

MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING BETWEEN SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND PARISH COUNCILS/MEETINGS

11th November 2009

PRESENT:

Representatives of South Derbyshire District Council

Councillor Mrs. Wheeler (Chairman) and Councillors Bale, Mrs. Farrington, Harrison, Jones, Lemmon, Murray (also Hartshorne Parish Council representative) and Timms (also Walton-on-Trent Parish Council representative).

Officers

J. Jones (Director of Corporate Services), M. Alflat (Director of Community Services), A. McCaskie (Head of Legal and Democratic Services) and P. White (Democratic Services Assistant).

Parish Council Representatives

K. Slater (Barrow-on-Trent Parish Council), K. Fairbrother and S. Jackson (Castle Gresley Parish Council), K. Bradford (Coton-in-the-Elms Parish Council), R. Davies (Dalbury Lees Parish Meeting), F. Mitchell (Elvaston Parish Council), B. Cowley, B. Penny, P. Riley and P. Woolrich (Egginton Parish Council), B. Lythgoe and F. Mitchell (Elvaston Parish Council), D. Muller and I. Smith (Etwall Parish Council), T. Beresford (Foston and Scropton Parish Council), R. Bell and D. Jenkinson (Hartshorne Parish Council), C. Thurman (Hatton Parish Council), J. Bates and L. Kolkman (Hilton Parish Council), D. Smith (Melbourne Parish Council), A. Wing (Netherseal Parish Council), S. Ellis (Newton Solney Parish Council), J. Barnes (Smisby Parish Council), T. Cooper (Weston-on-Trent Parish Council), F. Crocker and K. Overton (Willington Parish Council), E. Lummis and R. Statham (Woodville Parish Council).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District Councillors Mrs. Brown and Shepherd, F. McArdle (Chief Executive), B. Bagnall, S. Bell, R. Buxton, D. Buchanan, C. Knight, J. Storer, J. White and B. Wood (DALC).

PC/9. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th July 2009 were received.

PC/10. **PRESENTATION BY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**

Bill Corbishley, Managing Director and Paul Harrison, Assistant Managing Director of Community Transport (Swadlincote) gave a presentation on the services provided by this organisation. The intention was to promote greater awareness of Community Transport and the services it provided.

Community Transport was not a commercial operation, but a Registered Charity and Limited Company. The organisation had commenced during the mid 1980's with the assistance of Central Government funding from which it had enabled the provision of accessible transport throughout the County. The first scheme had been provided in High Peak in 1985 and a later scheme for South Derbyshire in 1989. Initially, each scheme had comprised one vehicle, one driver and a part-time administrative assistant. Transport was normally booked for shopping trips in the Burton-on-Trent and Swadlincote areas. It was also used by bone fide groups associated with activities of benefit to the community, which had to be affiliated to the scheme. Demand began to exceed resources and a further grant was made available from Derbyshire County Council.

After a few years, the scheme co-ordinators requested a more formal arrangement with the County Council in terms of a service level agreement. The agreement specified the provision of a fixed number of vehicles for a specific total cost. The resulting tendering contract included a fleet of vehicles and drivers, in order to provide a more diverse operation. Funding was currently in place for six vehicles, although in excess of twenty buses were operated. The company was contracted to provide eighteen "Dial-a-Buses", although actually provided forty.

Most passengers used the Gold Card, although there was a very low cost for those that had to pay for the services. There had been some criticism regarding group travelling, since a vehicle was not always available, due to contract arrangements with other organisations. This sometimes resulted in a lack of available drivers. Since most drivers worked on a full-time basis, it was considered unreasonable to request them to work additional hours. Additional volunteer drivers were always welcomed. In order to assist groups, where their own drivers could be provided, this decreased the hire costs. Suitable driver training was provided, since Community Transport was a ROSPA agent. In such cases, drivers would not be unaccompanied unless they were both confident and competent. No cost was levied for the training.

Reference was given to the literature circulated, which included details of the services available, volunteer opportunities and a service timetable. It was noted that the "Dial-a-Bus" service was over subscribed and that priority was given to wheelchair users.

A number of comments and queries were raised arising from this presentation, which included the following:-

- hours of operation;
- the age limit for volunteer drivers;
- details of pick up points;
- the possibility of additional time being provided between arriving at and departing from certain destinations;
- details of services to Derby;
- consideration of additional pick up points, including Smisby;
- consideration of suggested routes to other locations;
- potential funding partners;

- the possibility of extending some return times;
- responsibility for missing passengers;
- the possibility of providing additional services from Foston and Scropton to Ashbourne.

Detailed responses were provided. The Company was commended on the service provided. Bill Corbishley and Paul Harrison were thanked for their presentation.

PC/11. **QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION ITEMS**

It was noted that a number of accidents had occurred in the Etwall area caused by falling on pavements. The County Council had advised that this was a low priority. It was suggested that the local County Councillor should be made aware of the situation.

The protocol for evicting travellers from Council-owned and private land was questioned. It was advised that the District Council had powers to evict travellers from its own land, although it had no jurisdiction with regard to privately-owned land. Reference was made to a particular incident where travellers had encroached on a football pitch at Castle Gresley. It was noted that the Police would only take enforcement action in exceptional circumstances.

The large percentage of the County's allocation of travellers' sites in South Derbyshire was queried. It was advised that the County Council funded two controlled sites at Woodyard Lane, Foston and Lullington Crossroads. The remainder were privately-owned sites.

Concern was raised regarding potential harmful effects of vapours from new incinerators at Spondon and Sinfyn to nearby residents of Elvaston. Lack of consultation with residents had caused concern. Further advice on this matter could be sought from the Council's Head of Planning Services.

The infrequency of Woodyard Lane, Foston traveller's site liaison meetings was queried. It was advised that it was intended to request that the meetings be reconvened and that both County Council and District Council officers be requested to attend.

Further information was sought with regard to the parish lengthsman scheme. It was advised that, following consultation with parish councils/meetings, a report would be submitted to the Council's Finance and Management Committee concerning future proposals for the scheme.

Following a recent parish council audit, it had been suggested that the PAYE system be used for all staff. It was queried whether other parish councils used the same system. It was advised that an explanatory CD could be obtained from the Inland Revenue.

It was requested whether there could be a more even provision of socially-affordable housing. Reference was made to the identification of affordable housing needs within parish needs surveys and liaison with Housing

Associations. It was noted that there were several schemes commenced, or in the pipeline, within the District. It was suggested that, should suitable sites be identified, these be discussed with the local Ward Member and appropriate officers.

Reference was made to the recent Electoral Review meeting attended by parish councils. It was noted that details of the population forecast for the next five years had been promised for the end of October 2009. It was advised that all information could be viewed on the Electoral Commission's website, although it would be requested whether the Commission intended to forward the details to parish councils. Parish Councils were invited to submit their comments at this stage of the Review prior to 21st January 2010.

There was concern that the County Highways Authority had undertaken alterations to a junction in Hartshorne village. The changes were considered unnecessary since no accidents had occurred at the location. No consultation had been undertaken with the Parish Council or residents on this matter. It was considered that consultation should be undertaken with Parish Councils with regard to all highways issues. It was advised that the issue would be raised with the County Council's Cabinet Member of Highways and Transport who would be requested to liaise with the Parish Council. The matter could also be raised at the next Highways Forum meeting.

It was considered that parish councils were not provided with sufficient time to respond to reports, planning applications and consultative documents, which often required responses prior to the next parish council's meeting. It was requested whether the County and District Council's could provide longer timescales. With regard to consultation on planning applications, it was advised that responses could be submitted up to the date of the Development Control Committee meeting considering the application.

The date of the next Highways Forum meeting was queried. It was requested that dates of other future meetings of the Council be provided. This information could be provided in future agendas.

PC/12. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

A provisional date for the next Joint Meeting had been arranged for Wednesday, 17th February 2010 at 6.30 p.m. This would be confirmed in due course.

MRS. H. K. WHEELER

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 8.00 p.m.

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