

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

LINTON

1st February 2010

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Wheeler (Chairman) and Councillors Grant and Timms.

M. Alflat (Director of Community Services), P. White (Democratic Services) and C. Lukaszewicz (Helpdesk).

Derbyshire County Council Representative

Councillor Lacey.

G. Duckworth (Democratic Services Officer).

District and County Council Representative

Councillor Jones (Vice-Chairman)

Parish Council/Meeting Representatives

S. Jackson (Castle Gresley Parish Council), K. Bradford and W. Wadsworth (Coton-in-the-Elms Parish Council), G. Palmer, R. Palmer and J. Powell (Linton Parish Council) and M. Horne (Walton-on-Trent Parish Council).

Member of the Public

E. Lummis (South Derbyshire Tenants Forum)

LA/20. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Mark Todd, M.P., PCSO D. McMillan, V. Taylor and W. Taylor.

LA/21. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman advised that although there was no Police representative present at the Meeting, any issues relating to police matters would be referred to the Police following the Meeting.

The Chairman also advised that Liz Morris, Manager of Castle Gresley Children's Centre would like to give a presentation on the work of the children's centres within the District at a future Meeting.

LA/22. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Linton Area Forum held on 25th November 2009, were noted.

LA/23. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

Information had been circulated with the agenda to provide an update on the issues raised at the last Meeting.

With regard to issues relating to the Flint Mill Crossroads, the undertaking of a traffic survey and flooding concerns at Station Lane, Walton-on-Trent, County Councillor Lacey agreed to pursue these matters with the appropriate County Highways Officers and to report back directly to Rosliston and Walton-on-Trent Parish Councils.

With regard to arrangements for an independent safety audit in respect of the recent junction improvements outside the Cricketer's Inn at Acresford Road, Overseal, the local Ward Member was concerned that no further progress had been made on this matter. This was now considered to be an urgent safety issue. Netherseal Parish Council had agreed to write to the County Council requesting an urgent response. It was noted that the County Council was currently undertaking a reorganisation within its highways section, which might have caused delays.

Following a request for the Council to consider the provision of blue bags with handles for paper recycling, the Officer's response was reported. Residents were concerned that bags with handles were considered a health and safety risk. The current bags without handles were difficult to lift irrespective of the weight being carried. The Director of Community Services advised of the possible joint refuse service being explored with East Staffordshire Borough Council. All methods of recycling would be considered as part of these proposals. Concern was also raised regarding the confusion over refuse collection arrangements during the Christmas/New Year period.

It was agreed to investigate the Christmas/New Year collection arrangements further with a view to regularising the matter for the following year.

LA/24. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS**

It was noted that Derbyshire County Council had refused to install traffic calming measures at Hillside Road, Linton, as the road was considered to be too steep. Residents considered that this decision was inconsistent with other similar areas where traffic calming had been provided.

It was agreed to investigate this matter further and report back to the next Meeting.

Residents of Drakelow were concerned about HGV's causing damage to the surface of roads in the village. It was noted that a survey would be undertaken in the near future by the Trading Standards Department with a view to addressing this problem.

A local Member raised concerns regarding additional traffic over the Walton-on-Trent bridge and was advised that County Council Officers were pursuing this matter, together with other local issues. Officers had visited both Walton-on-Trent and Netherseal to monitor the volume of traffic travelling from the A42 through the District and then over the bridge at Walton-on-Trent. It was suggested that the local County Councillor request County Officers to ensure that the parish councils were kept informed of any progress on these matters.

LA/25. **POLICE ISSUES**

There was a discussion about the review of the Constabulary's Policing Divisions. It was the intention that the number of police officers on the ground would not be reduced.

It was queried whether the recruitment of PCSOs would be expanded. It was noted that one PCSO from the Linton area had now moved to Stenson Fields and therefore only one PC and one PCSO remained. The local County Councillor advised that no further PCSOs would be provided in the immediate future.

It was also noted that Sergeant Mike Sisman, Partnership Sergeant based at the District Council, had moved to Ripley on secondment to be part of Derbyshire Constabulary's "Moving Forward" project team. His replacement was Sergeant Andy King, who had been a reactive Sergeant in Swadlincote.

LA/26. **DISTRICT COUNCIL ISSUES**

(a) **Your Area – Options for future development and the Place Survey Results**

The Director of Community Services gave a presentation on the District Council's Core Strategy, which was currently out for consultation. He advised those present that the Strategy would guide development and investment in South Derbyshire over the next 20 years. The options identified the amount of development that should take place in South Derbyshire up to 2026 and where it should be built. A summary leaflet was available for residents, which provided highlights of some of the main points within the Strategy and advised how to find further information. The consultation document was available at the Council Offices and on its website. All residents were encouraged to respond by the closing date of 31st March 2010.

The Director of Community Services also provided an update on the Place Survey results for 2008/09. It was reported that this was a new statutory Survey that all local authorities in England were required to undertake every two years. A total of 4,000 questionnaires had been mailed to randomly selected addresses between October and December 2008. A response rate of 41% was achieved, which equated to 1,616 completed questionnaires. This was considered to be a good response rate. The results had been analysed by each community forum area and the key issues for Linton were included within the presentation. Results reported related to satisfaction with the local area, reasons that the area was a good place to live in, proposed improvements and perceptions of community cohesion.

At 7.40 p.m., Councillor Grant left the Meeting.

(a) Presentation on the Council's Budget

The Director of Community Services provided a presentation on the District Council's budget for 2010/11. Information was provided on the breakdown of Council Tax for a Band 'D' property between the District and County Councils, Police, Fire Authority and parishes. Details were provided of the Council's net running costs, together with how these were financed and the funds used. The 2010/11 initial budget showed a deficit of £484,250, which would need to be funded from reserves. Challenges faced by the Council included the effects of the recession, the review of Government grants and also the uncertainty of future forecasting. The District Council had accumulated cashable efficiencies to date of £677,000. Other savings would be found from restructuring, partnering, streamlining the central purchasing and procurement, the disposal of assets, lower pay awards and general inflation.

The aims of the District Council were reported, together with the timetable for the budget proposals. A full copy of the Consolidated Budget Proposals 2010/11 and to the Financial Plan to 2015 could be accessed via the Council's website at www.south-derbys.gov.uk.

With regard to disposal of the Council's assets, reference was made to land at Castle Gresley, which was currently for sale.

Following the discussions earlier in the Meeting about potential partnering of the refuse collection service, further clarification was sought as to whether the partner's current collection levels could be adopted by this Council. A detailed response was provided.

LA/27. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next Linton Area Forum would be held at 7.00 p.m. on Monday, 15th March 2010 at Coton-in-the-Elms Community Centre. The Chairman gave his apologies in advance for the next Meeting; Councillor Jones (Vice-Chairman) would preside as the Chairman in his absence.

R. WHEELER

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 7.55 p.m.