

## SWADLINCOTE AREA MEETING

30th November 2004

### **PRESENT:-**

#### **District Council Representatives**

Councillor Stone (Chair) and Councillors Lane, Murphy and Taylor.

F. McArdle (Chief Executive), M. Hallard (Design and Conservation Officer), J. Bellm (Democratic Services Assistant) and B. Jones (Helpdesk).

#### **Derbyshire Constabulary**

Sergeant D. Abbott and PC H. Hanson.

#### **Members of the Public**

M. Barsby, M. Brotherhood, R. Causer, T. Jackson, Mr. and Mrs. Key, M. Lunn, P. Marston and J. Williamson.

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District Councillors Harrington and Isham, County Councillor Southerd, Mr. M. Todd M.P., Inspector S. Fairbrother and Sergeant A. Wright (Derbyshire Constabulary) and W. Hardwick, C. Harvey, M. Hudson, D. Staley and Mr. and Mrs. Sutton.

#### SA/12. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th August 2004 were received.

#### SA/13. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chair reported that County Councillor Southerd would provide an update on highways issues at the next Meeting.

With regard to the diseased tree located in Church Gresley Cemetery, it was reported that the tree had been felled and removed.

The Meeting was provided with an update on the recycling issues raised at the last Meeting. The Recycling Officer had provided information which stated that currently, there was no re-processor in the Swadlincote area for plastic carrier bags. In response to the query raised with regard to the recycling of cans, it was reported that the District Council had previously owned machinery which performed this task. However, it was noted that although the cans were crushed at the Depot, they had to be sent to a third party for processing. It was therefore decided that the whole process be performed by the third party, and as a result the machinery was sold to a recycling company in Derby. Mr. Barsby asked whether or not the machine had been sold subject to tender, and it was agreed to investigate this issue and report back to the next Meeting.

Councillor Murphy provided an update with regard to multi-agency meetings which took place in the Swadlincote Area. He circulated a report, which detailed the resultant action following an incident in Pennine Way. He advised the Meeting that as a result of abusive behaviour by youths in this area, an elderly resident had contacted the Burton Mail and an article had been printed with regard to this issue on 17th June 2004. As a result of this article, Councillor Murphy reported that the District Council had conducted a survey of the area and had written to the residents of Pennine Way Sheltered Housing on 29th June 2004. A letter was also sent to a resident of Cleveland Close on 7th July 2004. It was reported that several meetings had been held over the previous few months with District Councillors, Housing Department Staff, Grounds Maintenance Staff, Derbyshire Constabulary and the Crime and Disorder Partnership in attendance. Councillor Murphy commented that in his opinion alcohol abuse by youths was the primary cause of such problems, and that a multi-agency partnership would be better equipped to directly deliver the facilities needed to alleviate this problem.

A discussion then took place with regard to the problem of underage drinking in Swadlincote. Sergeant Abbott reported that police patrols regularly confiscated alcohol from underage youths. He commented that letters were frequently sent to the parents of such offenders, often to no avail.

Councillor Lane asked what response there was, if any, to this problem by Youth Intervention Workers. Councillor Murphy reported that school programmes were planned where members of the Constabulary would attend schools in order to discuss anti-social behaviour. However, he reported that lack of resources was an issue. An ideal situation would be where Youth Intervention Workers were able to attend situations as and when required. Unfortunately, at the present time there were not enough resources to enable this to happen.

Sergeant Abbott commented that there was a need to provide some form of activity, in order to keep youths occupied. He reported that sometimes young people were not deliberately causing problems when 'hanging around'. If there was no formal meeting place for young people such as a youth club or a youth shelter, they would congregate in areas which were considered to be unsuitable, i.e. under lamp posts and on street corners. Councillor Taylor sympathised with this view, and further commented that the number of children involved in anti-social behaviour was a minority, most children just wanted to meet up and socialise with friends.

In conclusion, Councillor Murphy detailed the actions which had been undertaken to date, by the multi-agency partnership, with regard to the particular problems encountered by Pennine Way Sheltered Housing. These actions were:-

1. An area crime survey was carried out.
2. Secure, solid doors had been provided in order to alleviate the fears that the elderly residents had from the existing glass doors.
3. Effective nuisance patrols had been undertaken.
4. It had been agreed to install flood lighting to the rear of premises in Pennine Way.
5. In December a felling of the wooded area and cutting back of bushes was to take place.
6. A Schools Intervention Programme was planned for the coming year.

7. Targeted Youth Intervention Workers and Outreach Workers would be secured.
8. Youth Services had been approached in order to consult on the provision of a youth shelter.

These actions had alleviated the problem in Pennine Way and between the months of July and November 2004, calls made to the Police by the residents had reduced from 11 calls in July to zero calls in November.

SA/14. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mr. R. Causer informed the Meeting that the green area beyond the Thorpe Downs Road development, namely Gresley Common, had attracted itinerants during the summer months. He queried whether the District Council could enclose this area in order to prevent this problem. There was also an issue with regard to traffic arrangements at the top of Thorpe Downs Road. Residents queried whether proposed alterations would take place in this financial year or the coming financial year. It was agreed that this was a County issue which would be pursued and reported back to the next Meeting.

Residents were concerned about cars parked on the pavements, causing obstruction, near Granville School, Woodville at times which coincided with school children arriving and leaving. Some residents expressed an interest in putting leaflets on these cars, the title of which was 'Pavements are for People'. The Constabulary advised that such action might antagonise the car owners and warned residents to be aware of potential confrontation. The Constabulary agreed that they would investigate this matter and advised that they would notify the parents, through the school, of the need to avoid illegal parking.

Some residents queried the arrangements for the road closure which took place for the switch-on of the Christmas lights in Swadlincote. It was understood by some residents that the closure was only valid until Friday evening and they reported that cars had been driven dangerously, in areas which should have been closed. The Constabulary expressed the view that the road closure was actually valid until 12 noon on Sunday. The Chief Executive reported that he was unaware of any problem of cars being driven in closed areas, but agreed to investigate the matter.

Mr. J. Williamson reported that Hearthcote Road was currently encountering problems with excessive amounts of mud in the road. The Chief Executive confirmed that this issue would be investigated.

Councillor Lane requested that an update on Maurice Lea Memorial Park be provided at the next Meeting.

Sergeant Abbott advised that an update on the result of the increased Police profile in Swadlincote and Church Gresley would be provided at the next Meeting.

SA/15. **SWADLINCOTE TOWN CENTRE STUDY**

M. Hallard, the Design and Conservation Officer, gave a presentation to the Meeting. She advised that the study derived from the 'Swadlincote Town Centre Vision and Strategy', which was produced for the Local Plan. Work had started with the Swadlincote Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme, which had resulted in improvements to some town centre shop fronts in addition to work undertaken at Sharpes Pottery and Heritage Arts Trust. She reported that the Morrisons Supermarket proposal had provided the opportunity to provide a more detailed Town Centre Study, the cost of which would be borne by Morrisons. It was reported that the work on this Study would start in June 2005, which was the expected time of commencement of the development. In addition to providing for the cost of the Study it was reported that Morrisons would also provide £100,000 for improvements to the town centre. It was reported that the scope of the Town Centre Study and Masterplan (TCSM) was as follows:-

"The Study will consider the design and feasibility of specific projects identified in the Swadlincote Vision and Strategy 2001 including re-paving, de-cluttering the streets, improving the Delph and improving the approaches and gateways taking into consideration such issues as pedestrian/vehicle priorities, disabled access and enhancement of the conservation area.

The Masterplan will contain detailed proposals for the re-paving of the town centre and environmental enhancements elsewhere such as at gateways or on the periphery of the town centre and sketch ideas for sites where there are development opportunities".

The Design and Conservation Officer reported that a series of surveys would be undertaken, an analysis would then take place and ultimate designs would be proposed. Consultation would take place with the County Council, the District Council and the public at an early stage.

Following on from the analysis, design and consultation processes it was reported that a detailed survey would then be produced. An illustrated report would be provided which would include a 1:1,250 plan of the wider area under review, including proposals and a 1:500 detailed proposal plan of the pedestrian area. It was hoped that the total process would be completed in six months.

It was then reported that implementation of this Plan was dependent upon funding. The full cost of the scheme was estimated to be in the region of £2.5 million. It was noted that the Plan would be used to bid for funding from external parties as well as the District Council.

A discussion then ensued and residents expressed concern with regard to various issues. One resident queried whether drainage was part of the Study as it was reported that during inclement weather parts of the High Street pavements were under water. It was confirmed that drainage would be included. Residents also queried whether part of the brief would be to encourage semi-derelict sites in the town centre to be improved. The Design and Conservation Officer confirmed that the brief did include development opportunities and that ideas would be given for regeneration. Residents commented that work which had already been undertaken on shop fronts in West Street, as part of the Heritage Scheme, had greatly improved this part of

the town. It was noted that there were shop fronts in the Delph area which required considerable renovation work and it was queried what the District Council could do in order to rectify this situation. Residents were advised that the owners of the properties needed to deal with these issues themselves.

A resident also queried whether the Study would recommend that bridge parapets in the Swadlincote area be retained. The Chief Executive advised that this issue was being addressed but the bridge parapets were in private ownership and it was not something the District Council could deal with directly.

The Constabulary queried whether or not Swadlincote High Street would become a pedestrian only zone in the new scheme. The Design and Conservation Officer confirmed that the Study would identify any current problems and provide suggestions for improvement.

The Chief Executive concluded that Swadlincote was a town that was about to undergo change. He suggested that once the Morrisons development had been completed and new roads developed which would encourage people into Swadlincote Town Centre, further large companies could be attracted into Swadlincote.

SA/16. **DRAFT COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR SOUTH DERBYSHIRE**

The Chief Executive introduced this item and spoke of partnership working within South Derbyshire, particularly through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). He explained that the LSP was drafting a Community Strategy for the area and feedback was being sought from a number of forums on priorities for the area.

The Chief Executive requested residents to give thorough consideration to the information circulated prior to the Meeting and he urged their feedback through completion and return of the questionnaire. This was an opportunity for local people to shape priorities for the South Derbyshire area.

SA/17. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date and venue of the next Swadlincote Area Meeting would be confirmed in due course.

R. J. STONE

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 8.30 p.m.