

**SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
AREA 3 FORUM**

Mordon and Bradbury  
Village Hall

Wednesday,  
2 March 2005

Time: 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillor Mrs. L. Hovvels (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Councillor D.R. Brown	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor T. Ward	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J. Wayman J.P	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Chief Inspector G. Hall	–	Durham Constabulary
Inspector A. Neill	–	Durham Constabulary
Mrs. R. Parkinson	–	Mordon Parish Meeting
J. Parkinson	–	Mordon Parish Meeting
D. Halladay	–	Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
P. Irving	–	Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
Councillor Mrs M. Robinson	–	Sedgefield Town Council
R. Clubley	–	Sedgefield Development Partnership
T. Speary	–	Sedgefield Borough Council – Neighbourhood Warden
Mrs. J. Bowles	–	Sedgefield Resident
P. Reeve	–	Sedgefield Resident

**In**

**Attendance:** C. Walton and J. Elmer – Sedgefield Borough Council

**Apologies:** Councillor J. Robinson J.P - Sedgefield Borough Council  
A. Oliver - Sedgefield Resident  
G. Fortune - CAVOS

**AF(3)31/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**AF(3)32/04 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**AF(3)33/04 POLICE REPORT**

Inspector A. Neil was present at the meeting to give details of crime statistics in the area.

It was reported that the crime statistics were as outlined below :-

<b>Crime rate</b>	↑	<b>1%</b>
<b>Violence</b>	↑	<b>7%</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	↓	<b>50%</b>
<b>Burglary (Dwelling)</b>	↓	<b>30%</b>
<b>Burglary (Other)</b>	↑	<b>33%</b>
<b>Criminal Damage</b>	↓	<b>1%</b>
<b>Vehicle Crime</b>	↓	<b>5%</b>
<b>Theft from Vehicles</b>	↓	<b>27%</b>
<b>Vehicle Damage</b>	↓	<b>7%</b>
<b>Theft of Vehicle</b>	↑	<b>25%</b>
<b>Shoplifters</b>	↓	<b>30%</b>

Questions were raised regarding road safety and the lack of school crossing patrols, particularly in Sedgefield Village. It was agreed that the matter would be looked into and information would be brought to a future meeting.

### **AF(3)34/04      SEDGEFIELD PRIMARY CARE TRUST**

P. Irving was present at the meeting to update the Forum on all local health matters.

Members were informed that the Department of Health had announced the allocation of funding to all PCT's for 2006/2007 and 2007/2008. They were reminded that £9million had previously been invested by Sedgefield PCT for 2005/2006 and for the above periods it was confirmed that an additional £23million would be received to improve local health services. It was explained that the Local Delivery Plan was currently being compiled, which would detail where the funding would be allocated.

With regard to performance, it was noted that Sedgefield PCT continued to improve. Targets were being met in relation to GP access, and an increase had been identified in the provision of flu vaccinations. Sedgefield PCT could also boast some of the highest MMR immunisation rates in the country. It was identified that there had been only one patient who had breached the waiting period for nine months for the in-patient target. It was also pointed out that the problems referred to at the previous meeting regarding breaches for waiting times within the Accident and Emergency Department, particularly in County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospital Trusts, had been improved to the level where it was unlikely that the star rating would be lost, as previously thought.

It was explained that four new community partnership managers had been appointed to lead the integrated teams at Shildon, Newton Aycliffe, Ferryhill and Spennymoor.

It was finally reported that an agreement had been reached to commence the building of the new health centre at Newton Aycliffe.

Members raised concerns regarding problems that had been identified with referral and consultancy letters not being sent out in time. It was questioned whether the answer would be the implementation of the computerised referral system? It was explained that there were plans to implement an 'e-booking' system, however there were national dates set that needed to be followed. With regard to using other methods such as telephone, fax or e-mail referrals the problems were explained.

Concerns were also raised regarding the out-of-hour service specifically the location. It was explained that the service would continue to be reviewed and evolve as it was a new initiative and all concerns would be taken back to the relevant department.

### **AF(3)35/04 THE SKERNE CARRS PROJECT**

J. Elmer, Countryside Officer Sedgefield Borough Council, was present the meeting to provide the Forum with information and answer any questions regarding the above. A Briefing Note had been prepared and distributed at the meeting. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was explained that the Environment Agency was the Lead Authority for the project, and the Borough Council had no remit, therefore J. Elmer's attendance was for information purposes only.

The Environment Agency had assessed the role of the existing pumps that they currently operated at Bradbury Carrs, Mordon Carrs and Mainsforth Stell areas following the recent failure of the pump at Mainsforth Stell and the deterioration of the other two pumps.

Details were supplied of what impact a 'no pump scenario' would have. It was explained that no properties had been identified as being at risk, and there would be no impact on rising mine waters. The hydrological changes would, however have significant adverse effects on agricultural land in Mordon and Bradbury Carrs. A number of fields upstream of the A1 had become unsuitable for agricultural purposes, however, land downstream of the A1 had remained relatively dry and could be used as grazing land.

Reference was also made to a number of potential impacts that could incur a great deal of expenditure. It was possible that embankments along the A1 would need to be stabilised, as would embankments along the railway lines, as the wet ground could cause a number of serious defects. It was explained that trains travelling across soft ground could establish waves through the ground that travel in front of the train, which would have the potential of causing derailment.

It was pointed out however that the project could also offer an opportunity to create over 60 hectares of wetland to encourage the breeding of wetland birds.

Members expressed concern regarding the lack of consultation and the

fact that the Environment Agency had been aware of the problems for a long period of time, without advising residents. It was suggested that a liaison group be established for residents to raise their concerns and be kept up-to-date with the project's progression.

It was explained that no final agreements had been made and any concerns should be raised directly with Roger Martin, Environment Agency on 01904 822505.

## **AF(3)36/04      STREET SAFE INITIATIVE**

It was explained that Chief Inspector Hall had been invited to attend the meeting to give a presentation on the StreetSafe Initiative, which included the background to the initiative, its aims, themes, etc., and some of the successes which had been achieved so far.

Chief Inspector Hall explained that there had been a significant reduction in crime in the area over the past year. Between 1993 and 2003 crime in County Durham and Darlington fell by around 25% in real terms. In 2003/04 the area had one of the lowest rate of crimes per head of population in England and Wales. Durham Constabulary had one of the best detection rates and the highest number of police officers in the recent history of the Force. However despite those facts, the results of the last British Crime Survey showed that residents of County Durham and Darlington had one of the highest levels of fear of anti-social behaviour and disorder in the country. The StreetSafe Initiative aimed to tackle that conundrum.

It was explained that the aim of the initiative was to harness the energies of the communities, partners and the whole of Durham Constabulary to address crime, the fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and those quality of life issues that contributed to making people feel vulnerable.

The Forum was informed that the initiative aimed to increase re-assurance through visibility, accessibility and familiarity, creating an environment where the public felt safe. The initiative recognised the significant contribution that prevention, investigation and detection of crime, coupled with successful apprehension and prosecution of offenders made towards public re-assurance.

It was also hoped that the initiative would aid in the gathering of community intelligence, the use of problem solving initiatives to tackle anti-social behaviour and signal crimes and enhance community engagement.

The initiative had a number of themes which were:

- Police presence in the community
- Environment and physical factors
- Effective response

- Communication and public engagement

It was pointed out that for the initiative to be successful there needed to be partnership working with other agencies such as local authorities and community groups.

A video was then shown detailing some of the areas where the initiative had been put in place.

With regard to the theme – Police Presence in the Community – specific reference was made to National Alcohol Campaigns that had recently been run in the area, the multi-agency visits to licensed premises, the appointment of an additional PCSO who would be patrolling the streets by April as well as the recruitment drive to appoint more Special Constables.

In respect of the theme – Effective Response – the Forum was informed of the Test Purchasing Scheme and Drugs Intervention Programme that had been introduced.

Chief Inspector Hall requested that the StreetSafe Initiative be included on the agenda of future meetings of the Forum to ensure that Members were updated on progress.

It was explained that the 'Police Report' was a standard item on the agenda and an update on StreetSafe Initiative could be given under that item.

#### **AF(3)37/04 CRIME AND DISORDER AUDIT**

The results of the Crime and Disorder Audit held at the Area 3 Forum on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2004 were noted.

#### **AF(3)38/04 NEXT MEETING**

27<sup>th</sup> April, 2005 at 7.00 p.m.at Trimdon Village Hall

#### **AF(3)39/04 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **Toward a Better Future**

J. Bowles explained that she had attended a conference that day (2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2005) at Durham County Council, which had considered a proposed document, "Towards a Better Future".

It was pointed out that the conference had not been advertised therefore attendance by residents throughout the Borough had been poor. Disappointment was expressed at the lack of consultation that had taken place.

It was requested that a letter be sent to Durham County Council asking that the document be distributed to the areas within the Borough to give people the opportunity to raise their concerns and meet the feedback deadline.

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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 Miss S. Billingham Tel 01388 816166 ext 4240