

**NORTH AREA POLICE AND
COMMUNITY SAFETY
CONSULTATIVE FORUM**
in
West View Community Centre, Miers Avenue
on
Wednesday 10th January, 2007
commencing at 10am.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence
2. **MINUTES**
 - (a) To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 6th September, 2006.
 - (b) Matters arising.
3. Update from the Police
4. Update from Cleveland Fire Brigade
5. Presentation on the new Security Guard Contract – Community Safety Team
6. Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy – Community Safety Team
7. Update on Neighbourhood Policing and the Joint Action Group (JAGs) - Police
8. Public Question Time.
9. Any issues to be raised by Councillors and Resident Representatives.
10. Any other business agreed by the Chairman.

WARDS

Brus
Dyke House
Hart
St Hilda
Throston

***NORTH POLICE &
COMMUNITY SAFETY
CONSULTATIVE FORUM***

**6th September
2006**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT:

Chair: Councillor Rob Cook – Hart Ward

Vice Chair: Mary Power – Resident Representative

Councillor Derek Allison - St Hilda Ward
Councillor Caroline Barker - Hart Ward
Councillor Mary Fleet - Dyke House Ward
Councillor Sheila Griffin - Brus Ward
Councillor John Marshall - St Hilda Ward
Councillor Jane Shaw - Dyke House Ward
Councillor Denis Waller - Brus Ward
Councillor Edna Wright - Hart Ward

Residents: Pat Andrews, John Cambridge, Cal Carruthers-Watt, Mr Cooke, B Steel, Joan Steel, Cath Torley, Liz Torley, Alan Vale and Dennis Wilson

Officers: Karen Oliver, Town Care Manager – Customer Services Central
Sally Forth, Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator
Ken Natt, Landlord Registration Officer
Joanne Burnley, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

Cleveland Police Representatives: Inspector Alastair Simpson, Sergeant Lynn Beeston, Mark O'Brien

Cleveland Fire Brigade Representative; George Pendlington

10. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed residents, Councillors, Council Officers and

representatives from Cleveland Police and Fire Brigade..

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Steve Allison and Resident Representatives Ted Lee, John Lynch and Linda Shields.

12. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2006 were confirmed.

Matters arising – A Councillor asked if a message of condolence had been sent to the family the late Resident Representative Jim Hastings. The Chair confirmed a letter had been despatched on behalf of the Forum.

13. POLICE UPDATE ON NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Inspector Alastair Simpson gave an update on Neighbourhood Policing which had been launched on 3rd April 2006. This involved a named PC and PCSO being assigned to each ward, weekly ward surgeries, greater visibility by police and a single point of contact telephone number of 01429 235811. Details were given of the background and key principles of the initiative and members were advised of a number of successful interventions in the North area. Analysis of crime statistics from April to July 2006 showed that total crime had dropped by 11% since the launch.

The following issues were then raised:

- A Councillor asked if the statistics related to reported crime only. Inspector Simpson confirmed that this was the case but the British Crime Survey Comparator, which highlighted the disparity between actual crime and the fear of crime, showed a 39% drop in the fear of crime. He urged anyone who had

been a victim of crime to report it to the police as nothing could be done otherwise. Inspector Simpson highlighted the 45.1% detection rate currently held by Hartlepool Police, which he described as “unprecedented” and the highest ever in Cleveland.

- A Councillor queried the reported 7% drop in violent crime, saying it seemed to be increasing where she lived. She also questioned the assertion that police were attending public meetings in the Dyke House area and referred to the need for signatures to get into the Avondale Centre as some people wanted to remain anonymous. Inspector Simpson advised that signatures were a necessity for health and safety reasons but felt there could be a way round this.
- A Councillor praised the female officer in her ward for her ability to connect with local children and her more visible presence.
- A Councillor asked how victims of crime could be made to feel safer when reporting it to the police. Many people felt that if they reported crime they could be targeted for retribution by the perpetrators and this led to crimes going unreported. Inspector Simpson advised that in the majority of cases people found reporting crime to be a safe experience and there were a number of options available to people who felt this had not been the case. Officers could be adaptable and visit people's homes out of uniform if requested. He reiterated the need for people to report crime as this was the only way it could be dealt with.

- Residents advised that the dedicated number telephonists had been unable to help with queries on occasion. Inspector Simpson requested that details be e-mailed to him.
- A Councillor praised police officers in the Brus Ward as working exceptionally well. Residents were happy to be seen walking with officers. He went on to ask if the closure of houses and displacement of people in the Dyke House ward had made policing in that area more problematic. The Neighbourhood Manager advised that evidence from the Central Hartlepool Partnership showed very little displacement out of wards.
- A resident highlighted an incident on Davison Drive where he felt the police had failed to curb anti-social behaviour. Inspector Simpson said this was very disappointing but would like to think it was an isolated incident. He asked for the details to be given to him after the meeting. A councillor reiterated the previous comments made about the Brus Ward PCSOs and invited the resident to accompany councillors and police on their next walkabout in the area.
- A Councillor reported anti-social behaviour in Nicholson Way and Fulthorpe Avenue. Inspector Simpson asked for details after the meeting.

The Chair drew members' attention to a meeting of the Cleveland Criminal Justice Board. This would take place on 17th October from 2pm at the Historic Quay and was open to the public. He thanked Inspector

Simpson for his presentation and for answering questions.

14. UPDATE FROM CLEVELAND FIRE BRIGADE

Station Officer George Pendlington gave a brief presentation and circulated information on fire calls and comparisons between 2005 and 2006. There had been a drop in the number of vehicle fires, house fire (deliberate and accidental) and fires where damage to property had occurred. However the number of small fires (eg rubbish etc) and malicious false alarm calls had increased and this meant the number of total calls in the North area had gone up by 7.

Station Officer Pendlington went on to give probable reasons for these increases and made reference to the safety Improvement Plan which had recently been approved.

The following issues were then raised:

- The Chair asked how fire officers dealt with anti-social behaviour when they were responding to an incident. Station Officer Pendlington advised that they would work with the police in trying to resolve the situation there and then. However if the situation was extreme (eg missiles) or the fire was of a minor nature (eg a bonfire) then fire officers had the option to leave the scene.
- A Councillor asked how many malicious calls resulted in the despatch of appliances. Station Officer Pendlington advised that the telephone operators could usually tell which calls were genuine and which were hoaxes. If there was any doubt the hoax

callers would be phoned back with a warning. However if there was any uncertainty as to the authenticity of the call it would be treated as genuine.

The Chair thanked Station Officer Pendlington for his presentation and for answering questions.

15. BONFIRES

The Neighbourhood Manager advised that the issue of bonfires was on the agenda of the Arson Reduction Team meeting that afternoon. A framework strategy to tackle the problem would be drawn up and she suggested that the item be put on hold until this had been formulated. The Chair requested feedback from the meeting.

A councillor asked that a temporary strategy be put in place before 5th November 2006. This could then be improved upon for the future. This was something of massive concern to residents therefore areas specifically designated for bonfires were needed, as well as controls on the sale and use of fireworks. Councillors also raised concerns about the length of time it had taken for this issue to come before the forum. The number of meetings per year was queried but members were advised that a total of three meetings had been agreed between the three Chairs previously.

The Chair requested that the appropriate officer take the comments of the forum on this issue be forwarded on to the Arson Reduction Team meeting later that day.

16. SELECTIVE LICENSING OF PRIVATE LANDLORDS – PRESENTATION BY THE LANDLORD REGISTRATION OFFICER

The Landlord Registration Officer gave a presentation on the proposed Selective Licensing of Private Landlords initiative. It was explained that this allowed local authorities to require private landlords in designated areas to be licensed, with the aim of improving the standard of management of housing in the private sector.

Details were given of when and where selective licensing would be applicable, licence requirements and enforcement powers officers would have. Members were advised that consultation would continue to the end of September, the results of which would be reported to Cabinet before the end of the year. The following issues were then raised:

- A Councillor questioned how the proposed initiative would make existing laws stronger. She cited the example of a resident who had been plagued by anti-social neighbours for a year before being forced to leave her home. The Landlord Registration Officer advised that this particular case was a matter for the Police and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit. Selective Licensing of Private Landlords would deal with the management of the property rather than anti-social tenants. However landlords would be expected to ask for references for prospective tenants and if these were not good and the landlord disregarded this then questions might be asked about their management capabilities. However once the tenant was in residence any subsequent problems were a matter for the police.
- A Councillor highlighted the problem of agencies dealing with a number of properties being notorious for putting any tenants

in. The Landlord Registration Officer advised that under Selective Licensing they would be putting their entire portfolio of properties at risk.

- A Resident Representative asked if there was a policy compelling landlords to inspect their properties regularly. The Landlord Registration Officer advised that there was not but this could be considered as part of the consultation.
- A Resident queried how the process would work if the landlord did not live near their property. The Landlord Registration Officer advised that the licence holder had to be the most appropriate person for the role and if they did not live in close proximity to their properties this may not be the case.

The Chair thanked the Landlord Registration Officer for the presentation and for answering questions.

17 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY – PRESENTATION BY ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR CO-ORDINATOR

The Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator gave a presentation on the proposed Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy for Hartlepool. Details were given of the following

- Mission Statement
- Strategic objective 2005/8
- Local Area agreement commitment
- Task Group action plan
- RESPECT agenda
- Supporting families
- Strengthening communities

- Effective enforcement and community justice
- Legal powers
- Resources

Members were advised as to the anti-social issues which concerned people the most, with dogs and dog mess being top of the list. It was anticipated that the draft strategy would be in place by the end of October and finalised by December.

The following issues were then raised:

- A Councillor questioned the low number of anti-social behaviour orders which had been handed out in the last year – eight in Hartlepool whereas many more had been handed out in Stockton and Middlesbrough. The Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator advised that Anti-Social Behaviour Orders were only a small part of the response to anti-social behaviour. There was no direct correlation between increasing the number of Orders and reducing the fear of crime.
- A Councillor referred to the perceived reward culture whereby badly behaved children seemed to be given more things than well behaved children. Where was the incentive to behave in these cases? The Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator acknowledged this but advised that it was beyond her remit.

The Chair thanked the Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator for her presentation and for answering questions.

18. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions at this time.

**19. ISSUES RAISED BY
COUNCILLORS AND RESIDENT
REPRESENTATIVES**

No issues were raised at this time

ROB COOK

CHAIRMAN