

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

NEWHALL

25th January 2012

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Richards (Chairman) and Councillors Dunn, Mrs. Mead and Wilkins.

M. Alflat (Director of Operations) and D. Townsend (Democratic Services Officer).

Derbyshire County Council Representatives

Councillor P. Murray.

P. Jameson (Forum Liaison Officer).

Members of the Public

M. Biddle, T. Biddle, D. Bird, K. Dicken, M. Draycott, A. Emmott, C. Gillespie, G. Gouvein, G. Hall, R. Hughes, A. Jones, H. King, C. Knight, H. Kreft (Burton Mail), Mr. & Mrs. Lager, M. Lunn, C. Maddock, D. Martin, J. Martin, K. Parker, B. Parker, M. Richards, C. Rouszak, L. Rouszak, B. Wood,

NA/20. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

It was noted that Councillor Richards had been appointed Chairman of the Newhall Area Forum following the introduction of the revised boundaries.

NA/21. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillors Bambrick and Pearson, B. & M. Dunn and R. House.

NA/22. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

It was agreed that Councillor Dunn be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Newhall Area Forum for the remainder of the municipal year.

NA/23. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Newhall Area Forum held on 19th October 2011 were noted.

NA/24. **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 the bridge on Nadin's Way, a resident reported that it had been built by the developers of the golf course.

It was agreed that this be pursued and any actions reported to the next Meeting.

NA/25. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS**

It was asked why land surrounding derelict properties was allowed to become overgrown and unkempt, causing health and anti-social behaviour issues. The Director of Operations responded that a range of actions might be available. With regards to vermin, the pest control officer could be contacted. In addition, if these problems became detrimental to the area, planning enforcement might also be able to act. The private sector housing team were also working hard to bring empty properties back into use. The resident confirmed that he was referring to properties adjacent to the Lamb Inn. Councillor Mrs. Mead responded that this site had now been sold, and hopefully work would be started within the next 2 months.

It was reported that there was a strong smell emitting from the Rainbow Waste site adjacent to Sainsbury's in Swadlincote.

The Director of Operations agreed to look into this.

It was asked if the trees in Newhall Park could be maintained and cut back, as branches were damaging property, and were considered too high and dangerous. It was also reported that there had been a dispute with regards to a boundary fence in this area.

The Director of Operations agreed to look into this and respond directly to the resident who raised these matters.

It was reported that many of the post boxes in Newhall had been taken out, and asked if the District Council could contact the Post Office to confirm the current position.

It was agreed that the District Council write to the Post Office to confirm the current situation.

It was asked if a high street store had recently been rejected from opening in Swadlincote, as they were not considered suitable. The Director of Operations reported that he was not aware of any large retail store that had been turned down, and confirmed that Swadlincote was "open for business" to any prospective retailer.

It was asked if the Council could do anything to help improve internet connectivity in Swadlincote. The Director of Operations responded that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from the District Council had looked into this, and had had a certain amount of success in Etwall. He pointed out that private providers concentrated on larger areas with bigger populations. However, the County Council were putting together a bid to improve connectivity in the County.

It was asked why there was no covered area outside the shops in the Pipeworks. The Director of Operations responded that this would have been considered as part of the original design.

It was reported that the Post Office had now opened officially on The Delph in Swadlincote.

It was asked what was happening with the old Somerfield store and car park. The Director of Operations responded that this was currently under consideration, but no details could be given at present.

It was pointed out that there was an unacceptable level of light pollution from the Newhall Civic Amenity site, as they had doubled the number of lights, causing problems in adjacent properties.

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

NA/26. **DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES**

The Forum Liaison Officer reported on plans to change the way youth activities were delivered in Derbyshire. The consultation would run from 9th January to 18th March 2012. He briefly reported the proposals and advised that there was a series of consultation events arranged, to which members of the public were invited. Details of these events were provided, and residents were asked that they register in advance. The Chairman pointed out that it was very important that people attended and got involved in the consultation.

The Chairman asked the Forum Liaison Officer what had happened to street lighting following the recent consultation. The Forum Liaison Officer responded that the consultation had ended, and it was due to go before Cabinet at the end of the month. The recommendation was that reduced street lighting was acceptable in many places, although lights would not simply be switched off, as there were many determining factors, which must be considered at each location.

It was reported that there was work being done on the A511 through Woodville. The Forum Liaison Officer responded that a section of the High Street, Clock Island and Swadlincote Road were currently having works completed. However, it was not known if funding had been secured for work on Burton Road.

It was asked who was responsible if damage was done by a pothole to a vehicle. The Forum Liaison Officer responded that the resident should contact the County Council who would send a claim form for consideration.

NA/27. **DISTRICT COUNCIL ISSUES**

2012/13 Budget

The Area Forum received a presentation on the Council's budget for 2012/13. Information had been circulated which showed a breakdown of the total turnover and how it was paid for. It was confirmed that council tax was

currently £150.25 per year for district services at Band D, and consideration was currently being given to a council tax freeze for 2012/13 – the second year running. The Council had lost approximately £1.25m in Government grants (New homes bonus) over the last two years and had therefore been required, through efficiencies, to adjust its spending accordingly. The net budget for 2012/13 was estimated at £11.3m and it was explained how this was split over the main services.

The presentation concluded that total expenditure of £5m was planned on new capital projects with investment in local leisure and community facilities. The Council's contribution was £1.7m, the remaining amounts came from Lottery funding, and partners involved in the projects.

Further details were provided on the refurbishment planned at Green Bank Leisure Centre, and also facilities at Melbourne. It was pointed out that it seemed that there was a large amount of money spent in Melbourne, when Midway or Newhall had no facilities at present. The Director of Operations responded that decisions on capital projects had been made by a scoring panel of Members, and that the catchment area for Melbourne included 22% of the population of South Derbyshire.

NA/28. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Meeting would be confirmed in due course.

K. RICHARDS

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 8.30 p.m.