

ETWALL AREA MEETING

10th November 2004

**PRESENT:-**

**District Council Representatives**

Councillor Whyman, M.B.E. (Chair) and Councillor Bale (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Ford, Hood, Mrs. Hood, Lemmon and Mrs. Walton.

F. McArdle (Chief Executive), P. Spencer (Democratic Services) and B. Jones (Helpdesk).

**Derbyshire County Council Representative**

Councillor Mrs. M. Littlejohn.

**Derbyshire Constabulary**

Inspector S. Fairbrother and PC Featherstone.

**Parish Council Representatives**

Mrs. B. Cowley (Egginton Parish Council), B. Payton and N. Ireland (Etwall Parish Council), Mrs. L. Nash and S. Bell (Findern Parish Council), M. Cramp (Hatton Parish Council), G. Banton and Mrs. L. Kolkman (Hilton Parish Council) and T. Beresford (Foston and Scropton Parish Council).

**Members of the Public**

S. Avery, P. Black, S. Brown, S. Cowdrey, J. Etchells, Mr. Gerrard, C. Gibson, G. Green, H. Hague, P. Hickinbotham, K. Holbrook, A. Mitchell, S. Raymer, B. Smedley, I. Smith, G. Wale and M. Wilson.

EA/13. **SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DRAFT COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

The Chief Executive advised that a presentation would be made later in the Meeting on the Draft Community Strategy for South Derbyshire. Information and a questionnaire had been circulated and residents were asked to consider and complete the questionnaire to provide feedback.

EA/14. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District Councillor G. Martin, J. Carpenter, J. Dove, R. Mathews and B. Penlington.

EA/15. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Etwall Area Meeting held on 11th August 2004 were noted. The Clerk read a letter received from the Nottingham East Midlands Airport to provide clarification on a number of issues discussed at the previous Meeting. The Chair added that the Airport was currently undertaking consultation on proposals to extend its controlled airspace. It was proposing to alter the noise preferential routes and to relocate the "holding area" used by aircraft waiting to land at the Airport. A copy of the consultation document could be obtained from the Airport or possibly through the District Council.

Under Minute No. EA/7, Councillor Hood reported that Police Constable Cross had now begun to issue parking tickets in Etwall. It was felt that this had been effective in reducing the number of parking offences and problems reported at the last Meeting. Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn advised that Derbyshire County Council was seeking funding for a pilot scheme to provide a vehicle activator sign in Hatton, to warn speeding motorists. A resident explained that speed camera warning signs had been erected in Hatton. He criticised the method used to affix the signs and explained the problems being experienced. Previously it had been stated that such signs could not be erected unless there was a camera in the vicinity. It was noted that mobile speed detection equipment was periodically used in this area. The resident reported current traffic volumes and particularly the number of heavy commercial vehicles travelling through Hatton. In one incident, such vehicles had not stopped at a pedestrian crossing. He questioned whether the proposed signage would prove effective and felt that a speed camera would provide the only real deterrent. Inspector Fairbrother responded, referring to the speed monitoring which had taken place in Scropton Road, Hatton. He reminded also of the perception that some vehicles were heavy goods vehicles when they were actually below the 7.5 tonne weight limit. The resident felt that despite the Action Committee's representations over the last three years, little had been achieved. Inspector Fairbrother responded that South Derbyshire was the only Division of the Constabulary where the Local Beat Officers were using mobile speed detection equipment.

Mr. Wale referred to the discussion of highway issues at the last Meeting. Mr. Leigh of Derbyshire County Council had written to Officers at Staffordshire County Council about problems on the A511 and he spoke about the lack of reply to this correspondence. Mr. Wale felt that this was totally unacceptable and Officers had to be accountable. As a result he had written to Mr. Mark Todd MP, who in turn had written to Staffordshire County Council, but again no reply had been received from that Authority. It was agreed to write to the Leader and Chief Executive of Staffordshire County Council expressing dissatisfaction at the lack of response on these important highway matters. Mr. Wale then referred to the Derbyshire County Council Gold Card scheme and the additional session which had been organised to enable residents to obtain their Gold Card. He thanked Officers of the District and County Councils for their assistance and in turn was thanked by the Chair for his initiative in this matter. Mrs. Cowley had also written a letter of thanks to Derbyshire County Council.

Councillor Mrs. Walton explained the further delays experienced in the start of consultation on the draft scheme for traffic calming within Hilton. She had written to the Chief Executive and Cabinet Member for Highways at Derbyshire County Council and had only today received a copy of the draft scheme from County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn. The County Councillor explained that Etwall residents had attended the Derbyshire County Council Local Area Committee. Discussions had taken place with Officers and attempts were being made to identify additional funding to improve some sections of Willington Road in Etwall. Mrs. Cowley reported on the improvement works being undertaken by the County Council to the Egginton crossroads. Councillor Ford advised that a site meeting had been held with Mr. Leigh of Derbyshire County Council to pursue the problems with speeding traffic on Doles Lane in Findern. As a result of the meeting, he explained the further works planned for this area.

**EA/16. REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chair reviewed those items raised at the last Meeting and gave an update on the progress made. Inspector Fairbrother confirmed that speed monitoring had taken place on at least three occasions in Station Road, Hatton. The Chair asked that statistics on speeding traffic in the Scropton area be provided to the Clerk for circulation. Councillor Mrs. Walton confirmed that she had received a response, which explained why a number of properties in Hilton could not be added to the existing composting rounds.

The Chair then reviewed the highway issues raised at the previous Meeting. It was unclear if repairs to the street light in Sutton-on-the-Hill had yet taken place and residents were asked to contact County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn to pursue this matter if necessary. It was noted that Derbyshire County Council would undertake works to re-align a raised utility cover in a pavement in Egginton. Mrs. Cowley questioned whether this footway could also be used as a cycle path. After some discussion regarding the width of this footway and whether it formed part of the cycle route linking to Etwall, it was agreed to pursue this matter with Derbyshire County Council and to provide a report to the next Meeting.

County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn gave an update on the planned improvements to the Egginton crossroads. Tree maintenance works were being considered and the County Councillor agreed to monitor this issue. With regard to the request for improved signage to the Newhall Civic Amenity site, the County Council was awaiting the outcome of a tendering process on the future use of the site in question. The County Council, if successful in winning the tender, would provide additional signage. Otherwise it would pursue this matter with the appropriate company. It was noted that Watery Lane in Scropton had recently been closed to enable the replacement of a blocked pipe underneath the road. County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn was asked to pursue the request for measures to clearly define the edge of the carriageway where it was close to a ditch.

**EA/17. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Councillor Ford raised a highway safety concern that had also been raised at the Repton Area Meeting earlier in the week. There had been recent fatal road traffic accidents along the A38 in the vicinity of the Mumbai Blue Restaurant. There were concerns over the access to this restaurant and the need for improved signage. Councillor Ford explained that this section of the A38 was actually within the Egginton Parish. The concerns were noted by County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn, who asked that this matter be raised also at the next Egginton Parish Council Meeting. Mr. Wale added that access to the restaurant was not the only problem area along this section of the A38. It was suggested that the length of slip-road and access to the restaurant were wholly inadequate. Inspector Fairbrother confirmed that traffic management police were investigating this matter. Following a question from Mrs. Cowley, it was confirmed that there had been two recent fatalities in this vicinity.

Mrs. Kolkman referred to the western relief road in Hilton, which was still to be adopted and to have speed limit signs erected. There were concerns over

the speed of cars and motorcycles using the relief road and she questioned the legal position. Inspector Fairbrother felt that enforcement action would be difficult unless the vehicles in question were travelling above the national speed limit. He offered to investigate this matter. A local traffic survey had been conducted in Hilton and a resident felt that the vast majority of traffic was still travelling through the Village, rather than using the relief road. A letter had been sent to Derbyshire County Council on this matter, but to date no response had been received. Inspector Fairbrother confirmed that PC Cross had monitored heavy commercial traffic in this area to determine abuse of the weight limit. As discussed earlier in the Meeting, many of the vehicles were actually below the 7.5 tonne weight limit. Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn suggested that the resident write to Councillor Lucas, the Cabinet Member for Highways and the Environment, to report these concerns.

Mr. Cramp sought information about plans to close a section of Marston Lane, near to Hatton. Problems had been experienced with itinerants in this area. Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn confirmed that the County Council's Solicitors were trying to determine land ownership, in order to pursue this delicate issue. The Chair explained that the land in question was owned by Derbyshire County Council and that the closure of Marston Lane would require local consultation. He was due to meet County Council officials together with Mr. Buxton of Hatton Parish Council, to seek the urgent closure of this section of Marston Lane. He agreed to speak to Mr. Cramp after the Meeting. Councillor Mrs. Walton was invited to be included in the meeting with Derbyshire County Council, as part of Marston Lane was within the Hilton Ward.

The Chair reminded of the considerable problems caused by the repeated occupation of certain sites by itinerants and he asked how the Constabulary could assist. Inspector Fairbrother explained the Constabulary's policy and his own approach to deal with travellers. Immediate action was taken to identify the landowner of the site in question. He explained the "Section 61" powers available to the Constabulary, together with human rights requirements. He spoke of the historical problems experienced, the lessons learnt and the approach now taken. Where damage was caused, the Constabulary had to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the itinerants were responsible for this damage. He referred to a current case within the District where the itinerants were seeking local accommodation. There was also an issue of tolerance, but he assured that the Constabulary would assist where it could.

Councillor Mrs. Walton explained a particular problem in Hilton where itinerants had bought a site and submitted a retrospective planning application. She quoted from a recent appeal where the ruling had stated that human rights issues should not outweigh planning law. Councillor Hood explained the difficulties experienced in Findern where travellers occupied a site for which there was no known landowner. Councillor Ford praised the responsive approach of Derbyshire County Council to deal with a traveller problem. Following maintenance works, itinerants had moved onto a site with a hard-standing. He made a plea to ensure that such sites were kept secure, particularly at this time of year. The Chair felt it was sad that many beautiful parts of the District had to be secured to minimise the risk of them being occupied by itinerants. Inspector Fairbrother added that local knowledge was important to identify potentially vulnerable locations. Where it was suspected that itinerants were about to move onto a site the Police and

Landowner should be contacted. He guaranteed that the Police would not take action where temporary obstructions were placed, for example to block field entrances. The Chair commented on a further case where travellers had purchased a site and then through a number of planning appeals, overturned this Council's decisions and secured consent to site a number of caravans on the land. A resident added that in reaching his decision, the Inspector considered there was a shortage of such accommodation.

In closing the Public Question Time, the Chair confirmed that action was being taken to respond to enquiries made by Mrs. Penlington of Egginton, prior to the Meeting.

EA/18. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date and venue of the next Etwall Area Meeting would be confirmed in due course.

EA/19. **DRAFT COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR SOUTH DERBYSHIRE**

The Chair introduced this item and spoke of partnership working within South Derbyshire, particularly through the Local Strategic Partnership. He explained the organisations involved in this partnership, which were working together and combining funding to deliver services for South Derbyshire communities. The Local Strategic Partnership was drafting a Community Strategy for the area and feedback was being sought from a number of forums on priorities for the area.

The Chief Executive requested residents to given thorough consideration to the information circulated prior to the Meeting and he urged their feedback through completion and return of the questionnaire, by the end of the month. This was an opportunity for local people to shape priorities for the South Derbyshire area. A further report on the Community Strategy would be submitted to a future Area Meeting. In closing the Meeting, the Chair thanked Officers for their assistance.

B. WHYMAN

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 8.10 p.m.