

Item 3

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 4 FORUM

Hackworth Suite, Shildon
Sunnydale Leisure Centre

Tuesday, 18 January
2005

Time: 6.30 p.m.

Present: Councillor D.M. Hancock (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and
Councillor G.M.R. Howe – Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J.G. Huntington – Sedgefield Borough Council
Acting Inspector S. Ball – Durham Constabulary
PC P. Colman – Durham Constabulary
Mrs. A. Armstrong – Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
Mrs. C. Vasey – Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
Mrs. J. Johnson – New Shildon Residents Association
J. Smith – Local Resident
C. Hind – Local Resident

Apologies: Councillor J.M. Smith - Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. I. Jackson Smith - Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. L. Smith – Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor H. Robinson – Eldon Parish Council
Councillor Mrs. L. Goldie – Shildon Town Council
Mrs. M. Quigley – S.P.I.C.E.

AF(4)24/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

AF(4)25/04 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th November, 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

AF(4)26/04 POLICE REPORT

Acting Inspector Steve Ball was present at the meeting to give details of the crime statistics for the Shildon area.

It was explained that the total number of crimes had fallen since the last meeting. There had, however, been an increase in burglaries particularly in relation to commercial premises. There had been three dwellinghouse burglaries, 8 assaults in November and 9 in December. There had been one vehicle theft and three thefts from vehicles compared to the same period last year when it was double that number. Domestic violence had increased and there had been 40 incidents of anti-social behaviour in November compared with 23 this month so far.

A campaign had been undertaken in relation to licensed premises and the sale of alcohol to under-aged persons.

Reference was made to anti-social behaviour which was occurring outside the Salvation Army building on a Sunday evening. Police were to investigate the situation.

A query was also raised regarding the call centre at Bishop Auckland and concern was expressed that there still seemed to be isolated incidents of difficulty in contacting the call centre. It was explained that staffing capacity had increased at the call centre. However, there was a need for factual information when people were contacting the centre to enable a better response. The situation had improved and response in general was much better.

Members of the Forum were informed, however, that a new control system was to be introduced in May of this year which could cause some disruption. However, in the long term this would be a more modern IT system.

AF(4)27/04 STREET SAFE INITIATIVE

It was explained that Chief Inspector Hall had been invited to the meeting to give a presentation on the Street Safe Initiative and to outline the background to the initiative, its aims, themes, etc., and some successes which had been achieved so far. (For copy of presentation see file of Minutes).

Chief Inspector Hall explained that there had been a significant reduction in crime in the area over the last year and also a good detection rate – one of the highest in England. There were more Police officers than ever before and there had been significant achievements in fighting crime. However, despite this the area had one of the highest levels of fear of crime and in particular anti-social behaviour in the country.

The aim of the Initiative was for the force to work with the community to address the issues of crime, fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and quality of life. The Forum was informed that the Initiative aimed to increase re-assurance through this ability and accessibility, recognise the contribution of prevention, investigation and detection of crime, increase confidence in the judicial system, address anti-social behaviour issues, gather community intelligence, use problem-solving initiatives to tackle anti-social behaviour and enhance community engagement.

The Initiative had a number of themes including Police presence in the community, environment and physical factors, effective response and communication and public engagement.

For the Initiative to be successful there needed to be partnership working with other agencies such as local authorities, community groups etc.

In conclusion the Initiative was about being responsive, being professional, being positive and doing the job properly.

In response to a query raised relating to anti-social behaviour it was explained that the Police were confident that there were adequate means to deal with anti-social behaviour including educating young people, engaging with young people, anti-social behaviour contracts etc. Action Plans were being drawn up to inform other agencies of their responsibilities in relation to anti-social behaviour.

The Forum considered that partnership working was the way forward and that each partner had responsibilities. It was considered important that successful initiatives were maintained and sustained. Reference was made to the success which the Litter Enforcement Officer had achieved in relation to improving the environment which could contribute to less vandalism, graffiti etc. Unfortunately the Officer was no longer in post and this issue needed to be addressed.

Reference was also made to the need to recruit Special Constables and it was queried whether young people could be encouraged to undertake that role.

The Chairman then thanked Chief Inspector Hall for an interesting and informative presentation and it was suggested that this item be placed on the agenda on a regular basis so that issues etc., could be discussed and the Initiative driven forward.

AF(4)28/04 SEDGEFIELD PRIMARY CARE TRUST

C. Vasey and A. Armstrong were present at the meeting to update the Forum on local health matters.

It was reported that the Primary Care Trust was organising evening workshops in relation to the state of the health in Sedgfield Borough. Those seminars were to be chaired by the Chairman of the five Area Forums and would focus on issues and what could be done to promote good health. The events would be held throughout February and Members of the Forum would be informed of the dates.

The Forum was also informed of the results of the Patients Survey which the Primary Care Trust had distributed to 850 patients in the area. Each patient had been asked to comment on 66 areas of service. From the results of the surveys Sedgfield Primary Care Trust had performed well on 63 of them. The three areas which needed to be concentrated on were :

- Seeing a General Practitioner within two days,
- Dental services, and
- Referral to specialists without them having necessary information.

The Primary Care Trust had taken the comments on board and were

involving the Patient Investment Panel to find actions to rectify the situations.

AF(4)29/04 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Next meeting to be held on 8th March, 2005.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

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