

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

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2008

Present: **Representing the District Council:**

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

Representing the County Council:

Councillor D. Boyes

Representing Parish Councils:

Mr. W.S. Day - Easington Village Parish Council
Councillors W. Hill and M. Robinson - Horden Parish Council
Councillor W.B. Underwood - Monk Hesleden Parish Council
R. Moore, J. Moore, B. Connor, J. Cokhill - Durham Wildlife
Trust
J. Barnett, P. Barnett and P. Chicken - Horden Colliery Residents
Association

1. OPENING 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 2 July 2008, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were agreed.

(ii) Litter - Easington Colliery

Rail Track had been requested to clean the area of litter and the viaducts had now been cleaned of graffiti.

AGREED that the information given be noted.

(iii) North Terrace, Easington Village

East Durham Homes had organised the removal of the elderberry from one of the gardens as indicated by Mr. Hudson although some of the elderberry was within private gardens and outside of their remit. Trees within close proximity of the elderly complex would be pruned. The Highway Inspector had been contacted regarding the overhanging trees from the Doctors.

AGREED that the information given be noted.

3. DURHAM WILDLIFE TRUST

J. Cokhill from Durham Wildlife Trust was in attendance to discuss proposals for the coastline. The East Durham Coast was designated for wildlife at a European level. It was a major problem that the coast was eroding approximately half a metre per year on average but several metres at a time did fall off which was causing damage. They were trying to protect the coastline for the future and create something that people wanted to see.

J. Cokhill explained that the coastline was labour intensive to manage and very expensive. Discussions had taken place with Durham County Council and they had researched how the coast was managed in the past. In the seventeenth century, fields were created and the area was grazed. They wanted to create hedges and re-create the historic landscape to ensure that the right conditions were available for plants to migrate backwards. Native breed cattle could be used and would be a sustainable way of managing the coastline. The Trust would try to do this through a partnership arrangement and secure funding. The benefits of grazing were economic viability, sustainability, enhanced bio-diversity and created a tourist attraction. He felt this was beneficial and would like the community involved.

J. Barnett queried what the Trust were going to do about accessibility to the public and to protect the wildlife from visitors. J. Cokhill explained that there was a good network of footpaths in existence and a scheme would be used to put some paths in the right places. Parcelling the land would add further footpaths between fields to guide people into areas that they wanted to go. This would improve access along the coast and it would not be cut off anywhere. Improving the wildlife would add to educational visits.

Councillor Crute explained that East Durham Trust had a list of community and voluntary groups which may be able to help.

AGREED that the information given be noted.

4. YOUR QUESTION TIME, YOUR SAY IN SERVICE DELIVERY, YOUR CALL

(i) Future of the Coastal Area Forum

J. Barnett referred to the Unitary Authority and queried if there was any indication of what would replace the Coastal Area Forum. The Chair explained that at present, the replacement to the Forums was uncertain. Area Action Partnerships were to be introduced but the format had not been finalised.

Mary Hindmarsh explained that she was on the Working Group looking at Area Action Partnerships and they were aware that there should be local meetings and should be open to the public to attend.

AGREED that further information be sought on the Coastal Area Forums replacement

(ii) Selective Licensing

J. Barnett explained that he had attended training sessions regarding private landlords and Selective Licensing. Central government had not yet accepted the proposition on the Wembley area and the outcome would not

Coastal Area Forum - 29 October 2008

be known until January 2009. This had taken a long time to be evaluated and he wanted to know why the appraisal time was so long. If Selective Licensing was to be introduced into Horden, it would be another three to four years before it happened. He queried what the opinion of Durham County Council was in respect of the process.

The Chair explained that Durham County Council did not have any remit at present in housing services. Throughout the District there were a number of different types of management of the housing stock and East Durham Homes would still be responsible for the management of housing in the Easington area.

Councillor Crute suggested that Ian Morris, Head of Housing, be invited to the next meeting to give an update on progress with Selective Licensing and what the proposals were for housing within the new authority.

AGREED that Ian Morris be invited to the next meeting to give an update on Selective Licensing and proposals for housing in the new authority.

JC/CB/COM/CAF/081100
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