

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

AREA 1 FORUM

Tudhoe Community Centre Monday,
6 September 2004 Time: 6.30 p.m.

Present: Councillor J.M. Khan (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Councillor Mrs. A.M. Armstrong	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor A. Gray	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. C. Sproat	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor K. Thompson	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor N. C. Foster	–	Durham County Council
Inspector S. Winship	–	Durham Constabulary
Mrs. M. Khan-Willis	–	Police Authority
Mrs. G. Wills	–	Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
Mrs. M. Fordham	–	Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
Ms.J. Armstrong	–	Infection Control Nurse for Primary Care Trusts
J. M. Smith	–	Spennymoor News
Councillor S.A. Fleetham	–	Spennymoor Town Council
Mrs. E. Maddison	–	Local Resident
D. Gordon	–	Local Resident

In

Attendance: A. Blakemore, Mrs G. Garrigan, T. Guest, D. Scarr – Sedgefield Borough Council

Apologies:

Councillor Mrs. B. Graham	-	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor M.T.B. Jones	-	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor B.M. Ord	-	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor G.W. Scott	-	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor A. Smith	-	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor W. Waters	-	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. E. Summerson	-	Spennymoor Town Council
Councillor E. Foster	-	Durham County Council

AF(1)8/04 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th June 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (For copy see file of Minutes)

AF(1)9/04 POLICE REPORT

Inspector S. Winship was present at the meeting to give details of the crime figures for the area.

<u>Type of Crime</u>	<u>June 2004</u>	<u>July 2004</u>
Total Crime	101	92
Violent Crime	27	18
Dwellinghouse Burglaries	Nil	3
Theft from Vehicles	1	4
Shoplifting		12

With regard to total crime, it was pointed out that the figure for July 2002 was 174, compared with 147 in July 2003.

With regard to the rate of detection, it was noted that Durham Constabulary had performed generally well as a force, however, the detection figures had dipped over the last few months which could be due to a number of factors, such as the recent re-structure and the changes in working practices.

The Forum's attention was drawn to the fact that a mobile CCTV unit had been procured and was now operational. The unit was used for intelligence-led operations, enforcement action and anti-social behaviour problems.

Members were given details of the Street Safe Initiative and the Alcohol Reduction Campaign. The latter had been held during July and August and involved test purchasing, multi-agency visits to nightclubs and engagement with licensees.

With regard to the lists of graffiti referred to at the June meeting of the Forum, it was reported that the documents had been forwarded to the Probation Service to arrange removal. It was pointed out that arrangements were in place for all racist graffiti to be removed within 24 hours by either the Borough Council or the Probation Service, subject to receiving the permission of the owner of the property.

The Council was congratulated on its prompt removal of some obscene graffiti within Festival Walk.

Concern was expressed regarding the consumption of alcohol outside licensed premises in Spennymoor during the summer months. It was pointed out that the Police did not encourage drinking outside of public houses unless there was a designated area and it was up to licensees to ensure that customers were not allowed to take glasses and bottles outside.

Concern was also expressed regarding the difficulties the general public were still encountering in trying to contact the Communications Centre.

It was reported that the Police Community Support Officers were now in post and the feedback received from the general public was very positive.

AF(1)10/04 DURHAM CONSTABULARY - SOUTH COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE

Consideration was given to a report of the visit by members of the Forum and local residents to Durham Constabulary's South Communications Centre at Division Headquarters, Woodhouse Lane, Bishop Auckland on the evening on 29th June 2004. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was proposed that as a number of Members of the Forum had been unable to attend, a further visit would be arranged in the new year.

AF(1)11/04 SEDGEFIELD PRIMARY CARE TRUST

Gloria Wills, Melanie Fordham and Jean Armstrong attended the meeting to give an update on local health matters, including the control of infection and performance figures.

The Chairman congratulated Mrs. Wills on her appointment as Chairman of Sedgfield PCT and wished her every success.

Mrs. Wills reported that she had been appointed as Chairman for a period of four years and she still intended to attend the meetings of Area 1 Forum. She also reported that two new Non Executive Directors had been appointed. They were Councillor Mrs. Agnes Armstrong and David Halladay, both from Spennymoor.

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Mrs. Armstrong on her appointment.

It was reported that Sedgfield PCT had received a two star rating for 2004, improving on the one star that it received in 2003.

The Forum's attention was drawn to the fact that the Sedgfield PCT Annual Report for 2003/04 would be launched at its Annual General Meeting at Chilton Workingmen's Club on Thursday 9th September 2004.

Copies of 'PCT *life*' – the newsletter produced by Sedgfield PCT for its staff and independent contractors, were circulated at the meeting. (For copy see file of Minutes).

With regard to the report, "Achieving Patient Access Targets and Baseline Performance Requirements" it was noted that the targets in respect of access to a GP within two working days and a Primary Care Professional within one working day had continued to be met.

It was explained that under the 'Access Incentive Scheme' Sedgfield PCT had been awarded £77,600 for the quarter ending 30th June 2004 for the progress made towards improving access across all primary, acute and mental health services. It was anticipated that the money would be spent on improving the IT services for the Community Nursing Service.

With regard to the North East Ambulance Service, it was noted that the target of responding to 75% of calls to life threatening emergencies in eight minutes had again not been achieved. The actual performance was 63.8%. It was noted that representatives of the Ambulance Service had attended a meeting of the Professional Executive Committee of the PCT and officers of the PCT would be working closely with the Ambulance Service in the next few months to try and improve the service provided.

With regard to the development of the out-of-hours service, it was noted that from 1st December 2004, Saturday morning surgeries would operate from the Urgent Care Centre at Bishop Auckland. It was also pointed out that the Trust had recruited three emergency care practitioners, who would come into post within the next 12 to 18 months, once they had completed the necessary training.

Specific reference was made to the Public Health Annual Report 2003/04. A copy of the summary leaflet had been circulated with the agenda. (For copy see file of Minutes). Members' attention was drawn to the lifestyle issues - 20% of people in Sedgefield Borough smoked and 28% of men drank excessively.

It was reported that further information would be provided at the October meeting of the Forum regarding the development of Spennymoor Health Centre under the LIFT Programme.

In response to a question asked at the last meeting of the Forum, Jean Armstrong, the Infection Control Nurse for the six PCTs and Prisons attended the meeting to give a presentation on MRSA – Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus. The presentation covered what MRSA was, how it was spread, who was at risk and how it was treated. A patient information leaflet on MRSA was circulated at the meeting. (For copy see file of Minutes)

AF(1)12/04

NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN SERVICE

D. Scarr, Head of Neighbourhood Services attended the meeting to give a presentation regarding the above.

It was explained that Sedgefield Borough Council had invested significantly in the Community Safety Service over the past decade. The Service's achievements included the development of the Community Force, the establishment of Sedgefield Borough Community Safety Partnership and the creation of the Community Care Force Centre, which included a combined CCTV and Community Alarm function.

It was reported that in early 2003, Holden McAllister Partnership had been commissioned by the Borough Council to undertake an independent review of the Council's Community Safety Service. The report confirmed that Community Safety continued to be seen as a priority for residents of the Borough and concluded that whilst the

development of the Sedgefield Borough Crime and Disorder Partnership had provided a framework for strategic intervention by partner organisations, the development of a Community Safety Strategy specifically for the Borough Council was a logical next step.

With regard to the operational elements of the service, the report acknowledged that the development of the Community Force during the 1990s had been a bold and innovative step. The Community Force had been one of the first schemes used to inform the national development of Neighbourhood and Street Warden initiatives and latterly, the Police Community Support Officers initiative. The report concluded, however, that although the Community Force as a concept was pioneering, it now needed to refocus and together with the CCTV function, be set within the Corporate Strategy.

It was explained that the service re-engineering would begin with Community Force Officers being re-designated Neighbourhood Wardens, with an increased emphasis on community engagement/public re-assurance, creating stronger links with Neighbourhood Management by targeting areas of greatest need, having powers to issue fixed penalty notices and operating flexible working patterns in response to need.

It was pointed out that the transition was supported by the recent Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Neighbourhood Renewal Unit national evaluation of the Neighbourhood Wardens Programme. The evaluation recognised the unique role Neighbourhood Wardens played in neighbourhood renewal and recorded the overriding message from the evaluation that in successful schemes Neighbourhood Wardens can and were having an impact in areas of increased resident satisfaction, reduced fear of crime particularly for older people, decline in overall rates of crime, perceived improvements in environmental problems and contributing to tackling anti-social behaviour. In fact, the ODPM evaluation did commend Sedgefield Borough Council's existing Neighbourhood Warden Scheme that operated at Dean Bank, Ferryhill and West Ward, Newton Aycliffe in their efforts to reduce youth disorder and anti-social behaviour by engaging young people in a number of innovative initiatives.

The re-engineered Sedgefield Borough Council Neighbourhood Warden Service included features identified by the ODPM evaluation as common in schemes that were working well such as having a tailored and flexible approach, involving a wide variety of stakeholders including resident participation, active and represented steering groups, good management, partnership based, highly visible, targeted deployment based on need and having good quality and well trained staff. Neighbourhood Wardens would be community based although provision would be made for a central mobile response, including the out-of-hours service up to 10 p.m. and targeted joint working between the Wardens as a team and with others such as Police, Environmental Protection Officers, Neighbourhood Management, Housing Management and Tenancy Enforcement. The Wardens would work

with Resident Groups and Schools and provide re-assurance to vulnerable groups.

Deployment of the thirteen Neighbourhood Wardens within the local communities had been determined by development of a matrix of needs taking account of population, levels of deprivation, recorded crime and anti-social behaviour, Council housing stock numbers, priority areas amongst older private sector housing, NRF and other partnership funding and other services operating within the area. Based upon the above assessment Neighbourhood Wardens would be deployed within the five management areas across the Borough targeting communities of greatest need. Deployment according to the needs based assessment matrix would be kept under regular view and any adjustments would be made accordingly.

It was noted that the Council would have access to the Airwaves digital radio communications system used by Durham Constabulary to promote joint working and information flow between Police Headquarters/Officers and the CCTV Control Rooms and Neighbourhood Wardens.

The Forum was also informed that the Council's CCTV service was programmed to be reviewed in the final quarter of 2004, and a Community Safety Strategy for Sedgefield Borough was being developed, which would take account of the changing external environment and link Council services to the strategic directions set by Government Office, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnership.

It was pointed out that an article regarding the Neighbourhood Warden Service would be included in the October edition of Inform and arrangements were being made for the new wardens to hand deliver leaflets regarding their services to every household in the Borough.

Specific reference was made to the establishment of the Neighbourhood Warden Steering Group. The Group would include in its membership, representatives from the five Area Forums within the borough. It would meet on a quarterly basis, and monitor and review performance and be involved in service planning.

The Forum agreed that the nomination of a representative for Area 1 Forum to the Group would be considered at its October meeting.

AF(1)13/04

PLAY AREAS

T. Guest, Head of Policy and Development for the Borough Council's Leisure Services Department attended the meeting to give details of the proposed provision of play sites for the area covered by Area 1 Forum.

It was reported that in November 2003 the Council's Leisure Services Department had commissioned the National Playing Fields Association to undertake an audit of the fixed play sites owned by the Borough

Council and maintained by the Borough Council on behalf of Town and Parish Councils, as the starting point for the development of a play strategy.

It was pointed out that the audit had identified some immediate problems that had necessitated the dismantling and removal of 16 play sites as a result of safety concerns.

Reference was made to an Open Space Needs Assessment that was to be undertaken, which would sit alongside the Audit of Fixed Play Equipment, Sport England's recently commissioned 'Active Places' (a county-wide database of all sports facilities and activities) and the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy.

It was explained that the Government expected all local authorities to undertake audits of their existing open space, sports and recreation facilities, in terms of access and usage and the opportunities for new open spaces and facilities. The audits should consider both the quantitative and qualitative elements of open space, sports and recreational facilities and allow local authorities to identify the following:

- How much new provision may be needed?
- Measures against which need for enhancing existing facilities can be judged.
- Distance thresholds and consideration of costs.

The assessment would also give clear policy guidelines on positioning of 'No Ball Games' signs, clarify the requirements of fixed play and informal play sites, assist in the development of play areas and play spaces in line with the DDA requirements and provide extensive consultation with all ages regarding open space requirements.

The assessment, which was to be undertaken by consultants, would take approximately six to twelve months to complete and it was anticipated that work would start the following month.

With regard to the play area at Middlestone Moor, it was noted that Groundwork East Durham was currently undertaking a feasibility study, which should be completed by October 2004.

With regard to the question raised at the June meeting of the Forum in respect of funding available for young athletes, it was noted that arrangements were being made for information to be accessed through the Leisure Services website.

AF(1)14/04

LOCAL ROAD SAFETY ISSUES

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meeting of the Spennymoor Road Safety Local Working Party held on 13th May 2004. (For copy see file of Minutes).

The Forum was informed that a further meeting of the Working Party was to be held on Thursday 9th September at 6.30 p.m. in the Town

Hall, Spennymoor, which was open to the public.

AF(1)15/04

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 25th October 2004 at 6.30 p.m. at Spennymoor Town Hall

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Gillian Garrigan, Spennymoor, Ext 4240