

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

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2 APRIL 2008

AT SEATON HOLME, HALL WALKS, EASINGTON VILLAGE

Present: **Representing the District Council:-**

Councillor P. Stradling (Chair)
Councillors R. Burnip, Mrs. E.M.
Connor, R. Crute, D. Maddison,
M. Routledge and Mrs. V.M.
Williams

Representing Parish Councils

Mr. W.S. Day, Mrs. M. Burn,
Mrs. E.M. Hopper
Councillor W.B. Underwood - Monk Hesleden Parish Council
Councillor D. Boyes - Easington Colliery Parish Council

I Roberts and P. Chicken - Horden Colliery Residents Association
and R. Moore, J. Moore, S. Spowart, M. Howey,
R. William, A. Wilson, H. Archbold and Mrs.
E. Kiers

1. OPEN INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Coastal Area Forum.

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

(i) Confirmation of the Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 9 January 2008 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were agreed.

(ii) Double Yellow Lines - Middle Street, Blackhall

Councillor Cox had advised that Blackhall Colliery would be the first centre to be reviewed in this financial year.

AGREED the information given be noted.

(iii) West Street, Blackhall

Councillor Cox had advised that a survey had been carried out and the funding allocated for traffic calming measures along West Street. The questionnaire was distributed to residents and Durham County Council had received numerous complaints as residents did not want speed humps outside of their homes. Due to the public's reaction, the scheme became unviable and the funding was used on East Street. Councillor Cox

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has requested that signage be erected asking motorists to slow down and exercise caution.

Mr. Archbold explained that heavy lorries were coming from Castle Eden and Hesleden and reaching the junction beside Yohden Hall and satellite navigation systems were turning them left instead of taking them down to the A1086.

Following discussion, it was suggested that the possibility of installing chicanes be investigated.

AGREED that the suggestion of installing chicanes along West Street be suggested to Councillor Cox.

(iv) **Manhole Cover - Hesleden Road**

Mr. Moore explained that the manhole cover had still not been repaired. The Democratic Services Officer explained that the broken manhole cover had been reported on 10 January 2008 and she would investigate this further.

AGREED that the repair for the manhole cover be investigated further.

3. **YOUR QUESTION TIME, YOUR SAY IN SERVICE DELIVERY, YOUR CALL**

(i) **Horden Beach Road**

B. Wilson queried if there were any plans to open up Horden Beach Road onto the beach. This was the only public right of way and if it was opened it would create problems.

The Chair explained that approximately three years ago, there was a scrutiny exercise completed by Durham County Council on access to the coast. £80,000 had been raised to build a car park on the beach and create a path. Whilst Durham County Council owned part of the land, the land on either side was owned by the National Trust and English Nature who had refused to allow the land to be used as a car park. The car park was to be improved, CCTV fitted and lighting installed and the path from the car park to the beach improved.

Mr. Wilson explained that on the road leading from Castle Eden Dene down to the beach, the fishermen were driving over the grass and churning it up. he queried if a gate or blocks could be installed.

The Chair commented that this area was in Blackhall and the people of Blackhall would need to request that this be done.

Mr. Wilson explained that some footpaths in Easington and Horden were four to five feet wide so people could walk along with pushchairs and wheelchairs.

The Chair explained that Horden Dene's project would include the upgrading of the footpath as part of the project but where footpaths were too wide, they were being used by off-road bikes and quads. There will be community consultation taking place between now and September.

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Councillor Mrs. Connor explained that she was concerned about Lime Kiln Gill car park. There had been tyres dumped there and several people had reported it and they had been set on fire before they were removed. People were using the car park as a dumping ground. On the far end of the cliffs, quad bikes had been there at the weekend and churned the field up and kids were also setting fires on the beach banks.

The Head of Neighbourhood Initiatives explained that he would pass all the issues raised onto the Police.

AGREED that S. Arkley pass on all the concerns to the Police.

(ii) **Thorpe Road, Easington Village**

Councillor Mrs. Burn referred to the school gate that had opened on Thorpe Road and explained that this was not getting any better. There was misuse of the gate with cars dropping off and picking up in that location. She explained that there had been no consultation with residents and it made their lives a misery.

Mrs. Kiers explained that there were two openings in Thorpe Road and cars and bikes raced around. There were no signs up advising people to take caution.

The Chair explained that a crossing patrol officer had been interviewed and was waiting for a CRB check for that area.

The Chair explained that a Member Area Panel was to be held on 8 April 2008 and suggested that a letter be sent to Dave Wilcox at Durham County Council asking for it to be placed on the agenda.

Councillor Mrs. Burn explained that there were a lot of people allowing their dogs to foul and had not seen anyone from the Council to watch or fine the people. Craigellachie site was at a standstill and one barrier had been removed and was accessible from the playing field. The Principal Valuer explained that it would be a planning condition that the site should be secure and he would forward this onto the relevant Officer the following day.

Councillor Mrs. Burn referred to an empty house in Thorpe Road and explained that the lady was in a nursing home and the house was being neglected. Repairs needed doing and the garden needed attention.

AGREED that:-

- (i) the traffic issues at Thorpe Road be referred to Durham County Council and requested that it be raised at the Member Area Panel on 8 April 2008;
- (ii) the dog fouling at Craig Terrace be reported;
- (iii) the site at Craigellachie be reported to the Planning Department;
- (iv) the empty house in Thorpe Road be reported to the Housing Strategy Department.

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(iii) **Litter - Easington Colliery**

Councillor D. Boyes referred to the litter on the rail tracks at the bottom of Easington Colliery and there was also a lot of graffiti on the viaduct between Horden and Blackhall. The Chair suggested that they be reported to Envirocall.

AGREED that the litter and graffiti be reported to Envirocall.

(iv) **Anti-Social Behaviour in Blackhall**

Councillor B. Underwood explained that the children's playground had been set on fire with tyres. Youths had also been drinking and causing havoc behind the Welfare Park. Mr. Hoey explained that there was no park at all in Blackhall and no-one used the shelter. Councillor Underwood explained that he had spoken to PC Andy Holland who and was going to look into it further.

Mr. Moore referred to numerous incidents on the estate and explained that anti-social behaviour had not gone away.

Councillor Crute explained that this issue had been raised time after time and there was a breakdown in communications. The Police knew about the anti-social behaviour and it was taken off the agenda because it had died down. If there were no convictions, then there was not much the Council could do to evict people from properties. There needed to be a multi-agency approach and the Council were very limited in what they could do.

The Chair explained that the problem was common to most villages. Police consultative meetings were not very well attended.

The Head of Neighbourhood Initiatives explained that the Street Safe Boards worked very well and did have a multi-agency approach. If there were persistent problems in Blackhall on anti-social behaviour then this needed to be taken back to the Street Safe Board. The Street Safe Board was not a public meeting but a representative of the community could be invited along so agencies could find out first hand, what was happening on the estates. A representative of the community would be invited to the next Street Safe Board for Blackhall.

AGREED that anti-social behaviour be referred to the Street Safe Board and a representative of the community be invited to attend.

(v) **Blackhall Primary School**

Councillor Crute explained that a compound had been erected in the playground which overlooked Ninth Street. Residents were concerned at the lack of consultation and the compound was in front of three or four houses. Residents were also concerned about school children climbing onto the top of it. He had been in contact with the Architect, Service Direct, the school, Planning and Building Control at both the District Council and the County Council and had been unable to obtain a response from Durham County Council. He wanted to know why the compound had been put erected and why there had been no consultation.

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The Chair suggested that the Coastal Area Forum write to the Head of Service Direct.

AGREED that a letter be sent to the Head of Service Direct.

(vi) **Easington Village Green**

Councillor Routledge explained that the previous week there had been approximately eighty youths drinking on the village green. The Police were aware of this but with modern technology, the youths were dispersing before the Police were arriving. There was also a problem outside of the Masons Arms with patrons drinking on the pavement. The Police had spoken to the landlord and it did alleviate for a week or two and then started up again. In the summer months, there was always loud music when the doors were open. There were also problems with indiscriminate parking throughout the village and people could not pass with pushchairs and wheelchairs.

The Head of Neighbourhood Initiatives explained that there were no alcohol free zones, they were prohibited areas. New legislation gave the Police power to put a level two fine of £500 for people drinking in public places which would lead to behaving in an anti social behaviour manner. The guidance advised not to do blanket areas. The Council had chosen three or four areas to ascertain how the legislation would work. Alcohol could also be confiscated from under 18's.

The Head of Neighbourhood Initiatives explained that he was not a licensing expert and he would refer this matter to the Licensing Officer.

The Chair referred to parking problems in Horden and discussed this with the Sgt. He had suggested that the PCSO's put warning stickers on vehicles.

AGREED that the Head of Neighbourhood Initiatives refer the drinking on the village green and outside of the Masons Arms to the Licensing Officer.

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