

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

WEST AREA FORUM

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 20 APRIL, 2005

Present: **Representing the District of Easington**
Councillor M Nicholls (Chair)
Councillors D Chaytor, Mrs J Freak and
B Bates

Representing Parish Councils

J Goodwin – Hutton Henry Parish Council
P Todd - Hutton Henry Parish Council
Christine Carter - Trimdon Station Residents Association

Also Present: L O'Donnell - Durham County Council
A Cox - Durham County Council

1 CHAIR'S COMMENTS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the District Council's West Area Forum and introduced himself and the Officers present. A representative from the Customer Services Section was also present to take any individual queries or problems at the end of the meeting.

- 2 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 26 January, 2005, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.

3 MATTERS ARISING

(i) Landfill Site at Wingate Grange Farm for Premier Waste Limited

The Chair advised that since the last meeting Premier Waste had withdrawn the application for a landfill site at Wingate Grange Farm.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

4 YOUR QUESTION TIME – YOUR SAY IN SERVICE DELIVERY – YOUR CALL

M Lavender explained that the format of this meeting was a pilot following the Council's decision to re-brand the Area Forums in order to stimulate better discussion, participation and attendance at meetings.

It was explained that the Authority held a conference in October, 2004 titled "Your Community, Your Call". The purpose of the conference was to look at all the services provided by the Authority and discuss how it consulted with its partners.

The purpose of the Area Forum was to allow the public a chance to comment on the services provided by the District Council and how the public could be better engaged. It was intended that in future meetings would be less formal and venues would be improved. As part of the pilot, hand held voting equipment

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would be available at the meetings to allow those present to participate in the meeting, vote on issues that were being discussed and see the results instantly.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5 BETTER AREA FORUMS – YOU DECIDE

M Lavender advised that a key priority for the Council was to provide quality services for its people. As part of this aim the authority had decided to re-brand the Area Forums to better engage and consult with the community and obtain their views on issues which directly affected them. Details were given of initiatives being introduced to better engage with the community, which included youth and the Youth Strategy. The Authority was also looking at focus groups and citizens panels, which would allow services to be provided on-line.

It was explained that the Authority proposed to develop a Consultation And Engagement Strategy by the end of September 2005.

It was hoped that in future the Area Forums would be less formal, receive better publicity, be held in more accessible venues, which complied with the Disability Discrimination Act, and the content of the meetings would be relevant to the area it was being held in. The use of voting technology would also be used if available and appropriate.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 TOGETHER – REDUCING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

G Lodge, Senior Community Safety Officer, gave a detailed presentation on anti-social behaviour.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 GOING GREEN – OUR RECYCLING SERVICE

K Parkinson, Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, gave a presentation on the District Council's recycling service.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.