

**Community Conversation Battle Hill Ward  
Church of the Good Shepherd  
Wednesday 20 November**

**Notes of the meeting**

**Councillors and officers present:** Cllr Dave McGarr (Chair), Cllr Lesley Spillard, Felicity Shoesmith (Engagement Team), Ian Whitfield (Engineering), Steven Harvey (Engineering), Martin Craddock (Planning), Jacki Palmer (Planning), Paul Cook (Environment), Anne Foreman (Engagement Team), PCSO Mark Mather.

14 residents

**Apologies:** Cllr Carl Johnson

**Welcome:**

Cllr McGarr opened the meeting welcoming everyone to the first Community Conversation for the Battle Hill Ward. These are part of a new way of engaging with residents.

**Flooding:**

An update was given by Ian Whitfield from Capita. Over the past few years we have seen an increase in the effect of flooding, on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2012 over 900 properties right across North Tyneside were flooded.

We have been working hard to develop ways of reducing the risk of flooding to peoples' properties. The Council have invested over £4 million on reducing the risk of flooding to residents' homes and this will result in over 80 different schemes, including 5 major schemes. As well as engineering solutions we have improved gulley cleaning and have been working more closely with other partners, including Northumbria Water.

Question I am concerned about new housing developments and the increased risk of flooding these cause to existing properties, particularly the developments at Scaffold Hill and Holystone.

Response Currently there is uncontrolled water coming off this land. The developers have to make sure they build in ways to hold water following heavy rains / snow melt and reduce water flow. Development will not increase any flooding risks and in many causes will reduce it, however this has not always been the case as this has received greater focus over the past few years. Prior to planning permission being granted Northumbria Water will also look at any plans to make sure that the system can manage any changes in water flow.

Question Have you been working with Northumbria Water in this area?

Response Yes, Northumbria Water have been doing some survey work in this area and this has resulting in some issues that we will be working together to address.

Question I am concerned about the overall size of the drains – they cannot cope.

Response The drains are subject to surveying work to make sure that they can

cope; this has included more clearing out of drains and taking account of a holistic solution that reduces risks across the whole system. Recent changes in legislation mean that the Council is now the Flooding Authority, they have a responsibility to ensure holistic solutions. In North Tyneside this is overseen by a surface water partnership that includes Northumbria Water, Environment Agency and Capita.

Question I still worry about the Scaffold Hill development

Response The developers have included additional ponds as part of this development. This has two main advantages: they hold water following heavy rains and also have a wildlife benefit.

### **North Tyneside Local Plan**

Martin Craddock and Jackie Palmer gave a short presentation explaining about the local plan.

This is currently out for consultation, everyone will receive a leaflet with information on the consultation, this includes information on how people can respond.

Question Is the government saying how much of the green field sites should be protected?

Response There are no strict guidelines, just that each council should look to have a good mix

Question That means that the council could build everywhere?

Response The government have passed the main responsibility down to local authorities, the North Tyneside Local Plan will give us better control of what can be developed, this is because it has included a high level of community engagement. The plan will guide planning approvals over the next 15 years. The proposed sites do focus on brown field sites, however it is not always possible to build on these and we have also included some green field sites. This is a public consultation and we really do want to know what people think.

Cllr Spillard You might be wondering why the government think that we need to build 16,000 new homes. They have developed this by looking at the population size and the projected growth in population. By working with Newcastle and Northumberland we have been able to reduce down the number of houses we need to build in North Tyneside to between 10,500 and 12,000.

Without a Local Plan in place the developers can identify any sites and we have little control, the plan gives us more control of where development takes place.

Part of the challenge is balancing development with wanting to keep green open space, it really is very important that people give their views on the proposals set out.

The Mayor and Cabinet lead for Housing are clear that they want more affordable housing, so part of the plan includes up to 3000 affordable homes. This will be mixed with other tenure, this works much better than building estates all of affordable housing.

Cllr Please can I encourage people to participate in this consultation

McGarr

### Open questions

Question Are the rates going up next year?

Response The budget has not been decided, but I think it is very unlikely.

Question There is a problem with cars parked in Hadrian Park, on the junction with Canterbury Ave and Addington Drive, I am really concerned that there will be a car accident here, could the road marking be changed?

Cllr We will ask the Highways team to look at this and get you a response  
McGarr (Anne this needs to be a members enquiry)

Question Why does the council not collect the grass when it cuts it – this is a particular problem on some paths?

Response The council does collect the grass around sheltered housing schemes, but it does not have the resources to collect it everywhere. However if it does go across paths this should be reported and the environmental services team will go out to do something about it.

If any resident sees a problem where the cut grass is on the pavement and is causing a hazard, please could they either contact their ward councillors who will report it or phone Envirolink on 0345 2000 104

Question Do you still have environmental services wardens?

Response Yes, but not as many as we used to. We do want to encourage residents to phone in and let us know if there is a problem.

Question Is there a charge for the collection of bulky waste, has this increased fly tipping?

Response Yes there is a charge of £10 per item, introducing the charge has not led to a big increase in fly tipping.

Cllr We have Mark who is the Community Support Officer from Northumbria  
McGarr Police here today – does anyone have any questions for him?

Question I never see any police walking around on Hadrian Park.

Response That is my patch and I do try to get out when ever I can, but I do tend to concentrate on areas where issues have been identified.

Question How many neighbourhood officers do you have for this area?

Response Unfortunately the 2 neighbourhood officers are currently on restricted duties.

Cllr I would like to record that I would like to ensure that Battle Hill receives  
Spillard more on the ground support, officers on restricted duty are not able to be out and about as much I would like them to be.

### Close

Cllr Dave McGarr closed the meeting reminding people that there will be a Mayors Listening Session in Battle Hill from 7-9pm on Thursday 27 February at Battle Hill Primary School.