

MELBOURNE AREA MEETING

9th May 2006

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

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

I. Reid (Deputy Chief Executive), P. Spencer (Democratic Services) and B. Jones (Helpdesk).

County Council Representatives

Councillors Harrison and Jones.

J. Roberts (Democratic Services).

Derbyshire Constabulary

Sergeant Thandi.

Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service

Station Officer Alex Johnson.

Parish Council / Meeting Representatives

J. Green and F. Mitchell (Elvaston Parish Council), N. Hawksworth (Shardlow and Great Wilne Parish Council) and R. Wheat (Stanton by Bridge Parish Meeting).

Members of the Public

D. Bayliss, P. Dagley, C. Ford, J. Morrish, G. Pollard, R. Saxby, P. Waters and K. Whewell

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from C. Barker and D. Seed (Barrow-on-Trent Parish Council), M. Sharpe (Melbourne Parish Council), A. Mitchell (Shardlow Parish Council), P. Watson (Ingleby Parish Meeting), and Mr. D. Tysoe (Derbyshire County Council).

MA/24. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Melbourne Area Meeting held on 31st January 2006 were noted.

MA/25. REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING

Under Minute No. MA/22, there had been a discussion about a potential scheme to fine residents who left their wheeled bins on the pavement overnight. In response to a resident's question, the Chair confirmed the Council had no plans to introduce such a scheme at this time. She reminded residents of the concerns raised at the last Meeting about alterations to Arriva bus services. An outline was given of the actions taken since that time, but Arriva was not prepared to attend this public meeting. The Primary Care Trust had written in support of the Council's endeavours to re-instate

this service. Councillor Harrison added that similar support had been provided by the Chellaston School and the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary. Arriva had offered to allow passengers to utilise a longer bus service to reach the desired destination, for the same fee, but this was not acceptable. It was considered that Arriva had no intention of changing its policy on this issue.

Following the requests made at the last Meeting, further information on the Council's budget and about flood alleviation works had been sent to the residents who had requested it. Mr. Roberts of Derbyshire County Council gave an update on the issues raised at the last Meeting, regarding footways in Ticknall and the production of leaflets and publications. He agreed to respond to Mr. Watson on the latter issue directly.

MA/26. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS

Questions were initially invited on Policing matters. Councillor Harrison referred to the Safer Neighbourhood Police Meetings. There had been some confusion over the area in which Barrow-on-Trent was included and about the Beat Officer cover. It was requested that information be circulated to residents to clarify these issues and to give dates of future Meetings. Sergeant Thandi confirmed that there was a new Beat Officer for this area, PC M. Simms. She had received a letter from Barrow-on-Trent Parish Council and would respond to this. Councillor Harrison also reported on a serious incident involving youths and he praised the Police for the action taken to respond to it. The Chair thanked Sergeant Thandi for her attendance.

A request was made for an additional crossing over the River Trent to relieve traffic volumes on the Swarkestone Bridge. Councillor Harrison explained that when the District Council discussed the Local Transport Plan, he had raised this issue. A further route could be provided from the A50 trunk road to the Nottingham East Midlands Airport, bypassing Melbourne and Kings Newton. However, such a route would impact on Weston-on-Trent and be very costly to provide. Councillor Carroll was mindful that the weight limits along the Swarkestone Bridge were sometimes abused, but there were access rights to a number of properties in this area. A resident clarified that there were concerns about the volume of traffic and a serious traffic accident would cause significant delays. Mr. Roberts advised that this issue had been discussed over a number of years. He offered to refer this matter back to the County Council and to submit a report to the next Meeting.

Problems were being experienced in Shardlow with 'for sale' signs being placed on public property. Residents were mindful that this was a conservation area and such signage should be displayed at the property being sold. The Parish Council had been trying to get the estate agents concerned to co-operate. It was considering introducing a byelaw and questioned the likely level of support from the District and County Councils to this proposal. It was felt that such a byelaw was not needed as legislation was already in place to deal with fly posting. Ian Reid, the Council's Deputy Chief Executive gave further advice about highway law. County Councillor Harrison offered to pursue this issue and to provide a report to the next Meeting. Mr. Ford explained that similar problems were experienced in Aston-on-Trent, where there had been seven signs in one location. The signs in question had been removed through vandalism, but it was noted that they were not in close proximity to the development. Mrs. Green of Elvaston Parish explained that such signage had been attached to the Parish Notice Board, but this had been removed following discussions. Mr. Waters had previously taken advice

on this issue. He confirmed that it was classed as fly posting and explained how he had dealt with the signage.

A complaint was made about the condition of Long Horse Bridge over the River Trent, near to Sawley. Reinstatement works were required by Derbyshire County Council as this bridge had been in a poor condition for many years. County Councillor Harrison confirmed that he had been trying for over three years to get the bridge restored. The improvement works would cost in excess of one million pounds and some responsibility rested with British Waterways. Further delays had been experienced because of the rights of a local angling club. Derbyshire County Council was asked to pursue this matter and to provide a report to the next Meeting.

A resident thanked the Council over the sensitive grass cutting arrangements, to avoid damaging spring flowers.

Mr Bayliss explained the concerns of residents due to a lack of footway provision in Swarkestone. He quoted a number of specific examples and the previous promises to provide footways within the Village. County Councillor Harrison offered to pursue this matter. County Councillor Jones thought that a scheme might have been included within the County Council's Capital Programme, but there had been some budget cut backs.

Mr. Ford advised that signage was still in place for the former Aston Hall Hospital and it was requested that this be removed. The County Council were asked to undertake this.

MA/27. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date and venue of the next Melbourne Area Meeting would be confirmed in due course. It was hoped to use the Stenson Fields Primary School as the venue for the next Meeting.

MA/28. PRESENTATION BY DERBYSHIRE FIRE SERVICE

The Chair introduced Alex Johnson of the Derbyshire Fire Service. She gave an outline of the services provided through a Powerpoint and video presentation. She explained the cost of delivering the Fire Service and the pride of its Officers in delivering the service. The Fire Service was seeking to change its approach, as the majority of its work was currently reactive. It was hoped to provide a more proactive, preventative service. She spoke of the consultation arrangements to date and outlined the various plans and strategies which cascaded from an area strategy, to a community safety plan and ultimately to individual Fire Station plans. She then referred to community fire safety and home risk assessment, as the majority of problems occurred in domestic properties.

Ms. Johnson touched on the educational visits undertaken and particularly the fire safe counselling, for which Derbyshire was the national leader on this initiative. Other areas of work were to educate young offenders on fire safety issues and to give talks to community groups. Where a fire occurred, the Service would now contact residents in the vicinity, in the hope of avoiding similar problems. Maps were displayed showing the location of fire incidents in the whole Derby South area and those within the Melbourne Area Division.

The Officer published the free home risk assessment service. Anyone wishing to arrange an assessment could contact the Fire Service on (01332) 345440. Publicity leaflets were displayed and residents were encouraged to take a copy.

The Officer explained the endeavours to increase the number of smoke alarms installed in properties throughout the area. She also referred to joint work with other sectors, particularly for vulnerable people.

County Councillor Harrison sought further information about the specialist units that the Fire and Rescue Service had established. The Officer gave an outline of the capacity to respond to major incidents, to deal with flooding and decontamination problems. There was a regional support approach, to work with neighbouring fire services. She also spoke about the national risk analysis undertaken and felt confident that the Fire Service could respond to any major incident. A particular example was the major fire at an oil refinery earlier in the year, in which the Derbyshire Fire Service had been involved. There was now an integrated approach to ensure that the equipment of each Fire Service was compatible, to deal with incidents more effectively.

In response to a question from Councillor Atkin, the Officer explained the Fire Service statistics available via the internet and she was happy to supply tailored statistics to any person wishing to receive them. Mr. Waters questioned whether the Fire Service was still responsible for the issue of Fire Certificates. Ms. Johnson explained changes to the legislation and revised arrangements that would come into force in October of this year. Mr. Waters felt that this was a retrograde step, because of the loss of local knowledge. The Officer confirmed how the Fire Service would be involved in the future, being consulted on building control issues and having inspection and enforcement powers through the Fire Safety Order. She felt this would ensure commercial property was safer through the Service's enforcement role.

Mr. Ford questioned how the Fire Service could justify the cost of fully trained Officers being involved in the supply of smoke detectors. He felt that this could be undertaken by other people. It was explained that Fire Fighters' salaries would need to be paid whether they were based at the Fire Station or undertaking this more proactive role. The Chair agreed that this was making better use of the Officers' time and was a cost effective way of reducing the number of fires.

It was questioned whether the Long Eaton Fire Station in the adjacent borough of Erewash was being downgraded to a retained fire station. The Officer was not aware of this proposal at the present time. Councillor Harrison referred to proposals for an East Midlands Call Centre for the Fire Service, based at Castle Donington in Leicestershire. There had been concerns that this would impact on the ability of Fire Fighters to locate incidents. The Officer confirmed that the new call centre would become operational in 2007/08. She assured residents that through the technology available, the call centre would be able to pinpoint the location of any incident.

A resident was concerned that constricted roads, particularly with on-street parking would prevent the Fire Service from reaching certain locations. The Officer explained the various methods which could be used to ensure they accessed any incident.

Mr. Mitchell explained the water supply arrangements in Ambaston and that periodic water pressure checks were undertaken, to ensure there was a

supply in times of emergency. It appeared that such inspections were no longer taking place. Ms. Johnson explained that the Fire Service now had a specialist team and it should undertake an inspection at least annually. Each fire engine had a sufficient capacity to deal, for example with a typical house fire. Alternatively, the service had water tankers where a larger supply was required. She requested that the resident contact the Fire Service, so that this issue could be investigated.

County Councillor Jones asked about the proportion of properties within the area that were already fitted with smoke alarms. It had previously been estimated that up to 70% of properties were fitted with a smoke detector, but there were concerns that some residents did not maintain the batteries within them. The Chair thanked Alex Johnson for the informative presentation, which was applauded by those present.

J. D. CARROLL

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 8.20 p.m.