

# Stockton Home Safety Association

A meeting of Stockton Home Safety Association was held on Tuesday, 27th February, 2007.

**Present:** Cllr Mrs P A Cains, Cllr J M Roberts, Cllr B Woodhead; F Russell (Trading Standards); P Dix (Cleveland Fire Brigade); PC D Sanders (Crime Reduction Team); J Mennell (Public); A Mitchinson, M Wetherall, A Moriarty (Stockton Disability Advisory Group)

**Officers:** S Johnson (LD)

**Also in attendance:** T Redfern (Retired Senior Volunteer Programme)

**Apologies:** Cllr K Dixon; C Snowdon (DNS); D Turton (Cleveland Fire Brigade); Inspector M Thornton, Sergeant M Shallow (Cleveland Police); L Provett (Sure Start)

## **1 Minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2007**

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2007 be agreed as a correct record.

## **2 Matters Arising**

The Trading Standards Officer confirmed that all relevant Councillors would receive an invitation to the launch of the first pilot 'no cold calling' zone in Yarm along with an information pack.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.

## **3 No Cold Calling Zones**

The Trading Standards Officer provided Members with an update on the two pilot 'no cold calling' zones. The signs had been put up on the lamp posts in the Yarm zone. The officer advised Members that they were hoping to have the official launch of the 'no cold calling' zone in Yarm in approximately two weeks time. Trading Standards were hoping to put the signs up in the Oxbridge zone in approximately one week.

The Trading Standards Officer advised Members that there had been a few instances recently where reputable organisations had been turned away due to cold calling. The organisations were advised to let Trading Standards know each time they were planning to carry out similar visits or advise residents by letter.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.

## **4 Doorstep Crime - Trevor Redfern (RSVP)**

Trevor Redfern from the Retired Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP) attended the meeting to talk to Members about extending their work into the Stockton area.

He presented Members with an information sheet which outlined the work done so far by RSVP in the Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland areas to raise awareness of doorstep crime. He explained that to date they had given talks to

1232 residents and had 5 trained volunteers. Members discussed how important it was to have such an initiative in the Stockton area.

He discussed funding with Members. The Association were advised that if successful, a lottery grant would cover 75% of the project and that RSVP would have to match fund the remaining 25%. The officer advised that any extra funding received would be spent on staff time involved submitting the lottery bid, training volunteers, a small amount of equipment and publicity. The Association agreed to contribute £1,000 towards RSVP for each of the financial years 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 with a recommendation that the new Stockton Home Safety Association contribute £1,000 for the financial year 2008/2009.

CONCLUDED that Stockton Home Safety Association would contribute £1,000 towards RSVP for each of the financial years 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 with a recommendation that the new Stockton Home Safety Association contribute £1,000 for the financial year 2008/2009.

## **5 Report of Secretary**

### Trips and Falls Day

The Chair of the Association asked the Secretary to look into arranging another Trips and Falls day for Stockton, to be held on Stockton market on 27th June 2007. The Association discussed the success of the Trips and Falls day held on Stockton market in June 2006.

CONCLUDED that the Secretary would look into arranging a stall for the Trips and Falls day.

## **6 Report of Trading Standards Officer**

### Underage Sales

The Trading Standards officer advised the Association that there had been two sales of alcohol to volunteers on the 23rd January 2007. Both sales had been in national shops. The officer advised Members that Trading Standards were currently seeking legal opinion as to whether they could prosecute corporate bodies for underage alcohol sales rather than the licensee, which in many cases, was a manager.

The officer advised that there had been no sales of cigarettes to volunteers in the activities carried out in the schools half term in February.

### Crystal Meths

The Trading Standards Officer showed Members a poster that displayed a 'shopping list' to make crystal meths, a highly addictive drug. The 'shopping list' was made up of household goods. The poster had been received from America. The officer explained that one of the main items on the list was decongestant tablets. Trading Standards purchased decongestant tablets at two national supermarkets. The officer explained that national supermarket chains will not sell more than 2 packets of paracetamol to one person. Trading Standards purchased 12 packets of decongestant tablets. One national supermarket put

the packets of tablets through 2 at a time in separate transactions, which the officer explained, was not illegal. The other national supermarket did not prevent Trading Standards buying numerous packets of decongestant tablets. The Association commented on how worrying this was. The Trading Standards Officer advised Members that they were in the process of writing to all companies to provide guidance on this issue.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.

## **7 Report of Fire Officer**

The Fire Officer reported that there had been 6 house fires to date in February, 5 of which had been kitchen related.

The officer reported that they had finished the Fire Safety Zone in Newtown for the time being. They had managed to cover 66% of dwellings in Newtown and were due to start the next Fire Safety Zone in Norton Grange on 1st March 2007.

The Fire Officer discussed funding for various Fire Brigade initiatives with Members of the Association. The officer advised that they would particularly benefit from any support the Association could offer towards purchasing deep fat fryers. The officer explained that as part of the fire prevention initiatives the Fire Brigade offer households a deep fat fryer in exchange for a chip pan. The Association agreed that this was an important initiative and agreed to contribute £150 towards it.

The Fire Officer advised Members that he would be retiring as Station Manager at Stockton Fire Station from 31st March 2007. Members were advised that the new Station Manager would be attending Stockton Home Safety Association from April 2007. The Fire Officer thanked the Association for all the contributions to various Fire Safety initiatives. Members of the Association thanked the Fire Officer for his contribution to Stockton Home Safety Association and wished him well in his retirement.

CONCLUDED that the Association would contribute £150 to Cleveland Fire Brigade to purchase deep fat fryers.

(Councillors Roberts and Woodhead declared a personal/non-prejudicial interest in the above item due to being members of the Fire Authority)

## **8 Report of Police Officer**

The Police Officer from the Crime Reduction Team reported that domestic burglaries had been relatively low.

The officer discussed 2 in 1 burglaries with the Association. It was explained that 2 in 1 burglaries were where someone breaks into a house to steal car keys then steal the car. Members were advised that car manufacturers were making it increasingly hard to steal a car without the keys. The officer advised that 'fishing' was becoming more common, where people steal car and house keys through the letter box of a house.

The officer advised Members of a new initiative by Stockton Police - 'Stockton

Police say 'take me to bed tonight', the slogan was displayed on car key rings. The officer explained that they had decided to target car dealers as a way of getting the message across to car owners that it was important not to leave car keys in a house where they are vulnerable to theft. The launch for the initiative took place on the 14th February 2007 and Stockton Police were hoping to have all 20 of the main dealers in Stockton on board by the end of March 2007. As part of the initiative Stockton Police had produced information packs which would be placed on the seat of any new car purchased. The officer advised that they were hoping to extend this to used cars.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.