

Item 7b

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

AREA 2 FORUM

Community Centre,
West Cornforth

Tuesday,
7 September 2004

Time: 6.30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Mrs. C. Potts (Chairman) – Sedgefield Borough Council and

Councillor T.F. Forrest	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor J.E. Higgin	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor A. Hodgson	–	Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillor A. Denholm	–	Cornforth Parish Council
Councillor L. Ord	–	Cornforth Parish Council
Sergeant K. Vincent	–	Durham Constabulary
S. Gater	–	Ferryhill Business and Enterprise College
Councillor Mrs.P. Crathorne	–	Ferryhill Town Council
Mrs. B. Richardson	–	Neighbourhood Watch
Dr. A. Learmonth	–	Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
Mrs. S. Slaughter	–	Sedgefield Primary Care Trust
P. Forrest	–	Local Resident

In

Attendance: Miss S. Billingham, A. Blakemore and D. Scarr

Apologies: Councillors B.F. Avery J.P., Mrs. K. Conroy, B. Meek, D. A. Newell, R.A. Patchett and Mrs. M. Predki – Sedgefield Borough Council
Councillors J. Lee and V. Collinson – Chilton Parish Council
Councillor G. Porter – Durham County Council
Inspector S. Winship – Durham Constabulary

AF(2)7/04

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (For copy see file of Minutes).

AF(2)8/04

POLICE REPORT

Sergeant K. Vincent was present at the meeting to give details of crime figures and local initiatives for the Chilton, Ferryhill, West Cornforth and Bishop Middleham areas.

Members noted that the crime statistics were as follows :

	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Sept.</u>
Total No. of Crimes	21 (94)	105	126	6
Dwelling Burglary	0 (4)	8	10	0
Att. Burglary - Dwelling	0 (0)	0	10	0
Burglary Other	3 (8)	16	20	0
Violence Against Persons(Assaults)	6 (10)	13	3	1
Theft of Motor Vehicles	1 (4)	6	0	0
Theft from Motor Vehicles	5 (9)	7	10	1
Attempted Thefts from Motor Vehicles	0 (1)	1	0	0
Theft - General	9 (21)	17	21	1
Drug/Substance Misuse	0 (0)	1	0	0
Criminal Damage	16 (47)	36	52	3
Youths Causing Annoyance	20 (84)	83	72	13
Motorcycle complaints (Total for 2003-4)	0 (5)	3	1	1
Total No. of Incidents	154 (606)	647	708	61
Total No. of Arrest	6 (48)	61	64	2

The Forum was given details of Operation Ballade, which had been ongoing for a number of months to deal with racial problems and Operation Literature, which had been set up to tackle the problem of anti social behaviour.

Sgt Vincent explained that the Police had encountered problems over the holiday period regarding school children going missing from home. It was hoped that discussions could take place between the Police and the Schools to highlight the dangers of children going places without letting people know, to prevent the problem reoccurring next year.

AF(2)9/04

SEDGEFIELD PRIMARY CARE TRUST

Dr. A. Learmonth attended the meeting to give an update on recent performance figures and local health matters.

Dr. Learmonth reported that Gloria Wills had been appointed as the Chairman of the PCT and Mrs. Agnes Armstrong and Mr. David Halladay as Non Executive Directors to the Board.

Specific reference was made to the appointment of a person who had made visits to local surgeries to check on the performance in relation to access to a GP. The exercise had found that all surgeries visited were able to offer an appointment within one day, which had relieved the concerns of the PCT.

Members of the Forum reported that there were still problems in relation to access. Patients who attended Chilton Surgery needed to

visit Ferryhill Surgery if an urgent appointment was required.

A. Learmonth reported that she would not be able to attend the next meeting, however she would ask N. Porter to investigate the matter and report back.

Discussion was held in relation to support for drug users. It was suggested that the collection of methadone from local chemists was not the most ideal situation. It was explained that the introduction of LIFT would reassess the needs of the community and look for a preferred method of supplying provisions. There were five GPs now in post, who were specifically trained to deal with drug issues in the area. There was, however, not sufficient support for those suffering from alcohol abuse.

It was reported that a sub-group of the Crime and Disorder Group had been formed, which would be working with Sedgefield Borough Council, Sedgefield PCT and the Police to identify and support those who needed it. A. Learmonth agreed to keep the Forum updated regarding its work.

A draft report, "Alcohol Needs Assessment in County Durham" was distributed at the meeting.

It was reported that performance was still poor regarding the response time for ambulance requests. A meeting would be taking place between the Ambulance Trust and the Chief Executive to prepare a report. Details of which would be reported to a future meeting.

It was explained that the out-of-hours service would be going live at the beginning of December. Saturday surgeries would cease and patients would be expected to use the Urgent Care Centre at Bishop Auckland Hospital. It was pointed out that not everyone had transport or could travel. Members of the Forum also expressed their disappointment regarding the decline in home visits.

A. Learmonth invited those present at the meeting, to attend the Annual Board Meeting, which was to be held on Thursday 9th September 2004 at 1.30 p.m. in the Jubilee Lounge, Chilton Workingmens Club. Copies of the Annual Report would be distributed at the meeting and attendees would have an opportunity to raise concerns and ask questions.

AF(2)10/04

NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN SERVICES

D. Scarr, Head of Neighbourhood Services attended the meeting to give a presentation regarding the new Neighbourhood Warden Service.

It was explained that Sedgefield Borough Council had invested significantly in the Community Safety Service over the past decade. The Service's achievements included the development of the Community Force, the establishment of Sedgefield Borough Community Safety Partnership and the creation of the Community Care Force Centre, which included a combined CCTV and Community Alarm function.

It was reported that in early 2003, Holden McAllister Partnership had been commissioned by the Borough Council to undertake an independent review of the Council's Community Safety Service. The report confirmed that Community Safety continued to be seen as a priority for residents of the Borough and concluded that whilst the development of the Sedgefield Borough Crime and Disorder Partnership had provided a framework for strategic intervention by partner organisations, the development of a Community Safety Strategy specifically for the Borough Council was a logical next step.

With regard to the operational elements of the service, the report acknowledged that the development of the Community Force during the 1990s had been a bold and innovative step. The Community Force had been one of the first schemes used to inform the national development of Neighbourhood and Street Warden initiatives and latterly, the Police Community Support Officers initiative. The report concluded, however, that although the Community Force as a concept was pioneering, it now needed to refocus and together with the CCTV function, be set within the Corporate Strategy.

It was explained that the service re-engineering would begin with Community Force Officers being re-designated Neighbourhood Wardens, with an increased emphasis on community engagement/public re-assurance, creating stronger links with Neighbourhood Management by targeting areas of greatest need, having powers to issue fixed penalty notices and operating flexible working patterns in response to need.

It was pointed out that the transition was supported by the recent Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Neighbourhood Renewal Unit national evaluation of the Neighbourhood Wardens Programme the evaluation recognised the unique role Neighbourhood Wardens played in neighbourhood renewal and recorded the overriding message from the evaluation that in successful schemes Neighbourhood Wardens can and were having an impact in areas of increased resident satisfaction, reduced fear of crime particularly for older people, decline in overall rates of crime, perceived improvements in environmental problems and contributing to tackling anti-social behaviour. In fact, the ODPM evaluation did commend Sedgefield Borough Council's existing Neighbourhood Warden Scheme that operated at Dean Bank, Ferryhill and West Ward, Newton Aycliffe in their efforts to reduce youth disorder and anti-social behaviour by engaging young people in a number of innovative initiatives.

The re-engineered Sedgefield Borough Council Neighbourhood Warden Service included features identified by the ODPM evaluation as common in schemes that were working well such as having a tailored and flexible approach, involving a wide variety of stakeholders including resident participation, active and represented steering groups, good management, partnership based, highly visible, targeted deployment based on need and having good quality and well trained staff. Neighbourhood Wardens would be community based although

provision would be made for a central mobile response, including the out-of-hours service up to 10 p.m. and targeted joint working between the Wardens as a team and with others such as Police, Environmental Protection Officers, Neighbourhood Management, Housing Management and Tenancy Enforcement. The Wardens would work with Resident Groups and Schools and provide re-assurance to vulnerable groups.

Deployment of the thirteen Neighbourhood Wardens within the local communities had been determined by development of a matrix of needs taking account of population, levels of deprivation, recorded crime and anti-social behaviour, Council housing stock numbers, priority areas amongst older private sector housing, NRF and other partnership funding and other services operating within the area. Based upon the above assessment Neighbourhood Wardens would be deployed within the five management areas across the Borough targeting communities of greatest need. Deployment according to the needs based assessment matrix would be kept under regular view and any adjustments would be made accordingly.

It was noted that the Council would have access to the Airwaves digital radio communications system used by Durham Constabulary to promote joint working and information flow between Police Headquarters/Officers and the CCTV Control Rooms and Neighbourhood Wardens.

The Forum was also informed that a Council's CCTV service was programmed to be reviewed in the final quarter of 2004, and a Community Safety Strategy for Sedgefield Borough was being developed, which would take account of the changing external environment and link Council services to the strategic directions set by Government Office, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnership.

It was pointed out that an article regarding the introduction of the Neighbourhood Warden Service would be included in the October edition of Inform and arrangements were being made for the new Warden to hand deliver leaflets regarding their services to every household in the Borough.

Specific reference was made to the establishment of the Neighbourhood Warden Steering Group. The Group would include representatives from the Boroughs five Area Forums. It would meet on a quarterly basis, monitor and review performance and be involved in service planning. The Forum agreed that consideration would be given to the nomination of a representative from Area 2 Forum at the next meeting of the Forum.

AF(2)11/04

LOCAL ROAD SAFETY ISSUES

Questions were raised as to why the Minutes of the Ferryhill Working Party on Road Safety were attached. Members also expressed concern that there were no such meetings established for the areas of Chilton

and West Cornforth. It was suggested that clarification be sought and conveyed to the next meeting.

AF(2)12/04

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 2nd November, 2004 at Ferryhill Leisure Centre.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Sarah Billingham, Telephone No : Spennymoor 816166 ext. 4240