest plan are available at local community fire stations across the district, public libraries and One-Stop shops.

There were a number of public consultation meetings held at fire stations across the district and we would like to thank all those that attended for their input. This input will be considered as part of the consultation process before a final draft is published. The subsequent document will inform you of any new responsibilities that the service and the authority must comply with and will also demonstrate how we intend to provide compliance and any effects that it will have on the Service, its partners and our community.

Community engagement remains the cornerstone of our proactive activities, in particular the delivery of the **Home Fire Safety Checks** and the provision of free smoke detectors where necessary. We continue to improve our effectiveness by utilising intelligence led targeting of **HFSCs**. Unfortunately there are still some vulnerable groups within the communities we serve which have proven difficult to access. To ensure all efforts are made to reach these targeted properties, MFRS has developed a collaborative strategy with partner agencies to access these groups throughout the coming year. The Service has set challenging performance targets and we are pleased to report that Wirral stations regularly achieve and exceed these targets. During the last quarter the Fire Service visited nearly **6,000** homes on Wirral to complete Home Fire Safety Checks.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has set a goal to become an environmentally regenerative service. We will carry out investigations to reduce our carbon footprint with the ultimate aim of becoming carbon positive. The aim of which is to leave the climate in better shape at the end of each year. This goal will take a sustained effort over a number of years and will require radical change in how we operate as a business, whilst we maintain our high levels of service, intervention and response to the people of Merseyside. The Fire Service are committed to working in partnership to achieve strategic objectives within the Local Area Agreement.

The Fire Service has been working with partners to develop facilities at Wallasey Fire station as part of an integrated healthier lifestyle project. Work is nearing completion on a new **Lifestyle Centre** which will incorporate a Wirral HeartBeat gym and new community meeting and welfare facilities. It is envisaged that this will be available for use early 2009.

Another such initiative, utilising forum funding, is the development of a **Beacon Programme** running out of Birkenhead Fire Station. This is run 1 day a week for 12 weeks and is designed for children aged 11-16yrs. This is a partnership project to engage young people at risk of exclusion from mainstream education and involvement in arson related crime. The course participants are given a learning

experience outside the school environment to build their confidence and self-esteem. The course combines practical drill ground and scenario based training with classroom centred activities and workshops-including community fire safety.

In conjunction with Merseyside Police and other partners we are working towards reducing road traffic accidents across the district through the development of an educational training package, which is to be delivered to students by FS personnel. Fire Support Network volunteers will also be utilised in the overall strategy to assist in reducing speeding and other contributory factors of road traffic collisions.

Fire Support Network is a non-profitable registered charity which works in partnership with the Fire Service on Merseyside to promote fire safety to the local communities through volunteers and partner organisations. Volunteer roles vary from working directly with the fire-fighters, leafleting and replacing batteries in smoke detectors to providing an after fire care service and fund raising. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer can register online at www.firesupportnet.org.uk or contact via telephone on 0151 296 4600. The **F.S.N** are currently developing campaigns targeted towards the older people in the community and working with other relevant agencies to publicise further the facilities available to older people and the need to maintain fire safety in the home.

We are currently working closely with Wirral PCT on the **Smoke Free Homes Campaign**, the aim of which is to encourage smokers to make a pledge not to expose their family and friends to second hand smoke in their homes and cars, this will also assist in the reduction of accidental fires in properties and vehicles due to smoking related material. This scheme is currently being rolled out across the district, half of which is now included with the other station areas to follow shortly.

Community Fire Stations

- **Birkenhead:** Exmouth Street. Birkenhead.CH41 4AX. 0151 296 5325
- **Bromborough:** Dock Road South. Bebington.CH62 4SQ 0151 296 5925
- **Heswall:** Telegraph Road, Heswall, CH60 OAF. 0151 296 5805
- **Upton:** Arrowe Park Road. Upton.CH49 OUF. 0151 296 5895
- **West Kirby:** The Concourse. West Kirby. CH48 4HX. 0151 296 5955
- **Wallasey:** Mill Lane. Wallasey. CH44 5UE. 0151 296 6180

For a FREE Home Fire Safety Check, including FREE smoke alarm installation if required please contact Fire Service Direct on FREEphone 0800 731 5958

Equality & Diversity Update

The Council's first staff diversity event took place on Thursday 6th November 2008 in the Civic Hall, Wallasey Town Hall, as part of National Diversity week.

The Deputy Mayor of Wirral, Councillor Andrew Hodson opened the event along with Jim Wilkie Deputy Chief Executive, Wirral Council.

We were fortunate to be visited by Carole Eniffer from the Home Office who made a special trip from London to be with us. She attended in support of the Hate Crime promotion campaign that is currently underway. Andy Pownall from Government Office North West (GONW) also attended the event.



The Equality Watch team are delighted to report that over 400 people visited the town hall throughout the course of the day. Over 50 volunteers helped by staffing stalls and over 20 artistes performed. The Equality Watch team would like to thank **EVERYONE** who took part and all those who took time out of their working day to visit the event. The layout of the civic hall embodied the six equality strands. Community groups and council sections shared tables to reflect this. Some services that are 'cross cutting' were also in attendance:

Sexual Orientation - Wirral LGB&T forum (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender) and Terrence Higgins Trust

Age- Age Concern, Connexions and POPIN (Promoting Older People's Independence Network)

Gender - Trans Wirral, Women's Enterprise Breakthrough and Men's Health Group

Disability - WIRED (Wirral Information Resource for Equality & Disability) Access Improvements (Corporate Services/Technical Services), WIRED also arranged for PSS, Advocacy in Wirral and Merseyside Society for Deaf People to be in attendance.

Religion or belief - Merseyside of Council Faiths

Race - BRM Partnership (Black & Racial Minority), Irish Community Care Wirral Change, Wirral Multicultural Organisation, BME Supporting People

Cross cutting services – Streetscene, Human Resources, Staff Diversity Forums, Pensions, Customer Services (including One Stop Shops and Call Centre) Unison, Hate Crime, Child Support Agency (CSA)

A huge variety of activities took place with a whole host of performances throughout the day including demonstrations of tai chi and yoga, chinese lion dance, bag piper, service users from several of our day centres performing 'sign-along', Bengali

musician, multi cultural band, cultural food, Indian dancers and our very own Tony Excell as DJ and Brian Jones as master of ceremonies!!

Equality Watch Scheme Consultation

The Council's Equality Watch Team want your views on the draft 2009 – 2012 Action Plan. A public consultation process is now underway for people to have their say on Wirral Council's Equality Watch Scheme 2009 – 2012. The Equality Watch Scheme is the Council's equality and diversity action plan for the period April 2009 to March 2012, covering all six equality strands, also taking into consideration multi-forms of discrimination

The Equality Watch Scheme details the actions that will be taken across the whole Council to eliminate any discriminatory practices and to promote equality and recognise diversity within employment and service delivery. The scheme will also provide the framework for the Council achieving the different levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

The Equality Watch Scheme replaces the Council's Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. However, this proposed scheme does take into account the Council's statutory equality duties under the Race Relations Act 1976, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Equality Watch Scheme also gives appropriate regard to the forthcoming Single Equality Act relating to sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

The Equality Watch Scheme will be co-ordinated by the Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator, who will be supported by the Corporate Equality Watch Team and Departmental Equality Lead Officers. The Council will also work in partnership to actively promote involvement of external stakeholders, including voluntary and community sector projects and peers within other public sector organisations. An Equality Watch Review Group will be established made up of members from a variety of stakeholders.

The three year action plan is split into four sections and will be reviewed on an annual basis. More information can be found at www.wirral.gov.uk or contact the Equality Watch Team on **0151 691 8064** or email equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk

The deadline for comments is 27 February 2009

The Trust is pleased to be able to participate in the Local Area Forums and welcomes the opportunity to brief Wirral residents and our partner organisations on topical issues. Representing the Trust will be an Executive Director or Senior Manager and the elected Public Governor for the host constituency.

- Controlling Infection.....
 - Our Elective Surgical Unit at Clatterbridge remains MRSA bloodstream infection free – this Unit can undertake most planned surgical procedures including joint replacements.
 - Our Women’s Services Unit at Arrowe Park is also MRSA bloodstream infection free
 - Reducing the incidence of MRSA and Clostridium difficile is a very high priority for the Trust and staff continue to implement a comprehensive action plan to achieve this including a new 8 bed isolation unit for medical patients diagnosed with C.diff.
 - For the three months July – September 2008 the number of Clostridium difficile cases reported at the Trust reduced by 37% - from 124 cases to 78.
 - Our recently launched publicity campaign - ‘Working Together to Keep It Clean’ - aims to raise the Infection Control profile even higher at the Trust and to raise awareness amongst staff, patients and visitors of how important it is to ‘Keep it Clean’
 - In partnership with local GPs, our staff are working towards a more prudent use of broad-spectrum antibiotics that, if over-used, can make C.difficile infection more likely to develop.

- Improving Our Standards.....
 - The Trust was awarded the accolade of ‘Best Hospital*’ in the Dr Foster Good Hospital Guide 2008 which compares services and treatment outcomes at all hospitals across the country.
 - For the second year running we have been named as one of the country’s Top 40 performing hospitals by an independent benchmarking company that compares our performance in 20 key areas – including infection rates, mortality rates and waiting times – against other, similar hospitals.
 - In the 2007/08 Healthcare Commission Annual Health Check we scored ‘excellent’ for our use of resources and ‘good’ for the quality of our services
 - Our Women’s Services achieved a ‘hat-trick of excellence’ when they were awarded CNST Level 3 accreditation. Of the 156 Maternity Units in the country, only 17 others have achieved Level 3 and our Unit is the only one to have achieved 100% in every standard at every level.
Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST) Level 3 is evidence that our maternity services are extremely safe, well-managed and overall ‘first-class’.
This follows the Unit’s score of ‘best performing’ in the Healthcare Commission’s Maternity Services Review and being named ‘best in the region’ in a national survey of new mothers and mothers-to-be at the end of 2007

- An external assessment of our standards by the Patient Environment Action Team resulted in the following scores being awarded to the Trust for 2008

	<i>Environment</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Privacy & Dignity</i>
<i>Arrowe Park</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Good</i>
<i>Clatterbridge</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

Providing New Services.....

- The Trust has just announced a major capital investment in services for Women and Children at Arrowe Park Hospital. Due to commence in May this year, the £10million scheme will create a 'centre of excellence' by bringing together under one roof, all acute hospital services for women and children. More information on this exciting development will appear in a special supplement to appear with the 'Wirral News' newspapers in w/c 9th February
- A state of the art ward (Ward 14) to treat patients diagnosed with urological conditions has recently opened at Arrowe Park Hospital after a £1.4million up-grade.
- The Trust is a designated Urology Cancer Centre for Wirral, Chester and Northern Cheshire patients requiring major cancer surgery
- We were the first NHS organisation in Merseyside and Cheshire to offer a new laser technique – the *greenlight laser* – that is transforming the treatment of prostate conditions for men
- A brand new, multi-million £ Dialysis Unit has opened at Clatterbridge Hospital to treat patients with renal (kidney) conditions.
- We now provide Sexual Health services in the community – closer to where people live and work
- Easy to Use Website.....
 - Our new-look, easy access website can provide lots of useful information for patients, the public, staff and GPs about the Trust and its services go to
 - www.whnt.nhs.uk
 - The website is speech enabled for browsers with sight related problems
 - The new, easy click, 'email a patient' facility continues to be a popular feature
- Come and Join Us!
 - As a Foundation Trust we are keen to involve our Public Members in helping us to shape future services – we currently have more than 7,000 Public Members and are keen to recruit more. Public Members can get involved as much or as little as they like – from just receiving 'Public Membership News', our regular newsletter, to participating in surveys or standing for election as a Public Governor. To join, simply complete and return the attached Form or join on-line @ www.whnt.nhs.uk
- For more information.....
 - The Trust has published its Annual Report and Accounts for 2007/08. This can be accessed via our website www.whnt.nhs.uk or a copy can be obtained from the Membership Office at Arrowe Park Hospital ☎ 0800 0121 356

* Best large acute trust outside London – awarded jointly with Darlington and County Durham NHS Foundation Trust.

Wirral Youth Service

Wirral Youth Service provides opportunities, which are open to all Wirral young people. Youth work helps young people learn about themselves, others and society, through informal educational activities which combine fun, challenge and learning.

The Service works with young people aged 13-19 years, and specifically targeted young people aged 20 until their 25th birthday who have additional needs and need support with transition into adult life/services.

The Youth Service in Wirral works with many young people in a variety of different settings, these include:

- Youth clubs
- Street work projects
- “Kontaktabuses”
- “Wirral Youth Theatre” and Youth Arts
- “Response” – Advice, support, advocacy and information service and Substance Misuse Service
- International exchanges
- Duke of Edinburgh’s Award
- Outdoor activities
- Projects in schools

The Service is flexible and able to respond to the needs of young people and offers opportunities that are both universal and targeted. Youth work on Wirral is delivered through joint working between the Local Authority, voluntary organisations and other agencies.

Youth workers work with young people in many different localities in Wirral. Having a variety of youth clubs and street work projects allows youth workers to work with young people in their neighbourhoods, meet their specific needs and respond to issues that are important to them.

Much of the work of the Youth Service takes place in one of sixteen open access youth clubs located across the Borough. Street work teams of youth workers make contact with young people who do not access the service elsewhere, build relationships with them and in negotiation with the young people, develop programmes which address their specific needs. This work is delivered on the streets, through project work and on mobile Kontaktabuses.

Response

Response is a Borough wide Youth Service provision, providing counselling, support, advocacy and information for young people. Many of these young people have complex needs requiring intensive support from the service including homelessness, abuse, poor health and poverty.

The agency also has a team of specialist workers providing support to young people who have drug and alcohol problems. The team work with those individuals in a variety of settings including outreach street work and one to one work in their homes or wherever young people feel safe. The team also deliver educational programmes within schools and other youth settings on the risk, consequence and health implications of substance misuse. Partnership work plays an important role in targeting vulnerable, hard to reach groups of young people. Service level agreements and regular joint working ensures the needs of young people are met.

International Work

Each year the Youth Service runs a comprehensive programme of International Youth Exchanges. Young people from Wirral take part in a number of international opportunities including, Hong Kong and the Azores.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Youth Service is the Licensed Operating Authority for the whole of Wirral. Awards can be gained through a variety of approved operating units and access organisations made up of a combination of youth centres, schools, an open award centre and a selection of voluntary groups. Young people in Wirral consistently gain over 450 awards per year at bronze, silver and gold levels.

The DofE is available to all young people aged between 14 and 25 with the emphasis being the development of young people's leisure time. By taking part in the DofE, participants are able to increase their own self confidence and self esteem, make new relationships and develop fresh skills.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award staff continue to work with a group of Looked After Children who after successfully achieving their Bronze Award are now working towards their Gold. This group recently successfully bid for Youth Opportunity Funding to enable them to visit the Czech Republic. This visit, which involved studying social and foster care in a former communist state, satisfied the requirements of their DofE Gold Residential

A newly formed Bronze group is hoping to complete their expedition at the Oaklands centre in the forthcoming expedition season.

In our drive to make the DofE available to everyone and to diversify its delivery we are now helping several new units to run the Award. This includes Meadowside Special School and the Observatory School where we will adapt the Award for pupils with learning difficulties.

Wirral Youth Theatre/Youth Arts

Wirral Youth Theatre operates across the Borough to enable young people to access a wide range of performing arts related activities. Art forms such as drama, dance, music, technical theatre and new media are used to help young people to develop personally and socially as well as developing theatre and media related skills. A peer education company within the Wirral Youth Theatre have performed in parks and youth clubs a play about risk taking behaviour this is now going into schools

Leasowe Youth Club ran a Protective Behaviour Group in conjunction with a Learning Mentor from Wallasey School. The course ran for six weeks and involved drug/alcohol, sex health, relationships, cookery and clay modelling workshops. The aim of the course was to target some of the most at risk and vulnerable young people in the School. Young people also took part in a Christmas Event which was held at the Millennium Centre. The young people's involvement this year was serving out the soup and bread. One young person sang Christmas carols on the stage.

Moreton Youth Club supported the 'Hope 08 Carol Service', the event was held in the youth club and car park. Over 400 people attended the event, Youth club staff and young people were responsible for refreshments. Young people have been involved in a range of workshops covering world Aids day, substance and alcohol misuse.

Transport Update

At Council meeting on 15th December 2008 the following agenda item was discussed

MOTION: BORDERLANDS ELECTRIFICATION

(1) This Council notes:

- its consistent support for the electrification of the Bidston to Wrexham Borderlands rail line;
- the importance of the Borderlands rail line to the Wirral economy by linking the industries of Deeside with North Birkenhead, where greater employment opportunities are required;
- recent Government statements on the economic downturn, particularly the need to fund public works now, in order to get people back into work when the downturn is over.

(2) Council is dismayed at the recent Network Rail estimate for the electrification and upgrade of the line of £207m and notes this is more than three times the cost estimated for this work by Merseytravel. Council is perplexed at such wildly different estimates, and requests that an independent review of costs is jointly commissioned by Network Rail and Merseytravel to establish the true cost.

(3) Council also notes the application made by Merseytravel to take control of the track of the Merseyrail Network from Network Rail. Council believes by integrating management of the infrastructure with service delivery, greater efficiencies and investment can be secured for the benefit of local people and therefore supports this proposal.

(4) Council therefore:

- (i) requests that Merseytravel should now widen these discussions to include the Welsh Assembly Government and seek agreement to take ownership of the Borderlands line as part of these proposals, so that its operation can be fully integrated into the Merseyrail network;
- (ii) supports the electrification of the Bidston to Wrexham Borderlands rail line being undertaken by Merseytravel, with the possibility of a 25kV overhead electrified line being considered as an alternative;
- (iii) calls upon Wirral's MPs and North West MEPs to lobby the Government on these proposals on the Council's behalf.