

## MINUTES

**MEETING:** Anti Social Behaviour Study Group

**DATE:** Tuesday 06<sup>th</sup> September 2005

**TIME:** 10.30 am

**VENUE:** Committee room 1, Sunderland Civic Centre

**CHAIR:** Michael Cowie, Sunderland Housing Group

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### Apologies:

Alison Newbold – Safer York Partnership  
Sharon Bushby – Enterprise 5  
Dianne Headly – Sedgfield Council  
Kath Hierons – West Middlesbrough NT  
Greg Johnson – South Tyneside MBC  
Ann McMurray – Chester-le Street  
Clare McMullen – Private rented partnership  
Jane Hill – Middlesbrough Council  
Phill Tweddle – Richmonshire DC

Clare Peadon – Durham City Council  
Kevin Mc Gready – Newcastle City Council  
Tim Winter – Social Landlord C&N Group  
Clive Ledner – Accent Group  
Georgina Bailes – GONE  
Sue Wharam – Guinness Trust  
Gavin Brown – Endeavour HA  
Monica Morran – Middlesbrough Council  
Lee Colcough – Yorkshire Coast Homes

### Present:

Rob Jones – Darlington BC  
Clare Tierney – Gateshead BC  
Kelly Taylor – Nomad  
Barbara Cruickshank – Sunderland CC  
Libby Griffiths – Housing Hartlepool  
Lorraine Fenwick – Housing Hartlepool  
Steve Johnson – Erimus Housing  
Richard Mitchell – Cheviot Housing

Malcolm Woodhall – Tynedale  
Sharon Dalton – Coast and Country  
Paul Noddings – Tristar Homes  
Sally Forth – Hartlepool BC  
Jocelyn Sirs – Housing Hartlepool  
Gilly Marshall – Erimus Housing  
Graham Carter – Darlington BC  
Richard Mitchell- Cheviot Housing

#### 1.0 Minutes of last meeting

1.1 The minutes of the meeting of the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2005 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### 2.0 Matters Arising

2.1 Michael Cowie raised the issue of the new meeting format and whether this was clear to everyone. It was decided that more clarification was needed and that Simon should ensure this for the next meeting.

## **2.2 *Possible development of a Nuisance Neighbourhood Panel***

2.2.1 This idea was initially raised by Clare Tierney in the previous meeting in May concerning the development of a nuisance neighbourhood panel. Michael asked Clare to clarify what she meant by this.

2.2.2 Clare described how she foresaw the panel comprising a few members of the group forming a sub-group to regionally share some experience. This would act as a troubleshooting group that could deal with difficult problems, and if needs be we could bring in specialist speakers in to talk to the group.

2.2.3 There were reservations made about this from other members of the group concerning it confusing the aims of the group as a whole. This was taken on board by the Chair, although the point made about discussing and offering advice on particular problems was welcomed by the group.

2.2.4 It was decided that we would keep this item in mind although for now focus on ensuring that the group as a whole raised issues/questions well in advance of the meetings, and the NHC would press the group for issues/questions well in advance of the next meeting, and dedicating time for this.

## **2.3 *General discussion of Front-Line Training needs***

2.3.1 Following the previous discussion on training needs in the sector this was followed up by a general discussion on what the requirements were. Simon stated how he had arranged a meeting with Northumbria University concerning the possibility of setting up a course to meet these needs.

2.3.2 The group unanimously agreed that this was not needed and that the real issue was to do with induction. Alex Rhind agreed and suggested that most information to ensure a good induction is available on the Together Website run by the Home Office. The meeting with Northumbria University has been subsequently cancelled.

## **2.4                    *The possible development of a Witness support Network***

The next item concerned an issue raised by Tim Winter and passed on to the NHC. A breakdown of this was sent out to the group prior to the meeting for the group to give their views.

2.4.1                Clare Tierney commented that we need to look at ways in which we can best support victims, but made the point that victim support for ASB is different to support for crime. There was also concern from the group that if a network was set up then a lot of links and support could be lost that is already in place.

2.4.2                Alex Rhind commented that there is a lot of useful information on the Together website to do with victim and witness support. The group therefore agreed that a witness support network may affect the quality and transparency of support available presently.

## **2.5                    *Future Inspection regime***

2.5.1                Although this had been brought up in a previous meeting the group were unclear as to what inspection this related to. Alex Rhind suggested that she find out more on this to feed into this in the future.

## **3.0                    *Alex Rhind Home Office Update***

3.1                    The main news from the Home Office is the creation of the Respect Task Force. The ASB unit will remain but will focus more on policy information. We will also have an ASBO team with the task of a liaison function, developing the website and academy etc.

3.2                    Louise Casey will head the Respect Task Force. Alex will continue in her role, and there will still be a policy and communications team, although Alex is part of this Task Force.

3.3                    Autumn's action plan is primarily focusing more and more on parenting, and how to deal with this in terms of enforcement and support. This is something we will see a lot more of in coming months. Funding for Action areas and trailblazers is secure until March 2008.

3.4                    'It's your call' advice line has just been launched in Birmingham with others following soon. There is a need to correlate the Single Non Emergency number with this and educate the public as to their difference.

- 3.5 In terms of future funding £25,000 will continue to be funded by 2008 and spent on ASB co-ordinator or agenda. This money is ring fenced.

#### **4.0 ASB Conference 2005**

- 4.1 Simon Page outlined the progress of the 9<sup>th</sup> annual ASB conference and confirmed the dates as the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November at the Majestic Hotel in Harrogate. Simon also confirmed that the advance flyer would be ready within 2 weeks as it was currently at the printers.
- 4.2 The group felt that there were too many faces that were the same from previous years. In particular, Ray Mallon, who the group were unsure as to what he was going to say that was new.
- 4.3 Simon confirmed to the group that there was still 1 main speaker to get and 2 workshops and offered any comments as to themes or suggested speakers. The group responded with suggestions for something on diversity, Hate crime, night-time drinking culture, and experience from other countries such as Holland's experiment with the use of storage containers converted into homes.
- 4.4 Simon agreed to investigate these themes when finishing the bookings for the conference.
- 4.5 Gilly Marshall suggested that we could investigate the possibility of a speed networking event for the next conference as it was felt that often you go to these events and you go off and do your own thing without getting to know others at the conference. Gilly described how this had been a feature of a previous CIH conference and worked really well, and suggested that the NHC contact the CIH to find out how it worked. Simon promised to suggest this to management at the consortium to gauge their feeling.

#### **5.0 Developing the Safer Estates Agreement**

- 5.1 Previous meetings had discussed the need to possibly update the safer estates agreement to respond to any changes that may be of relevance. A sub group consisting of Greg Johnson, Kevin Reid, Sally Forth and Michael Cowie would lead on this and feed back to the group. It was decided that the NHC should

book a room to get this meeting underway before the next group meeting, as it was felt that it needed to be done. Simon promised to do this.

## **6.0 Training for Magistrates**

6.1 The issue of magistrates training had been raised in the previous meeting. It was however the view of a lot of the group that things were much better than they were. In the last meeting Peter Rawbottom was mentioned as someone who was useful to know if magistrates need training. In particular it was suggested that Peter may be doing refresher courses, as concerns were raised that there is a real problem when ASBO's are breached

6.2 Alex mentioned that there is guidance on the Together Website.

6.3 The concern from the group was that there is a lot of hard work done to try and get an ASBO or similar order, yet when it comes to magistrates they are thrown out. Waiting for a date to stop sentences being delayed when breaches occur was mentioned by Michael Cowie, and Malcolm Woodhall.

6.4 The debate then widened to other barriers. Gilly Marshall commented on the barriers she has experienced with the police not understanding the legislation that is out there, particularly on the ground. This has made her job difficult at times. Others from the group (Malcolm Woodhall and Michael Cowie) passed on some contacts to talk to from Sunderland Police.

## **7.0 Local Action and good practice**

7.1 Malcolm Woodhall suggested that from his experience Local Authorities can be reluctant to make an ASB order and possession order and asked whether other RSL's are reluctant to do this. Sharon Dalton added that Coast and Country had considered making an application for possession against a tenant and to attach an ASBO application against the son. Sharon sought advice from the Together Actionline who informed her that it was not possible because the son is under 18 years old. Sharon added that if the person subject to the application for an ASBO is over 18 there is no evidence to suggest that this cannot be done as long as there is a

connection to the principle proceedings in the County court e.g. Possession proceedings.

7.2 Michael Cowie updated the group on the progress of a demotion order at SHG which has been dismissed, although is now going to county court.

7.3 Clare Tierney updated the group on an interim order and full ASBO that is currently up in court and has been a battle. Clare informed the group that she would update everyone at the next meeting on the progress.

## **8.0 Other Business**

8.1 Simon confirmed to the group that he will be taking forward the suggestions from this meeting. In particular he will be organising a date for the Safer Estates agreement within the next couple of weeks and liaising more closely with the group on specific issues/problems to raise for the next meeting and urged the group to come forward.

## **8.0 Meeting dates**

The next meeting date for the ASB group is on the 13<sup>th</sup> December although no venue has as yet been set.