

REPTON AREA MEETING

13th May 2004

**PRESENT:-**

**District Council Representatives**

Councillor Taylor (Chair), Councillor Bladen (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Bell, Ford, Mrs. Hood, Isham, Jones and Mrs. Wheeler.

F. B. McArdle (Chief Executive), D. Cook (Democratic Services Officer) and B. Jones (Helpdesk).

**Derbyshire Constabulary**

Sergeant A. Wright.

**Parish Council Representatives**

D. Adams (Hartshorne Parish Council), S. M. Smith (Woodville Parish Council), D. Oatley (Woodville Parish Council), R. Paulson (Repton Parish Council).

**Members of the Public**

R. Statham (Woodville Parish Council), J. Orme, Mr and Mrs Cownie, K. & M. Vincent, M. Thornton, C. Manifold, D. Hicklin, H.D. Harrison, Mr. Yates.

**CVS**

R. House.

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from A. Gifford, Mr. M. Bordoli, Mrs. A. Mayger, C. Bailey, J. Burley, Mr. and Mrs. Gillespie and County Councillor A. Jones.

RA/26. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th January 2004 were received.

RA/27. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair advised that he had received a letter from Mr. Orme regarding the issue of public toilets at Willington. The letter referred to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th January 2004 which stated that "Mr. Orme suggested that the toilets should be serviced by Derbyshire County Council as, in his opinion the sole purpose of the toilets was to service the County Council's picnic area". Mr. Orme had stated in his letter that he felt the following statement would reflect better what he had said or intended. "Mr. Orme suggested that the cost of provision and maintenance of the toilets should be shared between Derbyshire County Council and South Derbyshire District Council as in his opinion, the toilets serviced the needs of tourists to the area including Derbyshire County Council's picnic area". Mr. Orme advised the Meeting that Willington Parish Council had not willingly undertaken to pay money towards the toilets at Willington. He stated that the amount involved was £1,500 per year which equated to 8.7% of the total parish precept. He

advised that this represented a total income from 84 houses in Willington. The Chair advised the Meeting that the Council's Overview Committee had scrutinised the decision taken regarding the funding of Willington toilets and advised that the District Council funded the toilets in the sum of £1,800 in concurrent functions and £2,317 for a parish lengthsman scheme. Mr. Orme advised the Meeting that British Waterways had agreed to be involved in discussions regarding a joint agreement for cleaning the public toilets and the Chair stated that he saw no problem with a tri-partiate agreement with British Waterways. The Chair advised Mr. Orme that Minutes of Area Meetings were confirmed at the Council Meeting immediately following the Area Meeting cycle. It was for the Council and its Committees to determine its priorities. The decision on public toilets was taken subsequently to be examined independently by the Council's Scrutiny Panel. Current arrangements between the Authority and Parish Councils were taken with consideration for the informed report from Scrutiny following Members visiting all locations. All relevant local circumstances were therefore considered at that time. Funding arrangements for public toilets ensured an ongoing partnership that maintained a contribution from South Derbyshire. In parished areas with exception, the facilities were dependent on partnerships with the parish council. It was for the parish council to determine whether it wished to participate based on the priorities that it identified as an independent elected body. That inevitably meant that those parish councils needed to identify funding for the part of the partnership. Accordingly, the Chair felt personally that the argument presented that this represented a surcharge to the residents within that parish was incorrect. He stated that it was a fact that not all locations in South Derbyshire actually had or had ever had public toilets. Therefore, for the Council to fully fund them in some areas as a result of their location and not provide them in other areas actually meant that residents throughout South Derbyshire would be subsidising public toilets in selected areas. That was the situation prior to the rationalisation that took place due to the Council's past funding pressures. The Chair had stated previously that the cost of public toilets to the Authority were disproportionate to their use. In some areas this was to the extent of the District Council contributing £2.50 per visit. Parish Councils that had continued to fund public toilets had done so on the basis of their priorities, no one had forced them to do so. They were already subsidised by the District Council for concurrent functions and the Lengthsman's Scheme as referred to above. This funding was provided in addition to the parish rate. The Chair stated that it would be remiss of him at this point not to mention that a substantial part of the population of South Derbyshire did not elect a parish council but they were already subsidising the ones in existence. Most did not actually live in the centre of Swadlincote. The only public toilets that now remained within the urban core were in the commercial centre. At the District Council the contributions from parish councils were valued and Members were happy to continue to fund them. The Council recognised that this funding in many cases allowed them to respond to their local needs providing services additional to those provided as standard in the urban core. The Chair advised that perhaps he should also add that he did not present this response solely with regard for the interests of the District Council. In Woodville he had been a parish councillor for almost twenty years. As one of the two District representatives for Woodville and having inherited part of the Swadlincote Ward that was still within the urban core he knew only too well, the differences between the flexibility of a parished area and the difficulties of trying to fix matters in a non-parished area.

The Chair referred to the new Surestart building at Blacksmiths Lane, Woodville. This project had been achieved via partnership working and represented a massive investment and asset to the area for young mothers. The Chief Executive addressed the meeting and advised that the Council was actively seeking monies for such schemes through Section 106 Agreements with builders of developments of ten houses or more within the District.

RA/28. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chair invited the Chief Executive to provide an update on matters raised at the previous meeting. With regard to the sign to be installed at Twyford Road Recycling Centre, Willington in an attempt to prevent waste dumping, the Chief Executive advised that the sign the Council proposed to install at the Recycling Centre at Willington would help to prevent fly tipping and litter at the site by directing patrons to the nearest alternative facilities, listing the materials that might be recycled there. The Council was about to provide the Burton Road, Repton Recycling Centre with an igloo for card and mixed papers, and when this was in place, the Council would install the sign at Willington containing the most up to date information. The contract for card and paper recycling was being drawn up by the Legal Team at Kappa Paper Recycling and the Council hoped to install the igloos within the next month. D. Oakley queried whether the carrier bags left at recycling centres were recycled. The Chair advised that he believed that this was not the case but agreed to confirm this at a future meeting.

With regard to car parking on zigzags outside the newsagents/chip shop at Woodville, Sergeant Wright advised that the Beat Officer and traffic wardens had been asked to look into this matter. Three fixed penalty tickets had been issued and the situation was being monitored on a daily basis. Mr. Yates, a resident of Woodville reported that two HGV vehicles had been parked in this area on the evening of the meeting and expressed concern that the area represented an “accident waiting to happen”. He suggested that the location be videoed during school hours and suggested that the police should be more proactive in their approach to this problem. He also referred to problems adjacent to the Post Office in Woodville.

Concern was also expressed regarding lorries mounting the pavement outside of “Dysons Cottages” in Woodville, and particular concern for the safety of children was expressed. D. Oatley advised the Meeting that traffic had increased in Woodville since the Ashby bypass was created and stated that there was a need to prohibit parking on High Street, Woodville completely. It was agreed to write to Derbyshire County Council to ask them to look at the parking issues on High Street and also to install flashing lights to warn drivers of children crossing. Sergeant A. Wright advised that in a perfect world the police would be able to give priority to the parking problems at Woodville. However, the local police force did not always have sufficient officers to do so. He stated that some time ago a decision had been taken to base all traffic wardens in Derby against the wishes of the local police. Sergeant Wright agreed to report on the comments made at the Meeting in order for action to be taken if possible. The Chair expressed concern regarding the speed of traffic on High Street and Moira Road, Woodville and accordingly, it was agreed to write to Derbyshire County Council requesting that this area be designated a School Safety Zone.

D. Oatley queried whether the speed cameras on High Street, Woodville were functional and Sergeant Wright agreed to find out and respond directly to Mrs. Oatley. He also advised that Beat Officers had recently been trained to use new radar cameras and hotspots had been designated within the District in an attempt to combat speeding problems.

Mr. Yates expressed concern that a mobile speed camera had been positioned at the old Scomark entrance in Woodville, a location where drivers naturally slowed down. The Chair advised that he was awaiting a response from the Police Liaison Meeting on this particular issue. Councillor Isham suggested that herself, Councillor Taylor, County Councillor A. Jones and representatives of the parish council met with Inspector Fairbrother to identify priority issues for the police in Woodville. Accordingly, it was agreed to set up this Meeting.

A resident stated that a Woodville bypass was needed and the Chair advised that the Chief Executive was currently working very hard in order to achieve such a bypass. Mr. Yates referred to the businesses Donald Ward and Jefferies Haulage within the area and asked whether access from the rear of Jefferies Haulage could be made. He expressed concern regarding the Council's policy of residential development in Woodville. The Chief Executive advised the Meeting regarding current planning policies and stated that development in Woodville was based on existing planning rights and development for the area. The District Council was trying to influence development in the area as best as it could but referred to the law relating to permitted development. He stated that within the Council's three year Corporate Plan a key aim was for the regeneration of Woodville.

RA/29. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mr. Orme congratulated the District Council on the fact that its year on year rise in Council Tax had reduced. He referred to the increases in the Police element of Council Tax since 1999 and asked what action the District Council could take to influence the Police Authority and encourage lower rises. The Chief Executive advised that the District Council could not take such action and reported that only 11% of Council Tax was for the District Council.

A resident expressed concern on behalf of another resident, Mr. Young who lived adjacent to the Ashby bypass. He was very worried that traffic coming from the roundabout onto the old Ashby Road was only taking two seconds to get from the roundabout to his house and accordingly, vehicles exiting from his driveway were placed in a very dangerous position. The Chair agreed to respond to this query after the meeting. The resident also expressed concern that the future Swadlincote/Woodville bypass might come out at Butt Lane, Woodville and suggested that this would not be suitable. The Chair talked about a number of options/alternative routes for such a bypass and the Chief Executive advised that the Council was currently trying to raise £50,000 for a feasibility study in this regard.

Mr. Paulson referred to a letter, which he had submitted to the Democratic Services Officer regarding police response routes and asked that this letter be forwarded to Divisional Commander A. Hurrell.

Councillor R. Jones expressed concern regarding the speed of traffic on Moira Road, Woodville and such traffic turning left at the roundabout. He suggested that the junction be altered so that the priority traffic could come from Albert Village rather than from the works end of the road. He also suggested lowering the speed limit on this particular road.

Mr. Yates referred to discussions which had taken place at previous meetings whereby County Councillor Walter Burrows had advised that a working group would be established to look at the traffic issues in Woodville. He stated that a working party had not taken place and accordingly, it was agreed to write to Derbyshire County Council requesting that a Working Party be established and inviting Councillor Lucas to attend the next Meeting.

D. Oatley asked for the District Council's definition of "regeneration". The Chief Executive referred to earlier discussions regarding development in Woodville and advised that the Council had to grant planning permission unless there was a good planning reason no to do so. He advised that the Council was trying to secure funding for a feasibility study to look at the best possible options for the regeneration of Woodville and agreed to bring a scoping document to the next Meeting. The Chair advised that £600,000 had recently been raised to improve education facilities in Woodville.

A resident expressed concern that the grass on the Woodville Park had not been cut for two months and accordingly, the Chair agreed to ascertain whose responsibility this was and respond directly to the resident concerned.

Mr. Yates asked about the District Council's policy regarding the cutting of grass verges and was advised that this was a County Council matter. The District did mow some areas on a contractual basis however.

RA/30. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Democratic Services Officer advised that she would write advising of the date and venue of the next Meeting once arrangements had been finalised.

RA/31. **CVS VOLUNTEERING**

Mr. Richard House of the CVS was in attendance and gave a brief presentation on volunteering. He advised that the CVS were tasked with "getting out" into the community. In his role as Volunteer Co-ordinator, he endeavoured to find out what it was people could do on a voluntary basis and reported that current trends showed that people were giving less and less of their own time for such purposes. He advised that organisations often approached the CVS asking for assistance when volunteers were needed. He advised that the CVS was based at Grove Street in Swadlincote and was staffed by 5/6 in-house volunteers. He referred to a Befriending Scheme which was operated by the CVS which aimed to put volunteer befrienders in touch with lonely people in society. He also referred to the Social Car Scheme which involved drivers taking individuals to places such as Burton/Derby Hospitals. This service was unique in that the driver would stay with the person for the duration of the visit and a small charge was levied to use such a scheme. He also advised that the CVS operated a Christmas Dinner Scheme whereby individuals would make an extra Christmas dinner and take it to a person living alone and in need of such a

meal. He stated that the CVS also dealt with referrals and supplied volunteers to work in charity shops, furniture recycling projects, Leonard Cheshire and Ryder Cheshire Homes for example. Mr. House outlined the benefits of volunteering and stated that some volunteers gave 30 to 40 hours per week of their time and some volunteers gave 2 hours per month, all of which was essential and appreciated.

RA/32. **LIBERATION DAY**

The Chair advised that the South Derbyshire Crime and Disorder Partnership was organising the 2004 Liberation Day and this would be held on Thursday, 27th May 2004 at the Bretby Conference Centre. As well as entertainment, dozens of groups and organisations would have stalls. Some of the exhibitors would have quiet areas available, where visitors could discuss private issues. Efforts were being made to provide transport for those who required it. The day had been organised to help elderly and vulnerable people throughout South Derbyshire see how they could stay safe and secure in their homes. Further details about the event were available from the Crime and Disorder Team on (01283) 595787, together with information on planned transport arrangements.

S. TAYLOR

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 8.35 p.m.