

MELBOURNE AREA MEETING

31st January 2006

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Carroll (Chair), Councillor Shepherd (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Atkin, Bell, Harrison, Pabla, Mrs. Renwick and Mrs. Wheeler.

J. Jones (Director of Corporate Services), P. Spencer (Democratic Services), P. Woolrich (Policy and Economic Regeneration) and B. Jones.

Derbyshire County Council Representatives

Councillors Harrison and Jones.

D. Tysoe (County Secretary) and A. Bond (Democratic Services).

Derbyshire Constabulary

Sergeant Thandi.

Parish Council/Meeting Representatives

E. Hicklin and J. Rex (Aston-on-Trent Parish Council), D. Seed (Barrow on Trent Parish Council), F. Mitchell (Elvaston Parish Council), N. Hawksworth and A. Mitchell (Shardlow and Great Wilne Parish Council), L. South (Smisby Parish Council) and P. Watson (Ingleby Parish Meeting).

Members of the Public

J. Barnes J. Burden P. Burden Mr. J Dallman Mrs. J Dallman C. Ford F. Hinds J. Hinds P. Laughlin A. Madeley A. Moseley L. Pollard A. Redfern C. Robey R. Saxby P. Water K. Whewell A. Williams M. Wilson.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from County and District Councillor Ford, Mrs. C. Barker (Barrow on Trent Parish Council) S. Green (Ticknall Parish Council) and R. Wheat (Stanton-by-Bridge Parish Meeting).

MA/18. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Melbourne Area Meeting held on 2nd November 2005 were noted.

MA/19. **CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Further to Minute No. MA/13, the Chair gave an update on the review of Area Meeting boundaries. It had been agreed to retain the current arrangements for the time being. The Chair reported that the Derbyshire

Constabulary was undertaking a review of the areas covered by its Beat Officers. For the Melbourne area, P. C. Fetherstone would replace P. C. Staley. Sergeant Thandi was invited to provide further information. She reported that a new police station would be established in Melbourne, confirmed details of the areas which would be covered from it, and the staffing arrangements, including Special P.C's and Police Community Support Officers. In response to a question from Mr. Bellis about overnight cover, Sergeant Thandi gave details of the likely shift patterns. Mr. F. Mitchell asked about Officer cover for the Elvaston Parish. Councillor Harrison sought clarification over the telephone numbers to be used to report incidents. In emergencies, residents should telephone 999 or (0845) 123 3333.

MA/20. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chair reviewed those items raised at the last meeting and gave an update on progress. Publicity information had been received from the Nottingham East Midlands Airport about the consultation meetings on its draft Master Plan. Arriva had also been invited to attend the Meeting, to discuss bus route alterations. In the main this concerned the withdrawal of a direct service between Swadlincote and Derby, particularly to serve the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary. She explained the efforts of various people to lobby the Bus Company, but without success. **It was agreed to write to the Primary Care Trust about bus route alterations and to seek its assistance, to lobby Arriva and require the introduction of a direct service to the Infirmary.**

MA/21. **BUDGET 2006/07 OVERVIEW AND CORPORATE PLAN 2006/09**

The Chair sought the approval of those present to vary the agenda order. She introduced this item, explaining that the community's feedback was sought on priorities, to determine where Council resources were spent. Jayne Jones, Director of Corporate Services at the District Council, gave a presentation, initially on the Draft Corporate Plan for the period 2006 to 2009. An outline was given of the consultation undertaken as part of this process. The Council's top three priorities were reported as reducing crime and the fear of crime, tackling the causes and effects of anti-social behaviour and providing efficient and effective customer services. There were a number of action areas, ranked under various themes. Additional action areas were reported on developing the capacity of the community and voluntary sector and preventing floods and other emergencies. Providing opportunities to take part in physical activity and working in partnership to promote healthy lifestyles were further action areas, together with addressing environmental issues within rural communities and promoting citizenship. A further slide showed the proposed way forward in developing the plan.

Residents views were sought by participating in an exercise to highlight priorities on a series of charts displayed around the venue.

Following the exercise, the Director of Corporate Services continued with a presentation on the budget overview and forecasted financial position for 2006 - 2009. In terms of revenue, the overall position was forecasted to remain relatively healthy for the period to 2009. The Government had provided information on the financial settlement for South Derbyshire for the next two years. For 2006/07 the settlement was 7% or £400,000 in cash

terms. For 2007/08, a 6% settlement had been awarded, which was a further £375,000 in cash terms. Additionally, money would be provided to introduce a free travel scheme for the over 60s within the District. With this revenue funding, it should be possible to maintain a sufficient level of general reserves as a contingency. There would be £1.4m of additional revenue resources available over the next three-year period.

The position on capital was much tighter. There might be a need to review the current 5-year planned programme and there was a forecasted shortfall in resources of approximately £350,000. There was a need to identify resources to finance any new proposals. With regard to the Council Tax levels, the current financial plans had been based on assumed increases of 4.5% for the next three years. This was under review and would be determined by the Council at its Meeting on 2nd March 2006, together with the final budget for 2006/07.

A resident referred to the formula for calculating Government grant contributions. Over previous years, South Derbyshire had not received its full grant entitlement, because of subsidy arrangements. The Director of Corporate Services confirmed the adjustments imposed when there was a change of funding arrangements. **Several residents requested more detailed information on the Council's budget and were asked to leave contact details at the Help Desk, so that this could be supplied.** In particular, reference was made to staffing costs. The Director confirmed that as a service industry there was a high proportion spent on salaries and other staff related costs. Another resident had submitted a request under the Freedom of Information Act. The Director of Corporate Services sought further details. She explained that certain information could be supplied, whilst other information might be withheld and confirmed that a charge could be levied if it took significant time to collate the requested information. She also explained that further budget information was available via the Council's web site and was provided on the Council Tax bill.

Mr. Watson of Ingleby Parish Meeting displayed a copy of 'The News', the Council's Newspaper. He asked how much the publication would cost each year and this was £40,000 for the four issues circulated. He was very critical of the publication, its content and he noted that the cost equated to 1% on the District's Council Tax. He made a comparison to a parish newsletter and noted that this publication had not been highlighted as a priority by residents in the budget consultation exercise. In reply, the Chair explained the efforts of the Council to inform its 83,000 residents. Through the newspaper the Council could publish important information, which could not be guaranteed through issuing press releases for other publications. Another resident was critical of the newspaper. He then submitted further complaints about the quality of road sweeping and the lack of police for the area. He referred to the number of plans and policies which the District Council produced and felt that little action was taken.

MA/22. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mr. Watson of Ingleby Parish Meeting referred to the amount of literature received from the District Council and a variety of other agencies. He estimated that approximately 90% of this literature was irrelevant to the Parish and he was concerned about the wasted time and money in

production and postage. He quoted a number of examples to demonstrate this including a County Council publication about bus services over the Christmas period, which had only been received in January. He felt that better use could be made of e-mail and requested that only relevant information be circulated. The Chair accepted the point about the use of e-mail and Mr. Tysoe agreed to relay the message about the ineffective flyer.

There was a further discussion about Police telephone contact numbers. Previously, Beat Officers had provided their mobile telephone numbers to residents. It was noted that when there was a change of Officer this became ineffective and the Chair reiterated that the main contact numbers were 999 or 0845 123 3333. The Chair then publicised a flyer that had been circulated, reminding residents of their opportunity to ask questions at a number of other Council meetings.

Mrs. Mitchell of Shardlow asked whether the Council was introducing a scheme to fine residents who left their wheeled bins on the pavement overnight. The Chair and Councillor Mrs. Wheeler advised that it was an aspiration of Government to introduce such a scheme, but the District Council had yet to discuss it.

There was also a further discussion about changes to the Arriva bus service and its impact on South Derbyshire residents. A resident complained about the problems from noise and vehicle fumes, particularly late at night and early in the morning. It was questioned whether the Environmental Health Department could undertake noise monitoring.

Councillor Harrison reported the background to this route alteration, which had been introduced without consultation. Arriva had threatened to cancel the previous route unless a subsidy was provided by Derbyshire County Council. At the same time, the Government was offering a grant to encourage public transport to airports. He spoke about the subsidies involved, the lack of use of the new service and the number of bus movements each year through Melbourne. People would now have to change bus in Melbourne to travel to the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary (DRI). He advised that he had met the relevant Cabinet Member at Derbyshire County Council to lobby on this issue.

He was also concerned about the potential for a bus shelter to be erected within the Village and the risk of further antisocial behaviour that might result from it. There were no toilet facilities within this area and problems were caused by people urinating against walls. This was a conservation area, so it was not acceptable to build new public toilets. He had written to Arriva to request one service per hour to pass the Chellaston school and travel on to the DRI, but was still awaiting a response. He had asked the Derbyshire Constabulary, the DRI and the Chellaston school to write in support of his suggestion. He had sought the support of the local Police Inspector that a further bus shelter should not be erected within Melbourne. He also felt that the number of services should be reduced until there was a demand for them.

Mrs. Burden thanked Councillors for their support. She was disappointed that Arriva had not attended the meeting, commented on the potential passenger numbers for the Airport and those for the previous service to the DRI. She spoke about the limitations of the local travel scheme and made a

comparison to a service from Loughborough into Derby City Centre. She also questioned subsidy arrangements and the Chair supplied further information.

The Chair agreed with the points raised by Councillor Harrison and explained the work she had undertaken to seek the reintroduction of a service to the DRI. Arriva had responded that there was not sufficient demand for this route, but she urged residents to continue campaigning for at least an hourly service. Mr. Ford commented on the lack of bus services in the Aston on Trent area and it was noted that this was the same for many areas of the District. Mr. Watson suggested that separate routes should be provided to the Airport and into Derby. Councillor Harrison had posed this question and been informed that journey times over one hour caused confusion. Mr. Madeley questioned whether the interchange could be relocated to the Airport. Mrs. Hawksworth referred to the closure of the Grove Hospital and noted that this unit had been moved to the DRI, so another group of employees would be affected by the route change. **It was agreed that Arriva be invited to attend the next Area Meeting.**

Reference was made to the Hatton Flood Alleviation Scheme and a resident questioned how many households would benefit from these flood defence measures. **It was agreed to research this matter and to provide a reply to Mr. Waters of Ambaston.** Mr. Mitchell commented that flood defence works were usually undertaken where they would benefit the greatest number of residents.

Following a question from Mr. Bellis, details were provided of the additional, ring fenced funding received for a free travel scheme within Derbyshire. The scheme would be available to certain sectors of the community and the Council hoped to negotiate with the bus companies to extend it over county boundaries. The previous 'Gold Card' scheme provided for half the fare to be met. It was hoped to use the same cards for the new scheme, to avoid the grant funding being spent on administration costs.

A resident complained about the condition of footpaths in Ticknall and gave specific examples of problems along and in the vicinity of the A514. There were concerns about the speed of traffic and where heavy commercial vehicles mounted the pavement. County Councillor Jones responded and had pursued some of these issues already. He explained that an improvement scheme had been submitted for one of the sites mentioned, but it had not been successful in previous budget rounds. **Councillor Jones offered to pursue the matters raised about the condition of footpaths in Ticknall.**

An update was sought on the occupation of land at Acre Lane, Shardlow by itinerants. Councillor Shepherd offered to speak to the resident after the meeting. Councillor Harrison advised that a legal decision elsewhere in the Country had impacted on the Council's Legal Department in pursuing this matter.

MA/23. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Melbourne Area Meeting would be held on Tuesday 9th May 2006 at the Shardlow Village Hall.

J. CARROLL

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 8.55 p.m.