

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SOUTH HETTON NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 JULY 2008**

Present

Representing the District of Easington:
Councillor R.J. Todd (Chair)

Councillor Mrs. J. McCreath and Mrs. C.
Charters - South Hetton Parish Council
John Hessewood - South Hetton Partnership

Residents:

S. Ryall, Mr. M. Rodgers, Mrs. J. Rodgers and
F. Monk

1. **CHAIRS INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the District Council's South Hetton Neighbourhood Forum and introduced himself and the Officers present.

2. **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 4 June 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were agreed.

3. **SOUTH HETTON AGENDA FOR ACTION**

(i) **Lack of Shops in the Village**

Stephen James explained that he worked for East Durham Business Service which was a partnership between the District of Easington and East Durham Development Agency. The Business Service was a One Stop Shop for business and business advice which provided a range of grant support.

EDBS employed a retail advisor and helped any retail business in the District. There was a retail support grant of up to £8,000 which could be used for fascia improvements outside of the shops, roller shutter doors or to upgrade the inside of the shop. There were two business start up Officers who covered the South Hetton area and offered help and advice to anyone who wanted to set up in business. There were grants available of up to £3,000.

South Hetton was similar to villages throughout the country and had a small population and the number of retail outlets in those villages had greatly reduced due to increased car ownership and people shopping outside of the village.

Mr. Hessewood explained that there were very few places in the village where a retail business could be opened. There were a number of larger chains opening smaller shops in local villages, for example, Sainsburys. He queried if the Council could persuade any of the chains to open a local retail business.

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S. James explained that the national chains had sophisticated methods on where they placed supermarkets. They would look at the travel area and what was nearby and at the moment the market was saturated. The Council had found it difficult to attract the larger shops to Peterlee where there was a larger population.

Mr. Hesslewood suggested that an outlet like Nisa could be provided in the village and could they not be made aware of the situation in South Hetton.

The Chair suggested that S. James contact the Regeneration Unit to ascertain if any businesses could be encouraged to look at South Hetton.

AGREED that S. James contact the Regeneration Unit.

(ii) **Improved Pedestrian Safety on A182**

Inspector Addison explained that he had received a letter from the Traffic Management Section at Headquarters, stating that Durham County Council were looking at providing a pedestrian crossing at South Hetton in the vicinity of the Community Centre.

The Chair explained that he had handed in a petition a number of weeks ago and there was also a Rural Renaissance Project centered around the Community Centre area. European funding had been secured as well as resources from the District Council to look at issues around parking and trying to improve the area. He thought the crossing would be incorporated into the overall design.

AGREED that the information given be noted.

(iii) **Traffic Congestion around South Hetton Primary School**

Inspector Addison explained that the PCSO's had continued to monitor the traffic around the school and it was flowing slowly and no tickets had been issued. Some were parking on the footpath but this was seen as reasonable. There had been some mini motos and off road motor bikes around the village and three bikes had been seized the previous week. This was one of the major issues across the whole of the District.

Mr. Ryall explained that people were coming from outside the village to use the empty piece of land with bikes and quads on a Sunday morning. Inspector Addison explained that he would look at this but the long term solution was to find land where people with motor bikes could use.

Mr. Ryall explained that he disagreed with what Inspector Addison had said and there was so much traffic at the junction with Frederick Terrace that the PCSO could not turn in until she had let some of the traffic out. He felt that the situation was unacceptable.

Inspector Addison explained that he would speak to the PCSO's and if people were obstructing, he would instruct them to start issuing tickets.

C. Charters explained that it had been a problem for a lot of years. They had tried a bit of give and take and it had not worked.

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Mr. Ryall explained that the first week back in September, Year 6 students were away on an educational visit. He felt that it would be pro-active if in the school newsletter it was explained that the PCSO's would be taking pro-active action and issuing tickets. Inspector Addison explained that he would speak to the headmaster to have something put in the newsletter.

AGREED that Inspector Addison contact the headmaster of South Hetton Primary School to include parking at the school in the newsletter.

(iv) **Improved Facilities for Young People**

S. Clark explained that he had met with J McCreath and C. Charters and had given them some information. With regard to the Youth Shelter, the bid for European Funding for the tarmac path to run from the Community Centre to the Youth Shelter had been applied for. It was hoped that some information would be available by the end of the month. There was £950 remaining for the Youth Shelter and it was up to the young people to decide what they wanted to use it for. The Regeneration Partnership had helped to finance the solar lamp posts.

When the Youth Shelter was first erected, there had been concerns about anti social behaviour, litter and drinking. The Police, PCSO's and Street Wardens had been excellent in monitoring the situation and the people drinking had moved on.

The Chair explained that the Youth Shelter had been successful and neighbouring parishes had been to view it because they wanted something similar in their village.

S. Clark explained that they had been looking at the feasibility of a Youth Café and a meeting was to be held the following day to get the process under way. It was hoped to get some questionnaires distributed to youngsters. There were different types of café. One could be managed and serviced by the youths, it could be ran as a community business or be ran between the youth workers and the young people. The latter option was what the Council wanted to do. Sustainability would be a big issue and they were looking towards three year funding for youth workers.

S. Clark explained that the Head of Neighbourhood Initiatives had a limited budget but could provide some youth support workers for a 6-10 week period. He added that the summer activity booklets had been distributed through the schools.

Mr. Ryall explained the he had been approached by two people who could not attend that evening who were disappointed in the summer activities that were being offered in South Hetton. S. Clark explained that he would need to feed back all comments to the Sports Development Team but if there was anything they wanted delivering in South Hetton in the October holidays, they would attempt to fit it in.

Mr. Hesslewood referred to the Youth Café and commented that this should be ran as a community café during the day and for the youths on

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an evening. S. Clark explained that meetings were being held to look at these issues.

S. Clark explained that there was a mobile skate park which was available to move around the District. Mr. Hesslewood explained that there was nowhere to put it in South Hetton as there was no available space.

S. Clark explained that there was a mobile cinema which was free and bookings were being taken.

AGREED that the information given be noted.

(v) **Improved Frequency of Transport**

S. Day explained that he was worked in the Integrated Transport Unit at Durham County Council and dealt with work on public transport, school transport and Social Services transport.

S. Day explained that bus services ran as a commercial business and they could decide what service to operate. Evening and weekends was what the County Council subsidised, although they could seek to influence and persuade, they could not tell the bus companies what to provide.

It was explained that South Hetton had a level of bus services as other similar villages. They had the power to provide bus services if the funding was available.

At the beginning of September, there would be a service provided Monday to Friday to access the call centres on the South West Industrial Estate and on a Saturday morning although it would not be accessible directly from South Hetton, a change was required at Peterlee Town Centre.

C. Charters referred to Doxford Park and said a lot of businesses were call centres whos staff worked shift patterns and it was challenging getting to work and home on an evening. People had to look for jobs where they were accessible. There were also shopping centres open in Durham that they could not get to on a weekend because of the lack of public transport.

S. Day explained that Durham County Council subsidised the first journey to Durham on a morning and the remainder was commercial. Durham County Council did not benefit from a season ticket that took in both Companies and it was something that was currently being looked at.

Mr. Ryall explained that he used public transport frequently and the standard of drivers had improved as well as the standards of driving and customer service. He commented that Arriva's fares were a lot more expensive when compared with Go North East. He explained that three buses went through South Hetton within 16 minutes of each other, then there was only one other bus in the next 43 minutes. He referred to the local hospitals and said there was no bus which made a door to door stop.

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S. Day explained that the X35 stopped outside Hartlepool Hospital and a project with the PCT would be formally launched which aimed to address this. The patient transport service had been transformed to a service that the public could use from Monday to Friday for patients to get to their appointments and also would run into the evening and weekend for visiting. He added that the contract had been awarded to Scarlet Band but would be rebranded as East Durham Transport Link.

Katrina Bage explained that the PCT were taking seriously transport to hospitals and there had been a series of 'Big Conversations' consulting the whole of the County. Transport was a big issue Countywide and accessibility to health was being looked at. There had been a lot of suggestions on how this could be done. There was now a park and ride operating in Sunderland and it was these types of initiatives that the PCT were looking at.

Mr. Hesslewood explained that residents would like to get to Durham after 5pm. S. Day explained that it was a major challenge to get a full hourly bus service on an evening but he would look at the situation to see if some further provision could be made.

Mr. Ryall explained that children were classed as an adult at the age of 14 except for the Middlesbrough area. S. Day explained that there was no standard way that child fares were calculated. The County Council had powers to run concessionary schemes and there was a lot of work going on behind the scenes. He referred to the LIC card for 14-16 year olds that gave them half price fares. It could be obtained through schools or through Durham County Council at a cost of £2 and a passport photo was required. Arriva had a scheme called Teen Travel and it was 50p to travel anywhere on evenings and weekends at a cost of £5 to obtain the card.

AGREED that the information given be noted.

(vi) **Revitalise the Pond and General Clean Up**

The Chair explained that no progress had been made with regard to this issue.

AGREED the information given be noted.

(vii) **Increased Availability of Female Doctors and Clinical Staff**

The Chair explained that there were occasions when women would benefit from a woman doctor. C. Charters explained that some women would like a more sympathetic ear for gynaecological problems and felt that some male doctors did not take them seriously. The doctor did not have to be permanent but could be sessional.

Katrina Bage explained that she would take all the comments back to the PCT and find out if there were any plans for female doctors in the village.

The Chair explained that he had spoken to the Head of Overview and Scrutiny at Durham County Council expressing concerns about public

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consultation events. There were two consultations at present, the Momentum consultation and the consultation on a GP led health centre which included community services closer to the home.

Katrina Bage explained that the Momentum : Pathways to Healthcare Project was about the location of a new hospital and part of it was how to get care closer to people's homes. GP led health services was also an addition to the service.

Mr. Hessewood referred to a consultation form he had received but was not sure whether other people in South Hetton had been consulted. K. Bage explained that there was a stakeholder list which had been compiled and issued to a number of groups.

AGREED that the information given be noted.

JC/CB/COM/SHNF/080701
28 July 2008