

**St Mary's, Whitley Bay, Monkseaton North and Monkseaton South
Elected Mayor Listens Event**

Note

24 February 2016

Present: Norma Redfearn, Elected Mayor
Councillors Carole Burdis, Eddie Darke, John Harrison,
Bruce Pickard, Lesley Spillard, John Stirling, Alison Waggott-Fairley,
Pam McIntyre, Sandra Graham, Margaret Hall, John O'Shea,
Alison Austin, Paul Mason, Les Miller and Davey Drummond

Also in attendance:

Malcolm Frazer, Highways Team, Capita
Anne-Marie Chesterfield, Training Officer
Graham Sword, Regeneration Team
Acting Superintendent Steve Readdie, Northumbria Police
Sergeant Dave Foy, Northumbria Police

Apologies: Councillor Ray Glindon

Councillor Carole Burdis, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She outlined the 'housekeeping' arrangements before introducing the Elected Mayor.

The Elected Mayor explained that the aim of these events was to bring the Elected Mayor and Cabinet into the community to talk to residents about what is happening in their area.

At this point, those Cabinet Members present introduced themselves and outlined their responsibilities.

Acting Superintendent Steve Readdie and Sergeant Dave Foy, Northumbria Police, introduced themselves.

Dementia Friends

Anne-Marie Chesterfield, Training Officer, gave a presentation on how to become a Dementia Friend in the community. She explained the aims of Dementia Friends and outlined the key messages that people needed to know about dementia. A short film was also shown and an interactive activity undertaken.

Road Resurfacing

Malcolm Frazer, Highways Team, Capita, gave a presentation on road resurfacing in the area. He outlined the different stages of the programme which were 1) localised

repairs; 2) planned patching programme; 3) micro-asphalt resurfacing programme; and 4) full resurfacing programme.

Mr Frazer answered various questions from residents and stated that he would follow up on the following issues that were raised:

- i) Inspecting the condition of the footpath between Duke Street and Alnwick Avenue;
- ii) Investigating a resident's concern about back lanes in the area being used as rat races;
- iii) Inspecting the condition of Seatonville Road.

In relation to a query about the publication of the Annual Parking Enforcement report, the Elected Mayor said that Councillor John Harrison would follow this up.

Mr Frazer agreed to meet with a resident at the conclusion of the meeting regarding the recent injuries the resident had sustained due to a fall.

Regeneration Update

Graham Sword, Regeneration Team, gave a presentation on various schemes including the Seafront Master Plan; St Mary's Lighthouse; Northern Promenade; Land Train; the Spanish City; a Premier Inn development opposite the Spanish City; The Avenue; Central Lower Promenade; Whisky Bends and Highpoint & Eastcliffe.

Mr Sword answered various questions from residents and stated that he would follow up on the following issues that were raised:

- i) Forwarding images relating to the Spanish City development to a resident who had requested them;
- ii) Clarification on the number of visitors to the area broken down between tourists and people working here (e.g. contractors).

Open Question Time

The floor was opened up to questions from residents. The following questions were asked:

1) Council Houses

With the Government intent on getting rid of council houses altogether, can you tell me what the current stock of council houses is in North Tyneside, and what the stock was at its peak?

Councillor John Harrison replied as follows:

Prior to the Right to Buy Scheme being introduced in 1980 the Council had a stock of 31,000 homes. Since Right to Buy was introduced the Council's housing stock is now 15,021.

2) One Way Restrictions – Park View and Park Avenue Area

I live in the rat run of the one way system between Park View and Park Avenue. Several times a day there are cars going the wrong way in our one way street, Park Parade. In 2014 I asked a Police Officer on the beat if anything could be done about this. He made enquiries back at the Police Station and got back to me to tell me that the signage in the street was incorrect and if anyone was charged with an offence they would get off on the technicality because of the incorrect signage. On one of Labour Listens last year I spoke to Councillor Sandra Graham about this. She made a note of this and a few days later I got an email to say she had referred it to the correct department of the Council. So far nothing has changed and cars still come down the street the wrong way. This can cause chaos and a lot of temper tantrums from these drivers if they meet a car coming up the right way. Can this ever be addressed or should we just go back to the old way when the streets were two way and the traffic was slower? PS My husband wonders why we have 20 mph signs around Whitley Bay as very few people seem to take any notice of them.

Councillor John Harrison replied as follows:

I am aware of this issue for two reasons – firstly through this question and secondly through contact with Councillor Sandra Graham. I have asked officers if the signage and markings are correct. They are. The issue is that some drivers are failing to comply with the one way system. I have asked officers to have another look at this as we recognise it is difficult for the police to monitor 20mph zones. When officers monitored Whitley Bay the information received indicated that the speeds conformed to the guidelines for 20mph zones so this seemed to be the right place to implement the restriction. However, I have asked officers to have another look at the 20mph zone and the one way system and report back to the Ward Councillors.

Sergeant Dave Foy also replied as follows:

These issues do come up from time to time. We will direct patrols in that area to educate rather than enforce. We will organise some high profile visits to determine, for example, if the drivers are local and will give appropriate advice. We will work with our colleagues in Speed Enforcement. We have a graded response in terms of visibility, educating etc. Once a spot has been identified we can use camera enforcement although we do have to consider issues such as location of the camera, etc.

3) Parked Vehicles causing Obstruction

I have raised this issue with Sergeant Foy before. Are the police dealing with the issue of parked vehicles causing obstructions to pedestrians and moving traffic?

Sergeant Dave Foy replied as follows:

Parking is shared between the Local Authority and the Police. The Police can step in where an obstruction is caused and remove the vehicle where there is a danger.

4) Beach Huts

In relation to the provision of 20 beach huts as part of the Coastal Regeneration Plan does the Mayor support beach huts being provided as visitor accommodation and can she assure me that the terms of the 90 year lease will clearly state the use will be for visitor accommodation and that sub leasing will not be allowed?

The Elected Mayor replied as follows:

I will seek clarification on this and will get back in touch.

5) Fencing

On my walks with my grandson up Monkseaton Drive to school I really appreciated the summer flowers. However, on 11 February I was shocked to see a fence in front of the daffodils. I was told the fence should have been on the other side but the residents of Beaumont Drive did not want it there. I phoned Ian Lillie who told me that St Mary's Ward were paying for this. I was told that one of the issues was that children were cutting across and making dens. I am not aware of this. Everyone is appalled and this has now been stopped. This could attract graffiti and could cause a danger by blocking views.

Councillor Pam McIntyre replied as follows:

The fence was erected by the contractor in the wrong place. Residents of The Chesters and Clifton Grove have complained for many years. Various things have been tried over the years. For example, bushes and plants were planted but they were trampled on. We put out leaflets to residents as a result of which it was agreed to have a fence. However the fence was stopped as it was in the wrong place. We have put leaflets out today to residents to see if they want the fence where it is or moved or have no fence at all.

6) Devolution

I understand that talks are ongoing with the Government regarding devolution of the Authorities within the North East Combined Authority. What is the timetable and date for formal signing? Will there be a vote by Council and will there be any further consultation?

The Elected Mayor replied as follows:

No date has been set yet as discussions are still ongoing with Ministers about governance. Durham and Northumberland will be discussing this at their respective Cabinet meetings. This issue will go to Council for discussion. There will be consultation.

7) Balustrades

Has the Council made the right decision to replace the balustrades in light of Government cuts, Council Tax increase and job losses?

The Elected Mayor replied as follows:

The decision to replace the balustrades will stand. So many people are passionate about them. There is provision in the budget so I will not be going back on this decision.

The Elected Mayor thanked residents, staff and speakers for their attendance. She thanked Acting Superintendent Steve Readdie and Sergeant Dave Foy from Northumbria Police for their attendance.

In closing, the Elected Mayor stated that she hoped residents found such meetings worthwhile as a positive open dialogue.