

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM
LINTON

24th February 2009

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Wheeler (Chairman), Councillor Jones (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Grant and Timms.

M. Alflat (Director of Community Services), P. White (Democratic Services) and C. Lukaszewicz (Helpdesk).

Derbyshire County Council Representatives

Councillors Bambrick and Mrs. Lauro.

R. Peberdy (Principal Librarian South, Ilkeston Library).

Derbyshire Constabulary

Inspector Sandeman

Parish Councillor/Meeting Representatives

O. Jackson, S. Jackson, J. Pallett and C. Wright (Castle Gresley Parish Council), K. Bradford (Coton-in-the-Elms Parish Council), R. Palmer and J. Powell (Linton Parish Council), G. Gee, P. McGibbon, T. Nicklin and A. Wing (Netherseal Parish Council).

Members of the Public

G. Palmer.

LA/19. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from M. Todd M.P., Dr. Elson, V. Taylor, W. Taylor and P. Jameson (Local Area Forum Liaison Officer, Derbyshire County Council).

LA/20. **POLICE ISSUES**

Inspector Sandeman addressed the Meeting, giving an update on police issues. He provided details of an incident which had occurred in Overseal involving the attack on an elderly gentleman on 19th February 2009. Members of the public were asked to report to the police any unusual activity in the vicinity during the day of the incident or the proceeding day as the victim was believed to have been targeted and the offenders were not from the immediate area. Inspector Sandeman stressed that this was an extremely unusual event, which was unlikely to recur.

It was advised that in South Derbyshire there had been a reduction in crime by approximately 300 incidents over the previous year, and the Linton area in particular, was a safe location within the District. There was, however, a national trend of a slight increase in burglary incidents. Crime statistics

could now be viewed on the Derbyshire Constabulary and District Council websites.

The Safer Neighbourhood Police Team was currently up to strength and would be gaining two additional PCSO's from March/April 2009.

Reference was made to the appointment of Parking Wardens which had been publicised on the local radio. There were a total of 32 Wardens throughout the County. In considering this matter, an issue was raised regarding vehicles parking on "yellow lines" and disabled parking areas without badges, in Midland Road, Swadlincote. The Director of Community Services advised that this scheme was being run by the District Council in partnership with the County Council and that individual incidents should be reported to Jack Twomey, Environmental Protection Manager at the District Council. Since the wardens only operated for a limited time of 18 hours per week within South Derbyshire, the Chairman advised that incidents could also be reported to local Ward Members. It was noted that free parking was available throughout the District.

Volunteers were currently being sought to run the Speedwatch Scheme within parishes in South Derbyshire, continuing from 1st March 2009. As well as the use of the speed gun, it had now been possible to acquire signs which lit up when driven past by speeding vehicles. In discussing this matter, a local resident raised the issue of the dangerous junction on the A444 at the Cricketts Public House, Netherseal. This was considered to be a 'black spot' and had no speed cameras sited.

It was agreed to refer this matter to the Traffic Management at the Police Headquarters and Derbyshire County Council, for further investigation.

An incident was reported involving the parking of Rainbow Waste vehicles and other vans on Hillside Road, Linton, which currently had no parking restrictions, obscuring vision along Hillside Road from the direction of Castle Gresley. There was a public footway on one side of the road only and this was part of the walking route to Linton School.

It was agreed to refer this matter to the local officer, WPC Croxall for further investigation.

An update on speeding traffic at Acresford, on the County border was requested. Reference was also made to two incidents where tools had been stolen in the Linton and Overseal areas. It was agreed that both of these issues would be given further consideration at the next Safer Neighbourhood Meeting, since they had previously been raised at that forum.

LA/21. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman advised that a leaflet had been distributed relating to a planning document called the Local Development Framework Core Strategy that would ultimately set out policies and major sites for development in South Derbyshire up to 2026. Consultation on the document had commenced and responses were required by 3rd April 2009. The main consultation booklet and questionnaire referred to in the leaflet would appear on the Council's website.

In the absence of the Forum Liaison Officer, the Chairman reported on the 'Trusted Trader' scheme. An initiative with Social Services to respond to concerns about certain service providers had led to the compilation of a database of trades people offering a variety of skills. Those involved in the scheme had been through rigorous checks and a leaflet and card were available providing further details on accessing the service and explaining how trades people could join the scheme.

LA/22. **MINUTES**

It was noted that V. Taylor listed under the members of the public present at the last meeting had been amended to read "W.J. Taylor".

The revised Minutes of the Linton Area Forum held on 22nd October 2008 were noted.

LA/23. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

A report had been circulated with the Agenda, which provided an update on the issues raised at the last Meeting.

Concerns had been raised previously about the narrowness of the footways on Hillside Road, Linton, near the Coton Park junction. It was advised that works had been undertaken to remove the leaves on the footway. However, concern remained regarding the narrowness of the footway, largely due to the eroding of the bank from the Manor's Estate.

It was agreed to request Derbyshire County Council to investigate this matter further and report back to the next Meeting.

With regard to the alleged installation of a water meter on the public footpath in Walton-on-Trent, it was noted that Severn Trent Water Limited had advised that any water meters sited on a public footpath to measure leakages would only have been used as a temporary measure and should now have been removed.

LA/24. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS**

A local Ward Member requested the provision of a grit bin on Donk Hill Road, Catton which sloped steeply and had been the cause of a number of accidents during the recent poor weather conditions. It was noted that the County Council's criteria had to be met before a decision could be made to the siting of a grit bin, including the gradient of any hill. The District Council would then be responsible for replenishment of the bin once emptied.

Additional winter maintenance was requested for the main road between Walton-on-Trent and Rosliston, used as the main route to local schools, which, at times had been virtually impassable during the inclement weather. It was suggested that the County Council could include this location in its gritting routes.

It was agreed to request Derbyshire County Council to investigate the matter further and report back to the next Meeting.

A local resident was concerned about under spending on street cleansing in the District and clarification was sought as to whether the works undertaken included the underneath of hedgerows.

A further issue was raised with regard to cleaning of recycling bins and reference was made to a particular incident at the Linton recycling centre, where a number of bins containing cardboard had been left overflowing. It was considered that the frequency of the emptying might need to be increased.

It was agreed to refer the above matters to the District Council's Clean Team for further investigation.

A local resident raised the issue of the use of empty cement silos on a residential development site in Castle Gresley for fly tipping. The rubbish was escaping from the silos and being blown around the site and surrounding area. It was questioned who the development company was. Officers advised that this could be both an environmental health and a planning enforcement issue.

It was agreed to investigate the matter further and report back to the next Meeting.

LA/25. **COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES**

(a) Libraries Presentation

The Area Forum received a presentation on the role of the Derbyshire Libraries Service. The County Council was seeking residents' feedback on how the service could be improved, to encourage greater use. Statistics were provided on the number of visits to libraries both nationally and within Derbyshire. The current range of services was outlined, including free Broadband, the free hire of books and availability of other media and online facilities. It was explained that library facilities were provided through a range of venues. Reference was made to the awards the service had received, including its Charter Mark status. It was noted that the home library service delivered materials to residents. There were publications in Braille, prescription books, the school libraries service and work with Surestart. An information sheet inviting comments had been circulated and it was requested that these be completed and returned to the County Council.

Reference was made to 2008 being the "National Year of Reading", during which the library service had worked to raise the level of awareness and the value of reading. It was intended to build on the progress made during the current year.

A number of comments were received on the presentation. In particular, the library service was congratulated on the provision of its mobile service within the District. Attention was drawn to the excellent signposting of information areas within the static libraries. A question was also raised with regard to the donation of books to mobile libraries.

(b) “Quids In” Welfare Rights Campaign

A County Council Member raised awareness of the welfare rights campaign entitled “Quids In” and advised that he held a number of explanatory leaflets giving further information on the campaign, which could be distributed to any interested members of the public.

LA/26. **DISTRICT COUNCIL ISSUES – PROGRESS ON CONCIL PRIORITIES**

The Area Forum received a presentation from the Director of Community Services on the Council’s priorities and budget for the period 2009/14. Initially, this covered the new Corporate Plan and evidence base, with details of the consultation undertaken and the top priorities identified. Particular issues were highlighted, including the impact on the District of the current economic position, as compared to the rest of the region. It was noted that consultation exercises were undertaken with a variety of outside bodies to seek residents’ views in compiling the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan would be submitted for approval to the Council at the end of March 2009.

Reference was made to the budget for 2009/14 and the District Council’s portion of the Council Tax and services it provided. Further information was provided regarding the 2009/10 Draft Budget Plan and issues for the following five years. It was stressed that the Council had plans to close a future budget deficit and that the Council did not invest in foreign banks.

Once approved, the revised Corporate Plan would be submitted to the next Area Forum. It was noted that various documents were available on the District Council’s website, including the 2007/8 Annual Report and the 2008/13 Medium Term Financial Plan.

Arising from this presentation, a number of questions were asked and responses provided. In particular, these concerned the recycling of plastics; the District Council’s total income and the purchase of empty properties for use as council housing.

LA/27. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next Meeting would be held on Monday, 30th March 2009 at Coton-in-the-Elms Community Centre.

R. WHEELER

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 8.15 p.m.