

ETWALL AREA MEETING

22nd August 2001

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Whyman (Chair), and Councillors Bale, Hood and Mrs. Walton. F. McArdle (Chief Executive), P. Spencer (Members' Services) and B. Jones (Helpdesk).

County Council Representatives

Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn and L. Partington (Emergency Planning).

Member of Parliament

Mr. M. Todd MP.

Parish Council Representatives

H. Thornton (Burnaston Parish Council), N. Ireland and J. Newton (Etwall Parish Council), J. Chisnall and L. Nash (Findern Parish Council) and C. Buckston (Sutton-on-the-Hill Parish Meeting).

Members of the Public

M. Evans, M. Martindale, I. Smith, J. Dove, G. Wale, S. Jolly, S. Fraser, B. Astridge, S. Hartley and R. Palmer.

EA/1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

It was noted that Councillor B. Whyman had been appointed Chair of the Area Meeting at a Council Meeting held on 21st June 2001.

EA/2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District Councillor Lemmon, P. C. Charlton of Derbyshire Constabulary and Mrs. E. Cowley.

EA/3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

It was agreed Councillor F. Hood be appointed Vice-Chair of the Area Meeting.

EA/4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Area Meeting held on 1st February 2001 were noted. In respect of Minute No. EA/19 Mr. N. Ireland reported he was still awaiting information from Mr. Nock of the Highways Agency. Under Minute No. EA/21, a presentation had been made on the future of Policing in South Derbyshire. There was concern that the proposals for changing policing arrangements in the area had not lived up to expectations. County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn explained that a liaison meeting with parish councils was to be held at the Police Headquarters in Ripley on Monday 17th September 2001 at 7.00 p.m. The Member of Parliament, Mr. Todd, explained the further recruitments planned over the next eighteen month period. An update was also provided on the Hilton Village weight limit and speed monitoring in that area by the Constabulary.

Mr. Ireland of Etwall Parish Council reported that problems were still being experienced with the recycling bins of the King George V Playing Fields in Etwall and he asked that the District Council look at the timing and frequency of emptying the recycling bins. The Chair advised of a new joint recycling initiative with other local authorities being undertaken by a company called Brightstar. This provided for the collection of all household waste, on-site separation and the re-use of materials to make new products.

Further to Minute No. EA/25, concerning problems with drainage at Main Road, Etwall and the cycle track, Mr. Smith of Etwall provided an update. A positive meeting had been held with a representative of Derbyshire County Council and he wished to ensure that these proposals were pursued. It was agreed that Mr. Smith speak to County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn after the Meeting on this issue.

EA/5. REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING

The Chair reviewed those items raised at the last Meeting and explained the progress made in each case. With regard to noise from the A50 trunk road, a consultation exercise had been undertaken with county councils on the prioritised list of roads to receive noise mitigation measures. An announcement was expected shortly on its findings.

The Member of Parliament commented on the offers of compensation provided to residents of the area and to the District Council which had a number of properties affected by the noise problems. Frank McArdle, Chief Executive of the District Council, explained that this would be considered by the Council and a statement would be provided in due course.

At the last meeting, the maintenance of highway verges and provision of bus shelters were discussed. These issues had been referred to Derbyshire County Council and a response had recently been received setting out the County Council's position which was reported. A question was submitted about ragwort. Councillor Bale provided an outline of the problems caused to livestock by this notifiable weed and felt that Derbyshire County Council should be requested to seek its eradication. There had some weed treatment in Hilton adjacent to the A50 trunk road but there were other problems within the Parish. The Member of Parliament advised that the County Council would respond in treating specific sites and he offered to pursue the problem reported at Hilton. Residents were asked to report further problems to David Harvey at the County Council. Problems with litter along the A50 trunk road were also reported and Mr. I. Smith gave an overview of discussions with Connect Roads. He sought information about the timetable for litter picking throughout this part of the District. The related issues of flytipping and gully weed treatment were raised and it was agreed to circulate any available information on treatment schedules.

With regard to that area of land in the ownership of the Wolverhampton and Dudley Brewery at Hilton, it was understood that this site was to be sold. The site was in an untidy condition and the Council was requested to take enforcement action to remedy the situation.

EA/6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS

It was reported that a letter had been received from Mrs. Cowley, a resident of Egginton. The Chair read extracts of the letter which explained that two further road accidents had occurred at the Etwall/Egginton crossroads. Mrs. Cowley was seeking the support at the Area Meeting to lobby Derbyshire County Council in requesting improvement measures. County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn commented that this matter had been investigated by the County Council and the Derbyshire Constabulary. Details were provided of the maintenance work undertaken to date and it was understood that the County Council was still considering its position on this matter. Several residents speculated on possible solutions to the perceived problems. It was agreed that Egginton Parish Council be asked to liaise with County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn to pursue this issue.

Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn explained that Derbyshire County Council had introduced a public question time session. The next one was to be held on Wednesday 19th September 2001 at 2.00 p.m. and any person wishing to submit a question should give notice in writing by the preceding Friday.

Problems were reported with flytipping in Sutton-on-the-Hill and Frank McArdle, the Council's Chief Executive, explained how it dealt with flytipping and the related problem of abandoned vehicles. Residents were reminded of the large geographic area of South Derbyshire and there was only a limited budget available for the service. It was questioned whether there had been an increase in flytipping since the Council had introduced a charge for the collection of bulky refuse. Such statistics were not at present available. There were a number positive comments submitted about the responsive service provided and the Chief Executive agreed to pursue the specific problem reported at Sutton-on-the-Hill and a further reported problem at Willow Pit Lane, Hilton.

A suggested discussion item for the next meeting was the Best Value Review of Sheltered Housing. Questions were submitted about this Review and the Chair confirmed that no decision had yet been taken on the future of this service regardless of the current press speculation. A thorough consultation exercise was being undertaken and no decision would be made until the consultation had been concluded. The Chair explained the purpose of sheltered housing, the role of other agencies and the variation in the quality of the current service provided. Financial aspects were reported and at present some £300,000 of subsidy was made to the sheltered housing service. From 2003, revised Government guidance would prevent such subsidy continuing.

A resident expressed disappointment at the publicity arrangements associated with the modernisation of the Local Government Structure in South Derbyshire. An article had been included in a local free newspaper circulating in the area and the resident felt that this issue should have been publicised in a manner similar to that used for the Best Value Performance Plan.

EA/7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Etwall Area Meeting would be confirmed in due course. It was proposed that the Frank Wickham be used as the venue for this Meeting, subject to its availability.

EA/8. BEST VALUE

The Area Meeting received a presentation from Frank McArdle, Chief Executive at the District Council. Information had been circulated prior to the start of the meeting to provide a summary of the Best Value process. Mr. McArdle gave an

outline of the requirements placed on local councils by Best Value, the need to publish a Best Value Performance Plan and to establish a Best Value Review Programme to examine all services over a five year period. Details were provided of those reviews completed in year one of the Programme and those proposed for the current year which were either underway or due to start shortly. Each service would be subject to an inspection by an independent assessor appointed by the Audit Commission. The inspector would make a judgement on how good the service was and whether it would improve in the future. For South Derbyshire, the two services inspected to date were the Development Control function and Sheltered Housing and the results of both reviews were reported. Information was provided on the community consultation requirements for the Best Value Process. The Chair provided further information, commenting on his own experience as a member of the Best Value Review Team for the Cash Office.

EA/9. CONSULTATION EXERCISE ON THE MODERNISATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH DERBYSHIRE

Two documents had been circulated prior to the Meeting to provide information on this subject. Frank McArdle, Chief Executive at the District Council explained the options available to the Council in implementing the Government's Modernising Agenda. There had been widespread consultation through the publication "Which Way, Have Your Say". Some 32,000 copies of this document had been circulated through the local free newspapers. Consultation had also been undertaken with parish councils and details were provided of the responses to the consultation exercise.

Since that time a modernised committee structure had been introduced and information was provided on the key features of this structure. There was increased notice of meetings and new rights for the public including a question time slot at all meetings. Mr. McArdle also explained the roles of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The new structure would provide for open and transparent local government.

EA/10. COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN FOR CIVIL EMERGENCIES

The Area Meeting received a presentation from Liz Partington of Derbyshire County Council's Emergency Planning Division. She explained that increasingly, the public expected a proactive response to emergencies, irrespective of legal obligations and potential costs. The County Council was seeking to raise awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the various agencies and to highlight the potential for a new partnership approach where the community could help to protect themselves and each other during an incident. The document had been produced in conjunction with the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils and the County's Emergency Services. The document would be made available to town and parish councils throughout Derbyshire to provide guidance on dealing with emergency incidents and the collation of local information.

It was stressed that the emergency services should always be contacted and details were provided of the County Council resources available to respond to incidents. Potential hazards and threats for Derbyshire included road and rail accidents, air disasters and terrorist attacks. There were a number of companies throughout Derbyshire which handled potentially dangerous chemicals and details were provided of those statutory and non-statutory hazardous sites throughout the County. The potential for football stadia disasters and incidents resulting from large organised events such as open air concerts was also recognised. [Page 4 of 5](#)

Questions were submitted on the practical operation of the emergency plan and it was questioned whether the document could be adapted to provide an emergency plan for a local school. Following last year's flooding problems, Mrs. Partington also advised that a flood defence fayre was to be held at the Bakewell Agricultural Business Centre on Tuesday 18th September 2001. The Chair thanked Mrs. Partington for the informative presentation.

B. WHYMAN

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 9.25 p.m.