

# Item 2

## SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 3 FORUM

Fishburn Youth and  
Community Centre,  
Butterwick Road,  
Fishburn

Wednesday,  
12 November 2003

Time: 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor J. Burton (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Councillor Mrs. L. Hovvels	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor T. Ward	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. M. Hills	–	Fishburn Parish Council
Councillor Mrs. S. Nicholson	–	Fishburn Parish Council
T. Spearey	–	Sedgefield Borough Council Community Force
Duty Inspector K. Weir	–	Spennymoor Police
P. Irving	–	Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
R. Pattison	–	Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
Councillor R. Passfield	–	Trimdon Parish Council
A. Oliver	–	Local Resident

**In**

**Attendance:** Miss. S. Billingham and G. Darby

**Apologies:**

Councillor D.R. Brown	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor K. Noble	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J. Robinson J.P	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J. Wayman J.P	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
J. Bowles	–	Trimdon 2000
J. Parkinson	–	Mordon Parish Meeting
Councillor Mrs. M. Robinson	–	Sedgefield Town Council

**AF(3)14/03 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2003 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**AF(3)15/03 POLICE REPORT**

Duty Inspector Kevin Weir from Spennymoor Police was present at the meeting to give details on the crime figures for the area.

It was reported that there had been a rise in youths causing annoyance over the past month, though it was suggested that it had been the result of Halloween and Bonfire Night.

It was explained that a number of arrests had been made regarding dwelling burglaries. The team believed to be responsible for a number of burglaries in the area had been arrested and were released on bail.

Concern had been raised at the previous meeting regarding speeding along Fishburn Front Street. Questions had been raised as to whether some form of traffic calming could be introduced. It was noted that the Traffic Management Team did not believe the introduction of the crossing was viable, as the road was too narrow with limited forward vision.

Concern was expressed over youths causing annoyance in Trimdon Village. The Forum questioned what initiatives had been implemented by the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit. It was explained that before any initiatives could be put in place the Unit would need to find out what was required in the area and what funds would be needed. It was pointed out that there were Outreach Workers based at Trimdon Grange and it was agreed that information on their roles would be brought to the next meeting.

Duty Inspector K. Weir was thanked for his presentation.

**AF(3)16/03**

**SEDGEFIELD PRIMARY CARE TRUST**

Paul Irving from Sedgefield Primary Care Trust was present at the meeting to give an update on local health matters in the area.

The Forum was informed of the development of the new GP contract that needed to be implemented by April 2004. A Steering Group had been set up to introduce the service. The intention of the Group was to implement the new contract. Local communities and groups would be involved and it is expected new local services will be developed. P. Irving agreed to return with any more information if required.

Specific reference was made to the 'choice' initiative, which would offer patients a number of choices of where services would be delivered to them. Initially these options would be available to patients who were waiting 9 to 6 months for their treatment. The PCT with their partners were aiming to reduce all waiting times to less than six months.

It was noted that the Local Delivery Plan would detail the development of services for the Primary Care Trust. This would be shared with local communities once completed.

It was noted that the Neighbourhood Renewal fund Bid for Tremeduna Grange had been successful. The official "sign-off" would take place in December 2003 with a business plan being developed for March 2004.

The "Improving Working Lives" (IWL) initiative had been assessed and had achieved the practice stage. It was hoped that this initiative would mean a happier workforce, which in turn would be reflected in the qualities of service being delivered.

The PCT's Health Promotion Team and Service was presently being provided by a 'shared service' with Easington PCT. The PCT's new Director of Public Health, Dr. Alyson Learmonth, had drafted proposals to develop a team and services dedicated to Sedgefields. A potential

budget of this was an improved focus of the health promotion of Sedgefield Borough residents.

Specific reference was made to an open day at the Sedgefield Community Hospital, which included the launch of a book depicting the history of the hospital. The book could be obtained from the main reception of the hospital, priced at £9.99. All funds were to go to the Volunteer Service, Friends of the Hospital.

P. Irving was thanked for his presentation.

**AF(3)17/03**

**DELIVERING THE PREFERRED OPTION - LARGE SCALE VOLUNTARY TRANSFER**

Graham Darby of Sedgefield Borough Housing and Environmental Health Department, was present to give a presentation on the above.

The Forum was informed that Council, at its meeting on 12th September 2003, had agreed that Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) was the preferred option for the future delivery of the ownership and management of the Council's housing.

It was explained that the Council had submitted its option appraisal study for formal signing off on 9th October 2003. An expression of interest for the 2004 LSVT Round had just been submitted that day, with the full application being submitted by mid-December 2003. By March next year the Council would be notified on whether they had gained access to the 2004 LSVT Round. If successful, the transfer must take place by March 2006. The average timescale for a transfer was twelve to eighteen months from being given access to the round. Formal consultation on the transfer cannot begin until the Council has been notified of its place on the 2004 Transfer Round in March.

Access to the Transfer Round would be 'selective,' based upon a range of factors, with 21 key data requirements set out by the transfer guidance that needed to be included in the application form.

The role of the Members and Tenants would be to monitor the development and delivery of the project and ensure that the Council influenced and informed the development of the new landlord and its business plans.

Borough Councillors would also be chosen to represent the Council on the Shadow Board and would monitor the delivery of promises made to tenants.

It was pointed out that an Independent Tenants Advisor as well as financial consultants would need to be appointed, with the development of a business plan that for the next thirty years that would include investment details. A contract between the Council and the new landlord would need to be developed, as well as a new Tenancy Agreement and formal offers to tenants.

With regard to the choice of Landlord, it was noted that the Council could choose from the following:

- A local housing company that was identifiable as part of Sedgefield Borough
- Not for profit Company
- A charitable organisation
- Industrial Provident Society

The landlord could also be part of an existing group structure or part of a larger group where the stock would be absorbed or a 'stand alone' independent Sedgefield Borough based local housing company.

It was noted that prior to the ballot extensive consultations must be undertaken if a successful outcome was to be achieved. The consultation would include the issue of newsletters, public meetings, the setting up of a mobile exhibition unit showing the types of work to be undertaken and front line briefings.

It was explained that tenants would receive a copy of the offer document prior to the ballot-taking place. The document would include promises to tenants, naming them the 5 R's:

- Rights,
- Rents,
- Repairs and Improvements,
- Representation and,
- Regeneration.

The promises must be deliverable with progress monitored. The ballot itself would be independently run and a simple majority of tenants voting would be required for the transfer to proceed.

G. Darby was thanked for his presentation.

**AF(3)18/03**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday, 7th January 2004, at Trimdon Colliery Community Centre.

**AF(3)19/03**

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT WORKS**

Concern was raised over work that had been carried out by Sedgefield Borough Council on the road opposite the paper shop in Trimdon Colliery. It was felt that the work that had been carried out under the Tidy Estates Scheme, was not value for money. Specific reference was made to the planting that was felt to be unsatisfactory, making no real improvement to the area. The Forum questioned whether a partnership between the Parish Council and Sedgefield Borough Council could be formed, whereby work could be funded by the Borough Council. The matter was to be pursued and would be discussed at the next meeting

**AF(3)20/03**

**TRIMDON COLLIERY**

Concern was also raised regarding the lack of interest for planning and

new developments in the Trimdon Colliery area. There were a number of sites that were believed to be suitable, however no interest had been shown. The Forum felt that more interest and support needed to be brought to the area through new developments.

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Sarah Billingham, Spennymoor 816166, Ext 4240

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