

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

NEWHALL

13th July 2010

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Mrs. Farrington (Chairman), and Councillors Bambrick, Richards and Wilkins.

M. Alflat (Director of Community Services), P. Evans (Direct Services Manager), D. Townsend (Democratic Services) and C. Lukaszewicz (Helpdesk).

Derbyshire County Council Representatives

M. Ashworth (Deputy Director of Environmental Services) and P. Jameson (Forum Liaison Officer).

Members of the Public

P. Bambrick , M. Biddle, T. Biddle, S. Garland, R. Holden, R. House, R.W. Hughes, C. Maddock, J. Pallett, O. Pallett, K.J. Parker, M. Richards, F. Ridout, E. Tunnicliffe and B. Woods.

NA/1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

It was noted that Councillor Mrs. Farrington had been appointed Chairman of the Newhall Area Forum at the Annual Council Meeting.

NA/2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillors Dunn, Mrs. Gillespie, Lacey, Mrs. Mead and Murray, P. Foy, G. Hall, B. Parker, M. Perry and C. Wright.

NA/3. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

It was agreed that Councillor Mrs. Mead be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Newhall Area Forum for the ensuing year.

NA/4. **POLICE ISSUES**

Sergeant Pitt reported that a new Inspector, Paul Cannon, was now in post in Swadlincote.

He also provided further information on crime statistics, compared to the same period last year, and confirmed that overall, crime had increased by 11%. He

added that the next “Have your say” event, was to be held on 14th August 2010 between 10.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. at Sainsbury’s in Swadlincote.

Sergeant Pitt reported that there had been a speight of armed robberies in the area, however police believed they now knew the offenders. A man had been arrested and charged with 6 armed robberies, 5 in Derbyshire and 1 in Staffordshire. They were looking for one more suspect. There had been no more offences reported following the first arrest.

A resident expressed concern that the local Inspector did not appear to remain in post for a long period of time. Sergeant Pitt responded that he was unsure how long this Inspector would remain at Swadlincote, however it was normally expected that an Inspector remain for a minimum of 2 years.

Sergeant Pitt confirmed that following a recent reorganisation, and since changing the number of police divisions from 4 to 3, front line services had not been affected.

NA/5. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Newhall Area Forum held on 25th March 2010 were noted.

In regard to the footpath between Meadow Lane and Church Street, the Forum Liaison Officer reported that it had been approved that this footpath be recognised as a public right of way. An Order had been drafted and would be issued, along with public notices. If the developer objected, which he could within 42 days of the notice, it would be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate for a final decision.

Mike Ashworth gave further information on rights of way, and he expressed regret at the amount of time that these issues took, due to the legal implications.

NA/6. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chairman reviewed those items raised at the last Meeting and reported the progress made in each case.

With regard to parking in Newhall (Sunnyside/Bretby Road), the Forum Liaison Officer confirmed that public consultation had taken place and the County Council was proposing restrictions to parking during school arrival and dispersal times. A resident responded that if cars were allowed to park in this area, it made traffic slow down, and he believed that the problems with speeding cars would be exacerbated if there were no parked cars on the road. The Forum Liaison Officer advised that this situation would continue to be monitored.

With regard to parking in Newhall it was pointed out that this problem was not on High Street, but on Orchard Street, which was around the corner.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to ask the Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) to increase their patrols in this area. M. Ashworth also asked that

residents make a note of the worst times and advise the Forum Liaison Officer who would contact the CEOs.

With regard to parking at the junction of Orchard Street/Parliament Street, Newhall, it was confirmed that the police could enforce against cars parked within 10 metres of a junction but only when it was dark. At other times the 10 metres was considered guidance only. A resident confirmed that problems still persisted and the Forum Liaison Officer advised that Highways Officers would continue to monitor this area.

With regard to land at Plummer Road, it was pointed out that there was only a single five-bar gate protecting the site, and it was felt that this area needed further protection to avoid any illegal encampment.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to look into improving security at this site.

It was reported that the sign at Ryder Close Industrial Estate had still not been replaced.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to look into this.

In respect of the football field off Oversetts Road, it was confirmed that the District Council had met with a local resident, and was currently considering ways of making improvements to the entrance to the site, including better provision for mobility scooters. Repairs were also planned to a seat damaged by vandals.

NA/7. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS**

A resident raised the question of illegal encampments around the area, and pointed out that he did not believe that the protection of some areas was sufficient. Councillor Richards confirmed that there was money available from the Safer Neighbourhoods Partnership to deter anti-social behaviour, which might be used for this purpose. He added that the District Council had spent £13,000 in moving on, and cleaning up after illegal traveller encampments, and money should now be invested in deterrents. The Director of Community Services responded that it was a problem, as common land had to be available for public access. In addition, he gave examples of where there had been deterrents, which had proved suitable, such as concrete blocks at the skateboard park and trenches on land at Church Street. He added that the Officers were proactively looking at sites in an attempt to keep them as secure as possible.

The Director of Community Services agreed to look at the security of land at Oversetts Road, where travellers had recently set up an encampment.

The Chairman reported that an email had been received from a Newhall resident expressing concern that land at Plummer Road, Newhall had been earmarked for social housing and a bungalow, which would be used by Adult Care as a home for people with learning disabilities. The resident was concerned that they had not yet been given the opportunity to comment upon this proposal. The Chairman reported that a decision had not yet been made on this issue and no planning application had been received. Once an

application had been made, neighbour consultation would take place, and a decision would be made following this.

This was followed by a second point in which the resident wished it to be noted that an area of land opposite Chrysanthemum Court was subject to a lot of anti-social behaviour, namely a lot of rubbish had been strewn over the road and the contents of a skip were thrown across the verge and road. The Chairman expressed sympathy and suggested that if this continued, a letter be sent to the Housing Association.

It was reported that the District Council had sent a questionnaire to local residents regarding a garage site off Field Way (St. Catherine's Drive). Local residents had never received an update following this questionnaire, and requested that an update be sent to all original residents who had been sent the questionnaire.

It was agreed to pursue this and report back to the next Meeting.

It was reported that the footpath adjacent to the B5353 Stanton to Newhall road was very difficult to use due to overgrown brambles. In addition it was reported that the hedges also needed cutting back, as they restricted access.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to look into this and report back to the next Meeting.

It was asked if an electronic "slow down" sign could be put on Park Road, Newhall. M. Ashworth responded that these signs were used at known collision and injury sites and in a clear speeding area. The County Council would do a speed count when investigating this and confirmed that it was also investigating the use of mobile technology for this purpose.

It was agreed that the Forum Liaison Officer investigates this and report back to the next Meeting.

It was asked if bus shelters were considered to be an asset to the community, as there were only 2 in Newhall. M. Ashworth responded that bus shelters were considered an asset, and the County Council had a criteria for design, however there was a risk of vandalism. He also added that if a site was identified by the community, the County Council would consider this and might enter into a 50:50 funding partnership if the full criteria was met. It was pointed out that there would need to be consultation with local residents, as many did not want bus shelters outside their property.

It was reported that the sign at the entrance to the new golf course had been vandalised.

The Direct Services Manager agreed to arrange for this sign to be cleaned.

It was reported that the pavement at the Old Market Place development had still not been properly finished. The Forum Liaison Officer responded that this was being pursued, and it was accepted that this pavement was not of the correct specification. He added that the District Council was dealing with a 'breach of planning' with the developer.

It was reported that there were problems with a smell from the drainage believed to be coming from the drains of the new flats on the Horse and Jockey site.

It was agreed that the District Council find out who is responsible and request that action be taken.

A resident asked, in light of the Government cutbacks, what frontline council services might be cut. The Director of Community Services responded that it had been announced that free swimming would be stopped, and it was believed that some of the money to refurbish the Green Bank Leisure Centre was now in doubt. The final funding settlement would not be known until 20th October 2010, but as South Derbyshire was one of the fastest growing districts, it was hoped that the cuts would be less than in other areas. M. Ashworth added that Derbyshire County Council would also have to look at services beyond October. He added that most of the big capital transport schemes had been stopped, but this would not affect Derbyshire.

It was pointed out that an area of land belonging to William Allitt School had not been cleared and was very unsightly. Maintenance contractors who were working in this area had told the resident that they were not allowed to maintain this area as there were needles in it.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to speak to the School and ask for this area to be cleared.

It was reported that a sign had been attached to a lamp column on Sunnyside stating that it was a teachers smoking and parking area.

The Forum Liaison Officer confirmed that this was not an authorised sign and arrangements would be made for its removal.

A resident asked if the proposed meeting at the golf course, as suggested by the Chief Executive at the previous meeting, would be taking place. The Director of Community Services reported that it was unsafe at present due to the number of vehicle movements, however the meeting would be arranged in the future. Concern was expressed that due to the height of some banks, users of the footpath wouldn't be able to see over the and were worried that when the golf course was in use, walkers might be hit by a ball.

The Director of Community Services agreed to look into this and report back to the next Meeting.

It was asked what the contractors were doing with the bricks that were being taken up in Swadlincote Town Centre due to the refurbishment. It was felt that these should be reclaimed and reused.

The Director of Community Services agreed to look into this and report back to the next Meeting.

It was asked if tetra packs could be put into the black wheeled bins. The Direct Services Manager confirmed that they could go in the black bins, and they were also accepted at 6 recycling centres around the District.

The Direct Services Manager also reported that there were currently no plans to reward people who recycled a lot of rubbish. However he was aware that trials were being completed in other parts of the country.

It was asked what residents should do with the many charity bags that were being left at their homes each week. The Director of Community Services responded that these should be put back out for collection. The Direct Services Manager advised that if they were not collected, they could be taken to some supermarkets who had the facility to recycle them.

A resident wished to offer their congratulations to the young people who had recently conducted a litter pick outside Sainsbury's supermarket. The Direct Services Manager responded that this was part of a 'Cleaner South Derbyshire' campaign and was an example of the Council working with other organisations. He added that this had been a very productive morning, and there were further initiatives in the autumn to encourage business' to do their own litter management.

It was asked if, as this District was a very fast growing area, the use of incinerators had been considered, and if the District Council were looking at the possibility of these at large sites planned for new development. The Direct Services Manager confirmed that landfill sites were becoming full, and an incinerator was planned for Sinfin. However, planning consent was turned down on this site and it was due to go to appeal. M. Ashworth added that landfill was unsustainable and must be reduced. There was always a massive lobby against incineration, but it was a highly technical and environmentally friendly method of waste disposal.

It was requested that an update be given on grit bins. M. Ashworth responded that last winter was the worst winter for 30 years and there had been a huge demand for grit. The County Council proposed to provide clear information on grit bins, both public and community provided, and was also hoping to provide a filling service in future years. Reserves would be doubled in the ensuing year. A resident reported that a grit bin was needed on the corner of Peartree Avenue and Birch Avenue. M. Ashworth confirmed that Derbyshire County Council would provide a grit bin if a local community organisation agreed to maintain it and fill it in the future.

NA/8. **DISTRICT COUNCIL ISSUES**

Councillor Mrs. Farrington gave a brief summary of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee within the District Council, and reported that the Committee had recently looked into issues such as the lack of high-speed broadband in the District, Swadlincote Health Centre, Etwall Leisure Centre and Rosliston Forestry Centre. She invited residents to attend Overview and Scrutiny Meetings, details of which could be found on the District Council's website.

NA/9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Details of the dates and venues for future Area Forum Meetings would be circulated in due course.

MRS. G. FARRINGTON

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 9.00 p.m.