

## **Home Safety Association**

A meeting of the Stockton Home Safety Association was held on Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2006.

**Present:** Councillor Mrs Cains (Chairman); Councillor Dixon and Roberts; Mrs G Corking (DNS); P Dix (Cleveland Fire Authority); Mrs T Harrison (LD); F Russell (DNS) and J Thomson (Wolviston Parish Council).

**Apologies for absence** were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Wade, C Snowdon (DNS), D Turton (Cleveland Fire Brigade); Inspector Thornton and Sergeant Challow (Cleveland Police); Mr Menell, Mr Jarvis and Mr N Thomson.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2005 were agreed as a correct record.

### **Matters Arising**

Members discussed the proposed dates and times of the remaining meetings of the Municipal Year 2005/06.

CONCLUDED that meetings of the Home Safety Association would take place on 20<sup>th</sup> March and 11<sup>th</sup> April 2006, which would be held at 1.30pm.

### ID Cards

Members discussed ID cards and were advised by the Secretary that there was no further information to provide at the time, however, it was her intention to have spoken with a representative from Stockton Blind Peoples Voice, requesting their input into ways of improving the Council's ID badges in time for the following meeting.

CONCLUDED that the Secretary would speak with a representative from Stockton Blind Peoples Voice requesting their input into how Stockton Borough Council could improve ID badges, enabling the visually impaired and blind to read the cards and identify the individual who work for the Council.

### Addition of Police to agenda front sheet

The Secretary requested members' opinion related to including a Police Officer as a permanent addition to the officers who would provide reports to the Home Safety Association as it was observed that the Safer Stockton Partnership Group already existed which dealt with all Police matters.

CONCLUDED that the Police Officer would be included on the agenda front sheet for all future meetings.

### **Trading Standards Report**

A Trading Standards Officer was pleased to advise Members that there had been no illegal sales of fireworks and due to a change of legislation, those wishing to sell fireworks all the year round were required to pay a fee of £500.

There had also been no sales of cigarettes; however there had been six sales of alcohol to under age children since Christmas with the worst offenders being supermarkets.

Trading Standards had investigated a sauna belt, which had caught alight and burned the person wearing the belt. Members were also advised that an adaptor, which had been purchased for his stall by a market trader from a wholesaler had exploded, however Trading Standards had not been able to investigate further due to the fact that the wholesaler had gone bankrupt.

Members were advised that Trading Standards had investigated an incident involving a man who had purchased a knife from a supermarket, whilst attempting to cut up some cheese the knife broke and cut his hand.

The Trading Standards Officer advised the current test undertaken on knives was not sufficient as the test merely secured the handle whilst pulling the tip of the blade. The Trading Standards Officer expressed a desire to see tests involving the slicing of items.

The Trading Standards Officer advised that he wished for the ID of their voluntary under age buyers to be changed as the current ID caused confusion to shopkeepers. The IDs currently produced showed the child's correct date of birth on the back, however, as their photograph was on the front many shopkeepers assumed that the child was eighteen or over due to the nature of the ID card.

Members were provided with a 'doorsteppers' update from Trading Standards who advised that Redcar and Cleveland had introduced a barring of all cold callers in the area.

The Trading Standards Officer expressed a desire for all employees of the Council to see the doorsteppers DVD.

The Trading Standards Officer clarified that if residents wished for an individual or company to undertake work of any nature the service provider would be required to enter into a contract with the resident.

The Trading Standards Officer observed if residents were bothered by cold callers they could take the registration number of the caller's vehicle and report it to the Police. It was observed that Trading Standards did not have a direct link with the DVLA therefore they were not able to be of assistance to residents due to the length of time it would take to obtain the information. Trading Standards were of the opinion that all services that dealt with issues such as cold callers should be linked, including their databases, therefore avoiding unnecessary delays in identifying repeat or dangerous offenders.

The Trading Standards Officer suggested that Howard Turton be invited to provide a doorstepper's presentation.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The report be noted.
2. The Trading Standards Officer would invite Mr Howard Turton to provide a presentation on doorsteppers in the current Municipal Year.

## **Budget**

Members were advised that the Home Safety Association had a budget of £2,253.00 which was required to be spent by the end of March 2006, however due to the limit of time Members enquired whether the budget could be carried over into the following year.

CONCLUDED that the Chair would speak with Mr Bryson (Accountant) to enquire if the budget could be carried over into the next financial year.

## **ROSPA**

Members were advised that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) were holding a 'Trip and Falls' Awareness Day on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2006. Miss Corking suggested going into a community centre, sheltered home; supermarket or post office to set up and man a stall advertising various issues related to home safety and provide freebies such as CO detectors and stickers warning peoples to lock their doors when they are in their homes, to work in conjunction with ROSPA's awareness day.

The Chair suggested that the Primary Care Trust (PCT) be contacted to enquire whether they would be taking part in the 'Trips and Falls' Awareness Day, if so the Chair suggested that we come together.

CONCLUDED that Miss Corking would contact ROSPA to gather further information regarding the awareness day and would then contact the PCT inviting them to join the Home Safety Association in organising a stall at a supermarket on 27<sup>th</sup> June for the awareness day.

## **Fire Officer**

The Fire Officer advised that R Bradley (Care for your Area) would collect such things as paint but there would be a charge, the amount of which had not been decided upon.

The Fire Service considered this beneficial, as paint and similar material were a fire hazard. The reason there would be a charge or in fact some items could not be collected was due to the fact that other services, other than the owner of the substance, required a licence to handle or transport.

Once the costs of transporting such items had been decided it was believed that the information would be publicised.

## Accidental Dwelling Fires

The Fire Officer was pleased to advise that accidental dwelling fires had reduced, however it was observed that there had been a fatality prior to Christmas due to a chip pan fire.

The Fire Officer advised that the Fire Service were attempting to get chip pans banned. It was observed that many chip pan fires took place when individuals returned home from drinking late at night, put the chip pan on and left it unattended and some times fell asleep.

Members were advised that Fire Officers visited some Tristar tenants and took their chip pans and £5 from the tenant and replaced it with a deep fat fryer. The Fire Service had asked many companies to promote deep fat fryers rather than chip pans and where possible to withdraw such items from their range of products.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

### **Terms of Reference**

Further to Members' requests to see the terms of reference the Secretary provided Members with a copy, which had been approved in March 1988.

It was acknowledged that much of the terms of reference were still relevant and would therefore remain, however, it was observed that some aspects were no longer relevant or needed updating.

Members observed that in the terms of reference it had been stipulated that there would be a maximum of four members of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, two of whom would be members of the Housing Committee or its future equivalent, however the Home Safety Association did not currently have any members who were also members of the Housing and Community Safety Select Committee.

Members noted that the terms of reference advised the membership of the Association was limited to 30 people. The current membership was currently significantly lower with a maximum attendance of 11.

The Chair observed that only one Parish Council was represented at Home Safety Association and suggested that the remaining Parish Councils be contacted inviting them to put forward a nominee who would represent their Parish Council on the Home Safety Association.

Members provided suggestions on which organisations the Secretary could contact to invite nominees for membership on the Association.

Members observed that the terms of reference had consisted of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, however it was observed that the service of the Secretary was now provided by Democratic Services and was therefore no longer a paid position. The role of Treasurer was now undertaken by an accountant employed by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and was also therefore no longer a paid position. Members therefore requested that the terms of reference be amended to reflect the current roles.

Under the 'Procedure at Meetings' section of the terms of reference, it stated that the minutes be recorded and submitted for consideration to the Housing Committee of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council or its future equivalent, as this was no longer the case Members requested that the terms of reference be amended stating that the minutes would be recorded and submitted for consideration at the Council meeting of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

Under the heading of 'Finance', Members requested that the first paragraph be deleted as it was no longer applicable and all reference made to Honorary Secretary or Treasurer be replaced by Secretary or Treasurer.

CONCLUDED that the terms of reference be updated, deleting all reference to 'honorary' when referring to Secretary or Treasurer and all reference to payment of the Secretary or Treasurer.

Section F of 'Procedure at Meetings' would be replaced to read "minutes will be recorded and submitted for consideration to the Council meeting of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council".

At the next Annual Council meeting the elected members would ensure that the proposed membership of four elected members would include two of the Housing and Community Safety Members.

The Secretary would contact the remaining Parish Councils who were not represented on Home Safety Association, inviting nominees to join the Association.

The Secretary would contact previous members of the Home Safety Association and enquire whether they would like to join the Home Safety Association and if they could recommend any other organisations who would be interested to submit a nomination.

Miss Corking would contact Mr Hunter to enquire whether the North Regional Home Safety Council still existed as the terms of reference made reference to the organisation. If the organisation still existed then Miss Corking would make enquiries regarding the renewal of our membership in their organisation and its aims and purposes.

Miss Corking would also contact ROSPA and obtain a password thus enabling all members of the Home Safety Association to use their website.