

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

AREA 3 – MELBOURNE AREA

Tuesday, October 10th, 2016 at Barrow on Trent Village Hall

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Peter Watson (Chair), Councillor Neil Atkin, Councillor Mrs Hilary Coyle, Councillor Jim Hewlett,.

Stuart Batchelor (Director of Community and Planning Services), Tom Sloan (Clerk).

Derbyshire County Council Representatives

Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton, Councillor Rob Davison.

Paul Jameson (Area Forum Liaison Officer).

Parish Council / Meeting Representatives

Wendy Earp (Melbourne Parish Council), Alison Hicklin (Barrow on Trent Parish Council), Frank Hughes (Melbourne Village Voice), Margaret Sharp (Melbourne Parish Council), David Smith (Melbourne Parish Council).

Members of the public

None.

MA/10 **Apologies for absence**

Councillor John Harrison.

MA/11 **Declarations of interest**

None.

MA/12 **Chairman's announcements**

Chairman Councillor Peter Watson had no announcements to make.

MA/13 **The minutes of the meeting held on July 14th, 2016**

The minutes were proposed by Councillor Rob Davison and seconded by Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton.

MA/14 **Report back on issues raised at the last meeting**

South Derbyshire District Council issues

Grass Cutting by SDDC

Stuart Batchelor gave an explanation of the position SDDC was in regarding verge cutting around the district. Councillor Mrs Hilary Coyle said the general response was that the quality of grass cutting was very poor. Several of the parishes in her ward had asked if they could cut it instead. Mr Batchelor replied that grass cutting used to be an issue 10 years earlier and the problem was the number of cuts, which couldn't be changed. All that could be done was to continue passing information on to the service manager. The issue would happen again in a warm and wet summer.

Councillor Mrs Chilton reported that long sections of tree branches had been left uncut where the A514 met the B587 near Melbourne. Mr Batchelor asked for similar incidents to be reported to SDDC.

A resident reported that Melbourne Parish Council had to cut grass at Cockshut Lane and Kings Newton to maintain visibility splays as cuts from SDDC came too late.

Councillor Watson said there was a massive section of the community who did not want hedges and verges cut because they wanted to see natural lanes. Motorists sat in cars typically had an eye line more than three feet off the ground so sometimes what appeared to be long grass was not actually obscuring visibility and extra cuts would be superfluous.

Councillor Davison added that cutting needed to be done maximally to ensure each cut was as long lasting as possible. He reported the same thing every year. At Stenson Bubble, a 1m wide pavement had been put in and now half of it was unusable, with prams having to go into the road. Councillor Davison also felt that DCC needed to show more backbone in making landowners cut vegetation properly.

Councillor Mrs Coyle felt SDDC needed to be proactive over the winter and look at schedules to see if all cutting could be fitted in. Mr Batchelor replied that the schedules had been put together over 30 years. A Parish and Member Briefing on the issue had been held and it had a very poor turnout from the parishes. Additionally, growing seasons for vegetation were now longer.

A resident reported that the first cut in Melbourne was done on June 14th, which they felt was too late in the year.

MA/15 **Public questions on issues raised by residents**

Councillor Watson reported that a considerable number of HGVs were using the route through Ingleby and Ticknall to avoid Swarkestone Causeway. He said there was a 7.5 tonne weight limit in effect but it was an area-wide weight limit. Two 40ft articulated lorries had recently met in the lane and one ended up having to reverse back to the John Thompson Inn. He asked if signs could be put up stating it was a narrow route unsuitable for HGVs. Mr Jameson said the issue had been discussed at Repton Area Forum. It was enforceable as it was an area-wide restriction encompassing eight villages. There was signage in Ingleby Road, Ticknall and HGVs using the route purely as a short-cut (i.e. not requiring legitimate access within the restricted area) were committing an offence. DCC's Trading Standards was aware of the situation. DCC would have to weigh up whether additional signage would have any effect.

ACTION: Paul Jameson to report back on potential for extra signage in Ingleby Lane

Councillor Watson raised the issue of the junction for Weston on Trent from Swarkestone Road, near to Junction 3 of the A50. Despite the accident record at the location, it had been found to be unsuitable for traffic lights. Removal of a footpath on the western side of the road would allow space for an extra lane for traffic turning right towards Weston. Councillor Davison said the cost of putting lights in was astronomical. Councillor Mrs Coyle asked if traffic could be slowed down. Mr Jameson said DCC wouldn't reduce the speed limit for the one junction. There would need to be more speed-related accidents there for DCC to even consider it. Councillor Neil Atkin said he thought traffic lights would be more effective.

Councillor Davison reported that there was £48,000 waiting to be spent on electronic signs to deter HGVs from using Swarkestone Causeway. Councillor Watson said a scheme to put a camera in should be pursued. Councillor Davison replied that it wasn't a camera-led scheme and was more of a deterrent featuring a flashing sign. Councillor Watson said it was pointless putting such a sign in as an HGV would be unable to turn around once it had left the roundabout at Chellaston. He preferred a system of weight-activated pads setting off an ANPR camera to capture number plates. Councillor Davison replied that to get prosecutions required access to the DVLA database. That needed police input and the police had made clear they didn't have the money for it. He agreed that the situation was exasperating. A resident said that the problem wasn't necessarily HGVs but the amount of traffic using the bridge. Councillor Watson agreed and added that cars had got much wider since the 1960s, worsening the problem.

ACTION: Neil Bennett to be invited to the next Melbourne Area Forum to discuss Swarkestone Causeway

MA/16 **County Council issues**

Councillor Mrs Chilton asked what had happened to the blocking off of Woodshop Lane. Mr Jameson replied that a DCC cabinet report had been drafted and was with Dean Collins.

A resident asked if bus shelters were the responsibility of bus companies. Mr Jameson replied that normally a parish council was responsible. They were funded jointly by parishes and DCC and then maintenance was passed on to the parish.

MA/17 **District Council issues**

Mr Batchelor reported that Part II of South Derbyshire's Local Plan was at the resubmission stage and would be submitted in January.

The Government had introduced a referendum if a parish council with a certain level of budget increased its Council Tax precept by more than 2%.

A consultation was taking place with BT over the removal of certain payphones in South Derbyshire. Payphones in Swarkestone, Thulston, Weston, Shardlow, Ambaston Lane and Ticknall were being considered for removal. Any comments could be submitted to BT.

MA/18 **Date of next meeting**

To be advised in due course.

Councillor Peter Watson
CHAIRMAN

The meeting terminated at 8.30pm.