

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

18th October 2006

PRESENT:

Representatives of South Derbyshire District Council

Councillors Whyman, M.B.E. (Chair), Mrs Littlejohn, Taylor and Wilkins.

Officers

Frank McArdle (Chief Executive), Mark Alflat (Director of Community Services), Jayne Jones (Director of Corporate Services), Andrea McCaskie (Head of Legal and Democratic Services), Gill Hague (Head of Planning Services) and Debra Townsend (Democratic Services).

Parish Council Representatives

R. Buxton and C. Thurman (Hatton Parish Council), C. Gerard and B. Cowley (Egginton Parish Council), S. Jackson and K. Fairbrother (Castle Gresley Parish Council), B. Payton, I. Smith and N. Ireland (Etwall Parish Council), M. South (Smisby Parish Council), J. White and G. Edwards (Overseal Parish Council), C. Bunston (Ticknall and Repton Parish Councils), W. Wadsworth and K. Bradford (Coton-in-the-Elms Parish Council), C. Peck (Aston-on-Trent Parish Council), N. Hill (Melbourne Parish Council), K. Overton (Willington Parish Council), T. Statham and B. Freeman (Melbourne Parish Council), C. Barker (Barrow-upon-Trent Parish Council), F. Mitchell (Elvaston Parish Council), S. Bell (Findern Parish Council), D. Buchanan (Newton Solney Parish Council), T. Beresford (Foston and Scropton Parish Council), W. Lythgoe (Elvaston Parish Council), A. Abblett (Shardlow Parish Council) and N. Hawksworth (Shardlow and Great Wilne Parish Council).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillor Carroll, I. Reid (Deputy Chief Executive), D. Adams, J. Clifton, V. Shaw and R. Statham.

Councillor Whyman opened the Meeting by introducing Divisional Commander Jack Russell, Inspector Steve Fairbrother and Inspector Rick Cuttell. He reported that Rick Cuttell was taking over from Steve Fairbrother, who he thanked for his work within South Derbyshire.

Jack Russell advised the Meeting that he had recently taken over as Divisional Commander from Tony Hurrell. He then gave a brief background on his career to date in the Police Force.

Rick Cuttell reported that he had spent time with Steve Fairbrother and hoped to continue with the work already carried out by him. He added that he was very experienced in partnership working and looked forward to bringing this experience to South Derbyshire. He would be taking over on Monday 13th November and his contact number would be 01332 613383.

Councillor Whyman reported that there was some confusion between the roles of the Safer Neighbourhood Partnership and Police Liaison Groups. He added that he was awaiting confirmation of the roles of these two groups and would confirm this back to the meeting when known.

Several questions followed relating to police matters which the police agreed to deal with outside of this meeting.

Councillor Whyman then addressed the Meeting and advised those present that it had been suggested to him that the Joint Meetings between South Derbyshire District Council and Parish Councils were “a waste of time”. He added that this was very disappointing. He pointed out that the controlling group wanted to devolve decision-making, power and influence to both parish council members and within the community, and that this had already been demonstrated following the highlighting of priority areas for the District Council which were taken from the consultation process. He then asked those in attendance if they felt that this meeting was a waste of time or whether the District Council was successfully consulting with the community.

A discussion ensued and points were raised as follows:-

- This meeting was not seen as a waste of time - the only criticism was that certain items were too District-weighted. In addition, at a previous meeting the speaker from D.A.L.C. had been moved to the end of the meeting, although the matter was important for parish councils.
 - There was concern raised over the amount of consultation that parish councils were expected to take part in. It was considered, however, that the joint meeting was very valuable and should continue.
 - These meetings were considered to be a useful two-way communication tool.
 - It was suggested that as the Regional Spatial Strategy was a very important item for parish councils, it may be useful to discuss this further at the next meeting. Councillor Whyman responded that this was a very significant document and would be discussed at a later date.
- It was agreed that as the District Council had received a presentation on the Regional Spatial Strategy, a copy of these slides should be distributed to all parish councils.**
- A question arose with regard to Service Level Agreements between the District Council and Parish Councils, Councillor Whyman responded that many Service Level Agreements existed within the community, and when concurrent expenditure was agreed, service level agreements would be considered where appropriate.

Councillor Whyman M.B.E. concluded the discussion by summarising that the overall feeling was that the joint meetings were very important to all concerned. He added that it was important that a partnership existed and that parishes continued to inform the District Council of their concerns and comments.

PC/38. **EMERGENCY PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS**

This item was requested by Etwall Parish Council. N. Ireland summarised by querying the emergency planning arrangements in times of flooding.

The Director of Community Services responded that a partnership existed with Derbyshire County Council, which provided emergency planning and a “flood contingency plan”. All major disasters were planned for including examples such as a major plane crash or an influenza outbreak. In addition, practical exercises also took place. It was suggested that all parish councils may wish to prepare individual parish emergency plans and the District Council would assist with this. The Director of Community Services confirmed that the main emergency planning document was not issued, as it contained confidential details.

It was agreed that the parish emergency planning document be circulated to all parish councils.

PC/39. **UPDATE ON THIRD RIVER CROSSING**

This item was raised by Coton-in-the-Elms Parish Council. The Head of Planning Services reported that the A38/A511 study being undertaken by Atkins was awaiting a final report which would be forwarded to Staffordshire County Council, who had commissioned it. This was not a consultation document and its purpose was to establish whether a road was feasible. If feasibility was established, there would follow a series of other studies which would look at various aspects of this project.

Councillor Whyman gave an update on the proposed Walton Bypass and advised the Meeting that an appeal had been lodged. However, East Staffordshire Borough Council had offered no evidence and did not contest the appeal. The outcome of the appeal was expected by the end of October 2006.

PC/40. **COTON-IN-THE-ELMS BAND ROOM**

This issue was raised by Coton-in-the-Elms Parish Council. The Director of Community Services advised the meeting that the current band room was due to be sold at auction in December 2006.

PC/41. **REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY**

Following discussions earlier in the Meeting, the Head of Planning Services gave an update on the Regional Spatial Strategy. She advised that this was a very important document to the District and would replace what was currently in the County Structure Plan. This document set strategic policies such as the amount of new housing required, for the region up to 2026.

PC/42. **QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION ITEMS**

It was requested that the following items be considered for discussion at the next Meeting:-

- (1) If further information on a third river crossing is available, Jim Seymour from Derbyshire County Council be invited to provide an update to the Meeting.
- (2) Budget issues.
- (3) Councillors’ Revised Code of Conduct.

B. WHYMAN, M.B.E.

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 8.40 p.m.