

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE SOUTH HETTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM**

HELD ON TUESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2009

Present: **Representing District Council**
 Councillor R Davison (Chair)
 Councillor R J Todd

 Councillor Mrs J McCreath – South Hetton Parish Council

 Resident – F Monk

 Inspector V Addison and Sergeant R Smith
 - Durham Constabulary

1 CHAIRS INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the final meeting of the District Council's South Hetton Neighbourhood Forum.

2 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 12 November 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were agreed.

3 MATTERS ARISING

**Horses
(Minute No 6(iii) refers)**

The Chair explained that the District Council virtually had no powers. Some powers may be available through Durham County Council's highways but correspondence received from them suggested that they did not think that these were appropriate to be used. A meeting had been arranged to explore ways of improving the bridleways to help get horses off the roads but there had been no real progress.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

4 SOUTH HETTON AGENDA FOR ACTION

(i) PACT Meetings

Inspector Addison explained that this was the last meeting of the South Hetton Neighbourhood Forum. With the move to unitary authority on 1 April, how services would be provided and community engagement would change. Durham Constabulary were committed to engaging with the local communities and guidance had been received that they needed to do this on a monthly basis. Sergeant Peart was currently making arrangements to have six weekly meetings in Easington, Haswell and South Hetton. Dates were available on Durham Constabulary's web page. County Councillors and district colleagues would be invited to the meeting and the agenda would be set by the community. Posters were to be displayed around the villages and hopefully local residents would attend.

The Scrutiny Support Manager explained that the Democratic Services Officers could distribute information to local members on behalf of the police.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) **Traffic Congestion Around South Hetton Primary School**

Inspector Addison explained that the PCSOs had been visible in the community and reported that there was no additional problems regarding congestion around the school. F Monk explained that the congestion was no better but had not deteriorated.

F Monk explained that children were playing on the school grounds and not all residents were happy about it. There was an influx of youngsters after dark and that was when the problems arose. It was explained that this item had been placed on the agenda at the next meeting of the school governors.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

(iii) **Revitalise Pond And General Clean Up**

S Arkley explained that contact had been made with Mr Frain the owner of the land who had been very co-operative regarding tidying it up. Approximately 50% of the reed maize was to be removed from the ponds to create more open water habitat for riparian species. Mr Frain had offered the use of his machinery to carry this work out. All conifer and sycamore trees were to be removed to create a habitat for insects and small mammals. Some small scale planting would be carried out with more suitable species such as willow and alder in more appropriate areas. The hedgerow on the field boundary was to be improved by traditional laying of gapping. The ditch to the north of the site was to be cleaned to create a small slow running stream to provide a potential habitat for water voles.

A more attractive entrance was to be created by removing a section of the barbed wire fence and erecting a stock proof kissing gate. A footpath would be created around one side of the pond only. Rustic benches would be installed in appropriate areas around the site. This would provide visitor interpretation once a detailed survey had been carried out. There was a potential to construct a small jetty/boardwalk to enable local schools to carry out pond dipping exercises. Some of this work could be carried out with the help from the Coast and Countryside Volunteer Rangers and local school groups. Funding had yet to be found for the project.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

5 AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIPS

J Murphy, the LSP manager explained that East Durham Local Strategic Partnership would be replaced by Area Action Partnerships (AAP) on 1 April 2009. There was to be 14 AAPs across the county one of which would be for Easington based on existing boundaries with the exception of Trimdon Foundry.

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The AAP would meet twice yearly to consider issues and define local priorities and agree an annual local plan. This meeting would be open to any member of the public. An Area Board would meet initially on a monthly basis to consider issues such as delivery against the local plan and manage and monitor spends. The Area Board which used the one thirds model, one third elected members, one third members of the public and one third representatives of partner organisations. Of the elected members, six would be unitary councillors and one a representative from the parish councils. Partner organisations would include the police, PCT, the largest Registered Social Landlord which was East Durham Homes, fire, East Durham Trust and a member from the business sector. The public would have to apply for the position, be shortlisted and interviewed.

J Murphy explained that there would be £50,000 per unitary ward which would be topped up by £12,000 from the highways budget and £4,000 from the Members budget which would give a total of £66,000 per ward. The rules of the AAP would override any previous rules on spending budgets. Neighbourhood arrangements were already in place for the LSP pathfinder areas and was hoping that membership of the boards would come from various localities.

A Member queried what the funding could be spent on. J Murphy explained that monies would be spent in accord with the priorities. There could be small scale projects with a minimum of £100 spend. There had been no clarity yet as to what the funding could be spent on.

Councillor Todd explained that the Members Local Initiative Fund was used by members to support local community type based initiatives. The unitary councillors for his ward had put the money together to allocate to the community centres and the remainder to help local organisations. The highways budget was used to pursue highway safety objectives. He had asked Haswell Parish Council to list their priorities and what they wanted to see happen in terms of highway safety. All schemes would be costed out to see what was achievable.

The Chair thanked the Officer for his report.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.