

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

ETWALL

30th January 2013

**PRESENT:-**

**District Council Representatives**

Councillor Mrs. Brown (Chairman), Councillor Mrs. Patten (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Bale and Mrs. Plenderleith.

F. McArdle (Chief Executive), P. Spencer (Democratic Services) and M. Buckley (Tree Officer).

**Derbyshire County Council Representatives**

Councillor Mrs. Patten.

P. Jameson (Forum Liaison Officer).

**Parish Council/Meeting Representatives**

J. Nicholls and M. Pateman (Dalbury Lees Parish Council), B. Cowley, H. Every, M. Nesbitt and S. Nesbitt (Egginton Parish Council), I. Bennett, T. Day, N. Ireland and D. Muller (Etwall Parish Council), T. Beresford (Foston and Scropton Parish Council) and C. Thurman (Hatton Parish Council).

**Members of the Public**

J. Bannister, L. Bannister, D. Brooks, M. Brooks, H. Carver, S. Every, J. Griffiths, A. Hind, A. Hughes, S. Jolly, E. & T. Kemps, B. Myring, K. Warburton, A. Wassell, R. Wherly and T. Wherly.

EA/17. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District Councillor Lemmon, G. Wale, Mr. Mathews and B. Payton.

EA/18. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman read a note advising those present how they could apply for a new travel 'Gold Card' before their current card expired. Further information was available from the District and County Councils' websites or by ringing the District Council's Customer Services Team on 01283 595795. A comment was made that whilst renewal of the card was easy, problems had been experienced by some new applicants, as their addresses were not listed on the system. It was agreed that this matter would be referred back to both authorities for attention.

**EA/19. DISTRICT COUNCIL ISSUES**

The Chairman proposed to alter the Agenda order and she invited Martin Buckley, the Council's Tree Officer to give a presentation about ash dieback disease. He referred to the recent media coverage of this serious issue and guidance received from the Forestry Commission about levels of infection in what was the Country's second most populated tree. It was explained that imported seedlings carried the infection and the Government had now prohibited further imports. The disease could kill a semi mature tree within 12 months and mature trees within 4 to 5 years. It was hoped that some ash trees would show signs of resistance. Mr. Buckley displayed Forestry Commission information sheets and these were circulated.

Plant health orders would be imposed in areas where the disease was identified, with a strict regime for burning infected trees and the use of disinfectants before entering or leaving an infected site. Mr. Buckley also referred to the liabilities for both private landowners and the Council. As an example, the Swadlincote Woodlands site included an estimated 5-6,000 ash trees.

A description was given of the symptoms of the ash dieback disease. A resident was concerned about the ongoing imports of other plants from abroad and the officer explained the measures that agencies took to prevent infected plants from coming into the Country. Residents were urged to read the factsheets and look at the Forestry Commission website for further information. Mr. Buckley was thanked for the presentation.

Frank McArdle, the Council's Chief Executive then addressed those present on the budget proposals for 2013/14. Information had been circulated. Whilst the Council had a healthy financial position currently, Government cuts meant that further savings of £300,000 per year would need to be achieved to balance budgets. The Council budgeted over a 5 year period and corrective action would be taken to cut costs, but not services. Mr. McArdle spoke about the growth of the District, the fourth fastest in the Country outside London and the South East. He explained the positive effects of additional development and also the additional services that needed to be provided. The Council was considering a freeze on Council Tax for the third year in a row. Reference was also made to the Council Tax Support Scheme, which included protection for pensioners and disabled people, but some working age claimants would need to pay up to 10% more.

The Chief Executive responded to residents' questions regarding the Council's bad debt position and growth in inward investment. A resident had a specific enquiry regarding benefit levels and was asked to contact the clerk after the Meeting. Mr. McArdle was thanked for the presentation.

**EA/20. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Etwall Area Forum held 10th October 2012 were noted.

**EA/21. REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chairman referred those present to the report circulated with the Agenda. She highlighted the issues raised at the last Meeting and the progress made.

**EA/22. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS**

A resident referred to the recent announcement regarding the HS2 train line, its potential impact for the Egginton Common development, and the surrounding area. It was confirmed that the District Council had received no further information ahead of the announcement.

It was stated that another council had recently introduced a specific charge for emptying the brown compost bin, but was confirmed that South Derbyshire District Council had no intention to impose such a charge. A brief update was given on the new recycling contract, which would improve the dry recyclable collection arrangements.

It was questioned when road and footway repairs would take place in Egginton. The Forum Liaison Officer explained that the maintenance team had been inundated with requests since the recent bad weather. However, repair works were programmed in Egginton and it was agreed that a direct response be provided to the Parish Council to update on this. It was stated that the repairs to potholes did not last very long and repeat repairs were then required. This point was acknowledged by the Officer, who explained how the County Council had changed its approach and would prioritise such repairs, ensuring that a better quality of repair took place.

There was discussion about the recent flooding problems affecting both the Egginton and Scropton areas. In Scropton, tapes had been placed across the road to prevent access to flooded areas. Details were given of some of the problems experienced. It was noted that flood levels changed rapidly and was questioned whether the authorities could be responsive enough to impose restrictions and then remove them after the flooding subsided. The role of flood wardens and a shortage of 'road closed' signs were other issues raised. The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to refer the points raised back to colleagues at the County Council.

There was discussion about the Lower Dove Flood Alleviation Scheme. The Chairman gave a detailed report on this scheme to alleviate flooding problems for areas such as Scropton and Egginton. The works were due to start on site in February and be completed by the summer. She also spoke about joint work with the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water to deal with surface water flooding issues. There was also recognition of the private sector support for the Flood Alleviation Scheme.

The development of Egginton Common was raised, particularly the planning process and the potential for surface water run-off impacting on Egginton and its surrounding area. It was explained that this planning process would not be dealt with by the District Council, but it would be a statutory consultee. A pre-application process would be undertaken and residents were urged to engage with this, to register their concerns. The need for careful modelling and use of

balancing ponds were further aspects discussed. Finally, there was a discussion about flooding more generally.

EA/23. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date and venue of the next Etwall Area Forum would be confirmed in due course.

MRS. L. BROWN

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 8.40 p.m.