

**NORTH AREA POLICE AND
COMMUNITY SAFETY
CONSULTATIVE FORUM**
in
Throston Grange Community Centre
Glamorgan Grove, Hartlepool
on
Wednesday 9th April, 2008
commencing at 2pm

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence
2. **MINUTES**
 - (a) To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9th January 2008 (*attached*)
 - (b) Matters arising.
3. Update from the Police
4. Public Question Time
5. Update from the Fire Brigade
6. Anti-Social Behaviour Perspective
7. Neighbourhood Issues
8. Any issues to be raised by Councillors and Resident Representatives
9. Any Other Business Agreed by the Chair

WARDS

Brus
Dyke House
Hart
St Hilda
Throston

NORTH POLICE & COMMUNITY SAFETY CONSULTATIVE FORUM

9th January 2008

MINUTES OF THE MEETING



The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the West View Community Centre, Hartlepool

PRESENT:

Chair: Councillor Mary Fleet – Dyke House Ward

Vice Chair: Resident Representative Linda Shields

Councillor Stephen Allison	- St Hilda Ward
Councillor Reuben Atkinson	- Dyke House Ward
Councillor Caroline Barker	- Hart Ward
Councillor Rob Cook	- Hart Ward
Councillor Edna Wright	- Hart Ward

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge, Irene Nelson, Mary Power

Residents: S Broom, Don Davison, N Larkin, Jean Lynn, C Nicolson, Cath Torley, Liz Torley, A Vale, M Vale,

Hartlepool BC Officers: Karen Oliver, Neighbourhood Manager (North)
Sally Forth, Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator
Phil Hepburn, Parking Services Manager,
Garry Jones, Neighbourhood Services Officer
Rachel Parker, Community Safety Research Officer
Katie Sheehan, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

Police Representatives: Superintendent Andy Summerbell
Acting Inspector Glen Ward
Sergeant Stuart Porritt

Fire Brigade Representatives: Steve Patton and Stuart Simpson

Housing Hartlepool Representatives: Natalie Gooding and Libby Griffiths

Safer Hartlepool Representative: S Willoughby

10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tim Fleming, Sheila Griffin and Peter Jackson, Resident Representatives Joan Steel and Robert Steel

11. MINUTES

The minutes for the meeting held on 5th September 2007 were agreed subject to the following amendments:

- The Chair was a ward councillor for Dyke House not Hart as stated in the minutes
- Councillor Jackson was marked as having attended but his apologies were also noted

12. MATTERS ARISING

Fire Brigade update

A Councillor made reference to a request by herself that more detailed statistical information be brought to future meetings and the subsequent undertaking by Ian Harrington to action this. Temporary Station Manager Steve Patton indicated he would be giving a presentation which would include statistical information and would be happy to discuss any further information required with the Councillor.

13. INTRODUCTION OF HARTLEPOOL'S DISTRICT COMMANDER ANDY SUMMERBELL

Andy Summerbell, the new District Commander for Hartlepool, introduced himself to those present. He explained he had been attracted to working in Hartlepool because of the good work

being carried within community partnerships to help prevent crime. He further noted that the current statistics were commendable, with a 6% reduction in the number of crimes over the last 12 months. This had led to the unusual situation of on-duty officers being sent home during the Christmas period as there were not enough incidents to justify them being on duty. The District Commander said he was committed to making neighbourhoods safer. He could make no promises but guaranteed he would do his best

A number of residents raised an ongoing issue with anti-social behaviour in their locality, saying that when the police were called out they either did not respond or took no action when they did respond. The Neighbourhood Manager asked that police and residents come together after the meeting to resolve this problem.

14. POLICE UPDATE AND WHAT IS PROBLEM SOLVING

Acting Inspector Glen Ward gave a brief presentation on crime figures for the North area between August and December 2007. These showed that the total amount of crime had steadily decreased month on month with all types of crime showing a decline since August. Crime prevention tips were also given.

A number of crime issues were highlighted including the increase in thefts of metal and lead and incidents of shoplifting over the Christmas period. The following issues were then raised:

Of the 2355 arrests how many had led to prosecutions? – The Acting Inspector would need to ask Headquarters for those figures.

Why had the crime figures not been broken down into individual forum areas? – The Acting Inspector explained that crime statistics could be pinpointed very specifically but it was felt this would create a monster. Alterations were also being made on how the information was collected

Was there expected to be more alcohol-related incidents in the Summer months? And what effect would the introduction of Alcohol Designated areas have on this? – The Acting Inspector acknowledged the light nights encouraged drinking but there was also a lot of celebration over the festive season. Alcohol Designated areas would provide an extra enforcement opportunity to police officers. In response to a further query relating to the omission of King Oswy play area from the previously circulated list of Alcohol Designated areas it was reported that all play areas were to be included and this was possibly an accidental omission which would be clarified.

Problems with anti-social behaviour outside my home – Residents were asked to discuss any specific incidents after the meeting. The District Commander indicated that he would ensure that all calls were responded to in an appropriate manner

Neighbourhood Police Team should be congratulated – The District Commander thanked members for this comment and paid tribute to the members of the team for their hard work. He urged the public to continue providing information on the issues facing the town.

The Chair thanked the District Commander and Acting Inspector for attending the meeting and answering questions.

15. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

“May I ask whoever is representing the police at this meeting why no positive action is being taken against individuals who are destroying public property namely bollards and posts at the Headland to gain access to the beach by using the lower promenade as a highway”

The Neighbourhood Services Manager advised that this was an ongoing problem, with the bollards having to be renewed constantly. There was no CCTV in the area as it was difficult to install there. A meeting had been scheduled between the local neighbourhood police sergeant and Council highway officers to come up with ways of solving this problem. Local knowledge would be vital particularly in terms of tide times.

A resident indicated he had been told that police officers were not able to remove individuals from the beach as their cars were not insured to be driven on the sand and the cost of doing this was prohibitive. The District Commander confirmed this was the case but vehicles were stopped when they moved from the beach onto the highway if they were clearly contravening the law. A Councillor requested that details be provided of all prosecutions and fines pertaining to this issue, commenting that if a police car was taken onto the beach word would spread and these incidents might stop. However the police reported that their vehicles would be seriously damaged if they were driven on the beach. The District Commander reminded members that the police were unable to do everything and priorities had to be made.

What percentage of nuisance calls do the police get? – The District Commander indicated that there were no statistics available on this. Action was always taken against any hoax callers.

How were emergency calls prioritised?

– The District Commander advised that the call centre would make a judgement on how important the call was. For that reason callers should give as much information as possible.

The Chair thanked the District Commander and Acting Inspector for attending the meeting and answering questions.

16. UPDATE FROM THE FIRE BRIGADE

The Temporary Station Manager gave a brief update on recent performance by the fire brigade. He advised that at the moment Hartlepool was the best performing fire service of the four local districts. Figures showed there had been a decrease in accidental dwelling fires and small fires although deliberate fires and road traffic collisions had gone up.

The Temporary Station Manager went on to discuss the proposed emphasis in 2008. This would include issues such as home safety visits, smoke alarms, deaf alarms, deep fat fryers and bed packs. There would also be efforts made to prevent fires by education through schools, neighbourhood group meetings and youth activity programmes. Relevant numbers for the various fire services were given out as follows:

Fire Headquarters (01429) 872311
Home Safety Visit (01429) 874063
Refuse Removal (01429) 523333
Vehicle Removal (01429) 523333

The following issues were then raised:

What effect will the anticipated budget cuts have on the work of the fire service? – The Temporary Station Manager confirmed the proposed £2 million budget cut would have a dramatic effect on the fire service. They would

continue to do whatever they could to the best of their ability but the proposals were a disgrace.

Had the criteria for deaf alarms been changed as previously they could not be fitted unless everyone in the property was registered deaf? – The Temporary Station Manager advised that the criteria had not changed but joint funding was possible.

What are bed packs? – Fire resistant bedding issued to the most vulnerable.

During home safety checks do you log if a property has a stair lift? – All the relevant information is included on a confidential database.

I'm deaf without my hearing aid, do I qualify for an alarm for the hard of hearing? – The Temporary Station Manager was unable to confirm this but would request an assessment.

The Chair thanked the Temporary Station Manager for attending the meeting and answering questions

17. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PERSPECTIVE

The Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator and the Tenancy Relations and Enforcement Team Manager gave a brief presentation on the issue of working in partnership to tackle anti-social behaviour. Detailed statistical information was provided showing the number of anti-social behaviour cases in Hartlepool between July 06 and December 07. This was broken down between individual wards and case categories were shown for each of the three neighbourhood forum areas. Further figures showed the amount of cases dealt with by the anti-social behaviour unit and by Housing Hartlepool.

The Tenancy Relations and Enforcement Team Manager went on to discuss the various local groups they had been working with to combat this problem, including the neighbourhood policing teams, Unite, Victim Support and Cleveland Fire Brigade. Details were given of anti-social behaviour improvements which had been made in 2007/08 and improvement plans for 2008/9. The following issues were then raised:

Could empty properties be boarded up properly to prevent fires? – The Tenancy Relations and Enforcement Team Manager advised that they preferred not to board up properties completely in order to keep the area looking as nice as possible. However if this was an issue it would be re-considered in individual cases.

How do the anti-social behaviour rules apply to private properties? – Housing Hartlepool could request an anti-social behaviour injunction against a private tenant if their housing management was being affected.

The Chair thanked the Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinator and Tenancy Relations and Enforcement Team Manager for attending the meeting and answering questions.

18. CCTV

The Neighbourhood Manager gave a brief update on the current CCTV situation in Hartlepool. A report on this issue had been considered by Cabinet and from there forwarded to scrutiny for investigation. Those present were asked if they had any issues they wished to put forward for scrutiny.

With reference to the recent Civic Centre break-in a Councillor queried why no action had been taken at the time the

CCTV camera was being disabled by the CCTV operators. The Neighbourhood Services Manager advised that nobody present was able to answer that question.

A Councillor indicated that there were ongoing issues of cameras being vandalised and how this could be prevented, with specific reference to the camera at the Headland paddling pool. The Neighbourhood Services Manager noted this but added that there had been 2 prosecutions in relation to vandalism of the Spion Kop camera so things were being picked up.

A Councillor requested that part of the scrutiny process should be to consider how agreement to install cameras was reached and their subsequent effectiveness.

19. ILLEGAL PARKING

The Parking Services Manager gave a brief presentation on the issue of Footpath Parking. Included in the presentation were slides relating to the following:

- Existing problems
- Who has responsibility for enforcement
- Protection of footway junctions
- Practical problems of footpath enforcement
- Common complaints/concerns
- Concerns/options
- Future/current actions

The following comments were then made:

- Vehicles including emergency and Council, park on the pavement and no action is taken. Children and the disabled are being put at risk and nothing is being done to prevent it. Absolute disgrace.

- Banning footpath parking is not the answer as there is often nowhere else for people to park. It is too simplistic a solution.
- I've never parked on a pavement in my life – why do others?
- Parking in bus lay bays is also a problem
- If a car parks over my driveway the police will move it for causing an obstruction but the same does not apply when it is obstructing the pavement. Farcical.

Did the police believe that roads on new estates needed to be made wider? The District Commander agreed that when new housing was being planned consideration needed to be given to emergency vehicle access and parking issues. Ticketing motorists regularly would have a negative impact on the relationship between the police and community.

Were there any plans for more parking in the town? The Neighbourhood Services Manager advised that this was a national issue which the Government was considering as part of its Sustainable Communities programme.

A request was made that statistics relating to illegal parking prosecutions, particularly outside schools, be provided to a future meeting of the Forum. In relation to this the Parking Services Manager advised that previously the issuing of tickets had to be carried out at the time of the occurrence. However the Traffic Management Act, due to come into force in April 2008, allowed for retrospective prosecutions using CCTV.

The Chair thanked the Parking Services Manager for attending the meeting and answering questions.

<p>20. ANY ISSUES TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS AND RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES</p>

None

MARY FLEET
CHAIR