

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COASTAL AREA FORUM**

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 13TH JULY, 2005

AT HORDEN SOCIAL CENTRE, SEVENTH STREET, HORDEN

Present: **Representing District Council:**

Councillor P. Stradling (Chair)
Councillors Mrs. E.M. Connor and R. Crute

Also present: Councillor W.B. Underwood - Monk Hesleden Parish Council
Councillor Mrs. S. Peacock - Monk Hesleden Parish Council
Councillor A. Barker - Durham County Council
P. Tennick - Peterlee Mail

and S. Szydlowski, J. Hudson, J. Stephenson, A. Brennan,
M. Wilkins, R. Moore, J. Moore, D. Graham, H. Archbold
M. Alderson, J. Watson, N. Gray, J. Tiplady, Mrs. J. Tiplady,
B. Tate and D. Tate

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Samantha Shippen and Councillor Mrs. Robinson.

2. OPENING INTRODUCTION

Councillor P. Stradling welcomed everybody to the Coastal Area Forum and commented that it was pleasing to have so many of the public in attendance.

3. FOLLOW UP FROM LAST MEETING AND CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

(i) Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 13th March, 2005, a copy of which had been circulated, were confirmed.

(ii) Update on Anti-Social Behaviour

A. Bailey explained that he was the Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer from the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit of the District Council. Concerns had been raised at previous meetings regarding the Attlee Avenue/Hart Crescent area of Blackhall.

A joint Police and Council operation had been carried out in the area and from this a number of individuals had been targeted. High visibility patrols had been carried out by the Police and Council Officers. A number of youngsters had been referred for Anti-Social Behaviour Contracts and evidence was being gathered for one person for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order. The tenancy of the person was also being looked at.

Coastal Area Forum – 13th July, 2005

It was explained that the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit needed members of the public to formally report the youths that were causing anti-social behaviour. Anonymous witness statements could be given which could be used in Court, so members of the public did not have to give evidence and would have total anonymity.

With regard to alcohol abuse, P.C. Robinson, the Licensing Officer, was gathering evidence regarding off-licences and test purchasing was being carried out in the area.

A resident of Blackhall queried why only one person was being pursued for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order when there were six causing disturbance. A. Bailey explained that they were targeting one individual for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order and the others for Anti-Social Behaviour Contracts. It was anticipated that once the ASBO had been granted the area would then improve dramatically. He added that witness statements were required and he could either meet residents at their homes, the Council Offices or somewhere in Blackhall where they felt comfortable.

Councillor Crute queried what structure was in place when reports were made as sometimes evidence may be lost. A. Bailey explained that there was a file on the individual's concerned that was kept by the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator which had all incident logs from the Police and the Council.

Councillor Crute commented that there seemed to be a problem with the co-ordination of evidence from all agencies.

K. Parkinson explained that the Street Wardens logged all incidents and calls made to them and passed the information on to the relevant Officer within the Council. For example, tenancy issues would be referred to the Tenancy Enforcement Officer and anti-social behaviour issues would be referred to the Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer for investigation.

J. Link-Emery explained that East Durham Homes had regular multi-agency meetings regarding anti-social behaviour with the Police where information was shared.

A. Bailey explained that the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit were looking at a national intelligence model that would feed into a database, therefore eliminating any errors in the co-ordination of evidence.

A resident of Blackhall explained that he had called the Street Wardens regarding his neighbours. When they had attended the music was turned off but they weren't out of the street and the neighbour had started playing the music loudly again.

A. Bailey explained that the Police had tried youth diversion in the area. Some of the youths had wanted to engage in a boxing activity. Once this was arranged, nobody had wanted to attend.

K. Parkinson explained that the role of the Street Warden was to gather evidence. He explained that he would request the Street Warden to regularly patrol the area and feed evidence back to the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and the Tenancy Enforcement Officers.

Coastal Area Forum – 13th July, 2005

Mr. Stephenson explained that he was experiencing anti-social behaviour in Gallagher Crescent in Horden which was progressively worse in the summer months. He had informed the Street Wardens and Police and members of the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit had visited his home. He had made statements but nothing had happened. There was a footpath being proposed from Chapel Hill Road down to Gallagher Crescent. A meeting had taken place in Roseby Road Community Centre the previous year regarding the proposed footpath. The Police, District Council and Street Wardens had attended and explained that there were no reports of anti-social behaviour in the area. If the footpath went ahead he felt there would be more anti-social behaviour in the area. He added that he had a petition from residents who were against the footpath.

The Chair explained that he understood the footpath could provoke anti-social behaviour but this meeting was not to discuss the installation of a footpath.

Councillor R. Crute explained that complaints had been made to numerous Officers over the years and felt there needed to be a central point where all information was reported and collated.

A. Bailey explained that the Council were looking at proposals to employ a data analyst for the Council and the Police who would be dedicated to collating all information.

Councillor Barker asked if there was a corporate strategy for anti-social behaviour. K. Parkinson explained that the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit was a joint unit that consisted of two Council Officers and three Police Officers. Street Wardens reported persistent anti-social behaviour to the Unit and a case officer would be appointed. This could be someone from the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit or a Tenancy Enforcement Officer depending on the complaint. Seventeen ASBO's had been granted in the last three years and East Durham Homes did evict tenants causing persistent anti-social behaviour.

A. Bailey explained that the system should improve now the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit was based at Peterlee Police Office.

Residents of the Gallagher Crescent area explained that people were taking drugs on the field, urinating, syringes were often found and they felt their children weren't safe to play in their gardens unless they were checked first.

A. Bailey explained that Street Wardens and Environmental Wardens were trained to pick up syringes and they would be removed as a priority.

Residents of the area explained that a gentleman who was supporting the proposed footpath had been asking people to sign a petition and explaining to residents he was doing this on behalf of the Council. They felt this man should be told to stop saying he was representing the Council. A. Bailey advised that he had spoken to the gentleman in question and explained that the District of Easington were neither for nor against the footpath.

AGREED that a progress report be submitted to the next meeting of the Coastal Area Forum on anti-social behaviour in:-

- (a) Attlee Avenue/Hart Crescent, Blackhall
- (b) Gallagher Cres/Roseby Road, Horden

(iii) **Powers of the Street Wardens**

A. Bailey explained that the Street Wardens only had citizens power of arrest and this caused a lot of problems. They were sometimes criticised for being too friendly with the public but they needed to gain the confidence of the youngsters. At the moment they had no powers to demand names and addresses and could only issue fixed penalty notices to people found dog fouling or littering.

The Environmental Wardens worked during office hours and the Street Wardens worked from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

There was new legislation coming in to force which would give a number of civilians new powers. The Government had decided to adopt a scheme called the Police Community Safety Accreditation Scheme. Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers had been signed off as accredited officers and would now be able to carry out certain police functions such as confiscating alcohol and tobacco from under age children, removal of vehicles causing an obstruction and demand names and addresses for people engaged in anti-social behaviour or criminal damage. It would also become an offence to obstruct an accredited officer in the case of their duties. Street Wardens were undergoing training at present and would be accredited once this was completed. There would also be new powers available through the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

(iv) **Update on Green Waste Recycling**

K. Parkinson, the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, explained that on changing to the black box recycling method, there had been no use for the blue bins that had been previously used for recycling paper. A pilot scheme had been established predominantly in the areas where there were large gardens for green waste recycling to use the blue bins. There were currently 15,000 houses in the scheme. The Council had received a lot of complaints from people who wanted to participate in the green waste scheme. The scheme would be reviewed at the end of the year and ways would be looked at to expand the scheme to other areas.

It was explained that the Government had increased recycling targets to 18% and it was anticipated that the target would be met. A lot of incentives for kerb-it had been introduced. Every month three people who used the kerb-it box were chosen at random to win £50. For every 1,000 tonne of recycling, Premier Waste would donate £1,000 to a local charity. K. Parkinson added that initially there had been a lot of dissatisfaction with the kerb-it boxes.

Mrs. Szydlowski explained that a lot of the elderly were deterred from using the boxes as they could not carry them from the house to the kerb and wind was also a problem when the boxes were empty. K. Parkinson explained that there was an assisted pullout scheme for the elderly or infirm whereby the box would be taken from the house to the kerb and back to the house again. 9 ½% of householders used the assisted pullout at present. The

percentage of people using the boxes was 33% but it was hoped that this figure would be improved upon.

The Environmental Health and Licensing Manager explained that stickers had been placed on bins to encourage people to recycle. Under the recycling legislation, a notice could be served to residents explaining how they disposed of their waste and prosecutions could take place if people did not adhere to it. The District Council did not want to enforce the recycling laws, they wanted to encourage people to use the boxes.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

3. CRIME AND DISORDER STRATEGY

S. Arkley gave a detailed presentation on the Crime and Disorder Strategy 2005-2008.

The Crime and Disorder Strategy was informed by a Crime and Disorder Audit which covered the period 2001-2004. Details were given of the crime and disorder trends for the District, targets that had been set by Government Office and key initiatives for 2005.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

4. BUS SHELTERS IN HORDEN

The Chair explained that the problem had been resolved since the distribution of the agenda, although there was a bus stop near Pat Lavery garage which needed attention.

Councillor Mrs. Connor explained that the brick bus shelter at the end of the Aged Miners' Homes was attracting a lot of problems from youths.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

5. YOUR QUESTION TIME - YOUR SAY IN SERVICE DELIVERY - YOUR CALL

(i) Footpath adjacent to Gallagher Crescent, Horden

Mr. Stephenson explained that he had been advised by a gentleman in support of the footpath adjacent to Gallagher Crescent that it was to go ahead. The Chair explained that before the footpath could be constructed, permission would need to be granted by the owners of the land who he believed to be the District of Easington and Peterlee Town Council. A planning application would then need to be submitted and objectors could lobby their local Councillors. He added that to his knowledge, no formal request for permission had been received by the Council.

The Chair suggested that the proposed pathway adjacent to Gallagher Crescent could be discussed at another meeting specifically for this issue.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

Coastal Area Forum – 13th July, 2005

(ii) **Durham Constabulary Central Number**

Sergeant Dickinson explained that every call that was made to Durham Constabulary's central number was recorded. The number to call was 0845 6060365.

AGREED that the information given, be noted.

JC/PH com/coastal/050701
25 October 2005