

Item 7a

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL AREA 2 FORUM

Chilton and Windlestone
Community College

Tuesday,
31 October 2006

Time: 6.30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Mrs. K. Conroy (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Councillor B. Fleming	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor T.F. Forrest	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor A. Hodgson	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
C. Hall	–	Castle Residents Association
Councillor Mrs L. Dixon	–	Chilton Town Council
Councillor Mrs M. Errington	–	Chilton Town Council
Councillor Drew	–	Cornforth Parish Council
A. Learmonth	–	County Durham Primary Care Trust
J. Weston	–	Dean Bank Residents Association
Sergeant I. Rodgers	–	Durham Constabulary
Councillor R. Greenwell	–	Ferryhill Town Council
S. Maral	–	Government Office for North East
J. Birchall	–	LADDER Centre
M. Chappell	–	PDIF
S. Dodsworth	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
C. Todd	–	Sedgefield Borough Learning Co-ordinator
P. Forrest	–	Local Resident
B. Sheppard	–	Local Resident

In

Attendance: G. Wood (Sedgefield Borough Regeneration Manager)

Apologies:

Councillor B.F. Avery, J.P.	-	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J.E. Higgin	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor B. Meek	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor G. Morgan	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor D.A. Newell	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Mrs. C. Potts	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor Ms. M. Predki	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor G. Porter	–	Durham County Council
Mrs. D. Longsdale		

AF(2)13/06 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that Councillors A. Hodgson and R. A. Patchett would each be declaring a prejudicial interest in respect of Item No. 5 – Review of Area Forums as they were Members of Cabinet.

AF(2)14/06 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5th September, 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

AF(2)15/06 POLICE REPORT

Sergeant I. Rogers attended the meeting to give details of the crime figures and local initiatives for the area.

It was reported that the crime figures for the area were as follows: -

	<u>August :</u>	<u>September :</u>
Detection Rate	166	130
Detection Rate	33.3%	30%
Dwelling Burglary	8	10
Burglary Other	5	6
Vehicle Crime	7	11
Criminal Damage	70	39
Violent Crime	45	33
Theft	31	36

Sergeant Rodgers updated Members of the Forum of the progress of Operation Acres Green, which concentrated on the Dean Bank area.

An update was also provided on staffing levels for the area. It was pointed out that two PCSO's would be based in West Cornforth and one in the Broom Ward. A further two officers were currently going through the required training, which was anticipated to be completed by the end of the year, resulting in 5 officers within Area 2.

Discussion was held regarding finances and staffing of the force as a whole and the debt that had occurred. It was explained that three hundred staff would be lost as a result of the financial difficulties.

Consideration was also held regarding Police attendance at public meetings. It was explained that the Police had made a commitment to only attend the Area Forums. Concern was therefore expressed as to the number of opportunities the public had to express their views. Sergeant Rodgers explained that the Police felt the Area Forums were the most effective way of receiving public views.

Questions were raised regarding responsibilities of the Police with regard to fly tipping. It was questioned whether the Police were able to stop vehicles carrying waste to check whether they carried the correct licence for disposal of the waste. Sergeant Rogers pointed out that fly tipping was a responsibility of the Council and not the Police. It was also questioned that now the Police were looking to target crime rather than anti-social behaviour would the local authority have to introduce By Laws and take responsibility for targeting such problems. It was explained that the Government was pushing for a crackdown on crime, however the Forum was reassured that PCSO's would still patrol the streets targeting problem areas. It was also pointed out that the Government had recently released a White Paper regarding responsibilities of local authorities this week.

Finally, questions were raised regarding the closure of Newton Aycliffe Police Station on weekends. Sergeant Rodgers explained that he was not aware of a closure, as the station was still designated and open 24 hours to allow offenders to be taken there.

AF(2)16/06

REVIEW OF AREA FORUMS

NB : In accordance with Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members Code of Conduct, Councillors A. Hodgson and R. A. Patchett declared a prejudicial interest in the above item and left the meeting for the duration of discussion.

G. Wood, Regeneration Manager, attended the Forum to consult and seek views from those in attendance regarding the proposals set out in the attached report to review the workings of the Area Forum. (For copy see file of Minutes). A questionnaire was also distributed.

Members of the Forum were informed that a Review Group had been set up to examine the operation and effectiveness of the Area Forums with a view to making changes to strengthen community involvement. The information provided throughout the review had been obtained from the Council's Regeneration Section with input from Council partners and tenants groups to ensure consultation was as wide as possible.

The Forum's attention was then drawn to the recommendations within the report and the questionnaire, which was requested to be completed.

AF(2)17/06

COUNTY DURHAM PRIMARY CARE TRUST

A. Learmonth was present at the meeting to update Members on local health matters.

A. Learmonth pointed out that this would be the last Forum she would attend as a result of the restructure of the Primary Care Trusts. Under the new County Durham Primary Care Trust she explained that it was unlikely that Area Forums would be attended by a field of Directors, instead it was suggested that invitations be extended to managers of the integrated teams.

With regard to the new health centre at Chilton it was suggested that contact be made directly with the lift company as Bob Parker had left the organisation.

Copies of the performance management report were also distributed where it was explained it was the most successful report to date.

Questions were raised regarding consultant appointments. Members of the Forum pointed that appointments were getting put back and questioned the reasoning. A. Learmonth suggested that contact with the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) to highlight concerns.

Discussion was also held regarding the Neurology Section and its move from Bishop Auckland Hospital to Sunderland General Hospital.

AF(2)18/06

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9th January, 2007 at Dean Bank and Ferryhill Literary Institute at 6.30 p.m.

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, sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk