

CENTRAL AREA POLICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY CONSULTATIVE FORUM

at

**Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Victoria Road,
Hartlepool**

on

**Thursday, 17 March 2011
commencing at 2.00 pm**

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence
2. MINUTES
 - 2.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2011
 - 2.2 Matters arising.
3. Update from the Police
4. Update from the Fire Brigade
5. Anti-Social Behaviour Unit Update
6. Any Other Business Agreed by the Chair

WARDS

Burn Valley
Elwick
Foggy Furze
Grange
Park
Rift House
Stranton

***CENTRAL POLICE &
COMMUNITY SAFETY
CONSULTATIVE FORUM***

13 January 2011

MINUTES OF THE MEETING



The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre, Kendal Road, Hartlepool

PRESENT:

Chair: Councillor Kevin Cranney - Foggy Furze

Vice-Chair: Resident Representative Evelyn Leck

Councillor Gerard Hall	- Burn Valley Ward
Councillor Pauline Laffey	- Park Ward
Councillor Sarah Maness	- Grange Ward
Councillor Carl Richardson	- Grange Ward
Councillor Ray Wells	- Park Ward

Resident Representatives: Bob Farrow, Ted Jackson, Julie Rudge and Hilda Wales

Residents: Fred Corbett, C W Hopkins, Gordon & Stella Johnson and Ray Waller

Council Officers:

- Clare Clark, Neighbourhood Manager
- Brian Neale, Community Safety Manager
- Irene Cross, Neighbourhood Development Officer (Central)
- Carl Gatenby, Police Anti Social Behaviour Officer
- Julie Hetherington, Community Safety Assistant
- Peter Gouldsbro, Community Safety Officer
- Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

Police Representatives: Sgt Dave Halliday, PCSO Graeme Handley

Fire Brigade Representative: Peter Bradley

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were submitted by Councillors Frances London, George Morris, Robbie Payne, Chris Simmons and Gladys Worthy and Resident Representatives

Brenda Loynes, Steve Mailen and Noma Morrish

**19. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD
ON 11 NOVEMBER 2010**

Confirmed as a true record

20. MATTERS ARISING

None

21. UPDATE FROM THE POLICE

Sergeant Dave Halliday referred to a number of concerns which had been highlighted by residents in recent months as follows:

Visual Audits - Sergeant Halliday indicated that Chief Inspector Lynn Beeston had instructed that these would only be held in areas where they were felt to be of value. In the case of the Central area this meant the Foggy Furze visual audits would remain in place however the York Road meetings would be scrapped. Sergeant Halliday emphasised that officers were carrying out visual audits every time they left the office.

Policing in Middleton Grange Shopping Centre – Concerns had previously been raised at the high numbers of PCSOs being taken from their neighbourhood policing duties to police Middleton Grange Shopping Centre. Sergeant Halliday confirmed that this was still taking place and would continue until 31st March, although in a scaled down form from mid-February. The original intent had been to educate the existing security at the Shopping Centre, however the opposite effect had taken place and the PCSOs tended to take the place of the existing security. This was a concern that the District Commander was aware of. Abstraction statistics of 2.7% had previously been quoted however this did not take into account the fact that only officers in the central area were being taken away from their regular duties with officers from the north and south unaffected. Sergeant Halliday estimated an abstraction rate of 15%, saying he had lost 2 PCSOs permanently to this initiative. He acknowledged that the 2

operations (respect and shadow) had been successful but at a cost to neighbourhood policing. Shops in the Shopping Centre were being protected while smaller shops in the communities were being left vulnerable. Councillor Richardson felt that the police should be charging Middleton Grange for their services and would raise this as a suggestion at the next meeting of the Police Authority of which he was a member. Resident Representative Evelyn Leck referred to the abstraction figures previously given by District Commander Glen Gudgeon which were now being disputed. She suggested that the District Commander be invited to a future meeting of the forum to respond to these criticisms. Sergeant Halliday confirmed that he had raised concerns regarding officers being overstretched and potential crime displacement when the operation was first launched but had been told he was being negative. Councillor Pauline Laffey understood that the police had difficult decisions to make but the Shopping Centre was closed at night whereas people lived in their neighbourhoods 24/7. Resident Ray Waller moved that the Council's Police Authority representatives be asked to take this matter up particularly the unfair distribution of the work solely onto central PCSOs. Councillor Carl Richardson was in agreement but highlighted that the council did not control the police and if this was an operational matter there was little they could do about it. Councillor Ray Wells referred to a meeting he had attended with the District Commander and the robust argument which had been given in support of the initiative. If an arrest was made 2 officers could be off the streets for up to 3 days dealing with the aftermath. This was a preventative measure to keep officers on the beat. Sergeant Halliday acknowledged this but said his role as Sergeant of Neighbourhood Policing was to ensure people felt safe in their communities. The

Assistant Chief Constable was due to attend an open forum in Hartlepool on neighbourhood policing in February and Sergeant Halliday would feed back all the concerns raised here.

Sergeant Halliday then gave an overview for performance for December force wide and specific to Hartlepool. Instances of crime had fallen in all categories leading to a drop in total crime of over 20% for Cleveland and over 19% for Hartlepool. Details of performance in the Central area in relation to arrests, detections and incidents were given along with feedback on concerns previously raised by residents in relation to Dent Street, Baden Street and Hereford Street. A number of good news stories were highlighted.

Resident Representative Julie Rudge praised officers for their excellent work in combating drug crime

Resident Fred Corbett referred to plans to install CCTV at Stranton Cemetery saying a balance needed to be struck between spending money on CCTV and utilising PCSOs more. He also felt that the retention of personal data by Cleveland Police made people less inclined to report crime.

The Chair thanked Sergeant Halliday for attending the meeting and answering questions.

22. UPDATE FROM THE FIRE BRIGADE

Peter Bradley from Cleveland Fire Brigade gave an update on the number of fires which had occurred in the Central area between October and December 2010. Comparison figures with the same period 2009/10 showed no increase in any category of fire, with all remaining static or decreasing. There had been a drop in the number of home fire safety

visits but this was thought to be due to the inclement weather.

Mr Bradley also discussed various diversionary activities including the Rifty on Friday evenings. The Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) owned by the fire service had recently been deployed at the Thornton Street car park, leading to a 60% reduction in secondary fires and a 6.9% reduction in anti-social behaviour. The MUGA would be taken to different locations throughout the summer.

Resident Ray Waller asked what priority would be given to diversionary activities in the forthcoming budget cuts. The Neighbourhood Manager advised that funding for the Rifty, which came through the local Neighbourhood Action Plan and Central Joint Action Group, would disappear by the end of the year. The Council would support the administrators in their efforts to find alternative sources of funding. Given the huge success of the project they were felt to be in a strong position to apply for additional funding.

Mr Bradley also referred to visual audits saying he made every effort to get to as many as possible but could not attend them all.

The Chair thanked the Cleveland Fire Brigade Representative for attending the meeting.

23. UPDATE FROM THE ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR UNIT

The Police Anti-Social Behaviour Officer gave details of a number of initiatives which had been carried out by the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit recently. These included resident focus groups as part of the development of a new social behaviour strategy and a leaflet drop in the Dent Street area. The Unit had been heavily involved in the public multi-

agency meeting to tackle anti-social behaviour in the Linear Park area, resulting in the placing of 15 young people on Acceptable Behaviour Agreements and a dramatic decrease in complaints from local residents. Anti-social behaviour orders had also been obtained for disorder in the Baden Street area. There had been no further information regarding the possible scrapping of anti-social behaviour orders and they would therefore continue to be used.

Linear Park – Resident Ray Waller referred to the noise and disturbance caused by children and young people using this area at night. He highlighted the lack of suitable play facilities nearby and asked how these problems could be resolved. The Police Anti-Social Behaviour Officer felt it would be impossible to prevent young people from gathering together and more should be done to limit the impact on residents such as the provision of diversionary activities. The Neighbourhood Manager commented that children tended to play outside the park despite the park originally being designed as a place for children to play. Although residents had initially been reluctant to provide facilities within the park there was increasing recognition that this may be necessary. The possibility of a forecourt within the park was being looked at but would need to go through the planning process. The local residents were all fully supportive. Resident Fred Corbett felt that the Linear Park was not fit for purpose and had been designed by planning people who did not know what children wanted. However the Chair and others present advised that the park had been designed and implemented following detailed consultation with local residents. Resident Gordon Johnson suggested that high fencing be installed as a way to ensure children would be safe while playing.

Street games – Councillor Gerard Hall asked if there was a more informal way to deal with children playing in the street. He acknowledged that children needed to play but it was unacceptable if by doing so they caused damage to cars. The Police Anti-Social Behaviour Officer indicated that officers tended to speak to individuals and parents before the problem escalated. Police could deal with any issues of criminal damage, previously the council had byelaws but these had now ceased. Identifying the perpetrators remained one of the most problematic issues. Softballs were also provided as a replacement to footballs where appropriate. However Councillor Ray Wells felt this was not a satisfactory solution as it gave the impression that football on the highway was acceptable. The Police Anti-Social Behaviour Officer advised that this was certainly not a solution if children were playing football near cars and would depend on the specific location. The wishes of the residents were always taken into account.

25. UPDATE FROM THE CRIME AND DISORDER CO-ORDINATION UNIT

The Community Safety Manager offered his full support to the neighbourhood policing initiative and the good work being carried out around Hartlepool. He sympathised with some of the comments made previously regards current operations, saying that the ethos of neighbourhood policing was being debated locally at a senior level. He then went on to give details of the results of the 12 month Strategic Assessment review for the Crime and Disorder Co-ordination Unit which had recently been completed. Priorities for 2011/12 were highlighted, including alcohol treatment, criminal damage and confidence and cohesion. Details were also given of the new objectives of the unit for 2011-2014.

The Community Safety Manager updated those present on changes to the departmental structure, specifically the forthcoming retirement of the Assistant Director for Community Safety and Protection. The Assistant Director for Neighbourhood Services would take over her role in Community Safety.

Resident Fred Corbett referred to plans to install CCTV at Stranton Cemetery saying it would be preferable to have increased PCSO patrols. The Community Safety Officer advised that the security improvements to Stranton Cemetery involved 9 measures including CCTV and an increased police presence. The cameras would not be fixed and could therefore be moved out of the cemetery should the current situation improve.

The Chair highlighted an investigation being carried out by the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum into domestic violence and queried the percentage of attacks on men. The Community Safety Manager reported that these figures were very low.

The Chair thanked the Community Safety Manager for attending the meeting and answering questions.

26. ANY OTHER BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

Resident Fred Corbett highlighted the amount of dog dirt remaining in the streets following the snow melting. The Chair announced that there would be a town wide meeting on this and other dog control issues on Tuesday 8th February at the Civic Centre. He urged residents to let officers know details of any problem areas at this meeting.

The meeting concluded at 11:40 am

CHAIR