

ETWALL AREA MEETING

30th October 2003

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Whyman, M.B.E. (Chair) and Councillors Bale, Ford, Mrs. Hood, Lemmon and Martin.

F. McArdle (Chief Executive), P. Spencer (Democratic Services) and Mrs. K. Ward (Helpdesk).

Derbyshire County Council Representative

Councillor Mrs. M. Littlejohn.

Derbyshire Constabulary

Sergeant A. Wright.

Parish Council Representatives

Mrs. B. Cowley (Egginton Parish Council), N. Ireland and D. Parkinson (Etwall Parish Council), J. Chisnall and Mrs. L. Nash (Findern Parish Council), R. Beresford (Foston and Scropton Parish Council), R. Buxton and R. Harding (Hatton Parish Council).

Members of the Public

S. Avery, B. Banton, G. Banton, S. Bell, J. Carpenter, B. Chell, M. Cramp, C. Creed, A. Crossley, J. Dove, C. Gerrard, H. Hague, B. McGibbon, A. Mitchell, J. Orme, J. Parkinson, B. Payton, N. Roberts, M. Ross, S. Smith and G. Wale.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillor Mrs. Walton (Vice-Chair) and Councillor Hood (South Derbyshire District Council), R. Grimmett and B. Penlington, B. Smedley and I. Smith.

EA/12. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Area Meeting held on 30th July 2003 were noted. Under Minute No. EA/10, a resident clarified that the Member of Parliament, Mr. Mark Todd, M.P. had commented that the Derbyshire Constabulary was not using available powers to move itinerants on.

EA/13. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On behalf of the Vice-Chair, a report was provided about action taken to improve the condition of roundabouts and the Greenway in Hilton.

EA/14. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chair reviewed those items raised at the last Meeting and reported the progress made. Improvements had been made to a 1 kilometre section of ditch at Hatton and the Chair advised of ongoing discussions to secure further improvements. Concerns had been raised at the last Meeting about

the methods employed to treat weeds in road channels and on footways. This matter had been researched and a response was provided. Several residents were still concerned that weed treatments were ineffective and it was agreed to refer these comments to the Direct Services Manager. A response was provided about restrictions on certain herbicides and pesticides. Derbyshire County Council had confirmed that prohibited chemicals could be taken to a Civic Amenity site or the County Council would collect domestic quantities free of charge. The Chair publicised the telephone number for this service: 01629 580000 Extension 7532. It was noted that South Derbyshire residents used Civic Amenity facilities within the City of Derby and at Lount in Leicestershire. Mr. Wale had been in discussion with Officers at Derby City Council, who felt they could not answer the question regarding the disposal of prohibited chemicals. The Chair repeated the County Council's response and asked Mr. Wale to provide a report to the Clerk or himself if problems were experienced. Should any further guidance be received on this subject it would be circulated to those on the Area Meeting's distribution list. Reports were given about the provision of a new bus shelter in Hilton and a road closure in Hatton. A resident had raised safety concerns about the Egginton rail crossing. This matter had been referred to Derbyshire County Council, although a response was awaited. The Clerk would pursue this matter and seek a report back to the next Meeting. The Chair read extracts of letters received from Members of Derbyshire County Council in response to the request for a footpath between Long Lane and Thurstaston. Councillor Bale thanked those involved for their support and repeated his concerns for the safety of children walking along this road to the Village school. The Chair provided a report on discussions with East Staffordshire Borough Council to secure access to a civic amenity site in Burton-on-Trent.

EA/15. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mr. Carpenter, a resident of Hilton complained about the level of Police precept and the percentage increases over the last three years. He understood that local authorities could attend the meeting where the Police considered service options and the corresponding precept that would need to be imposed. Few local authorities had attended this meeting and he asked that the Council be represented at future meetings to raise concerns about the cost of police services. It was clarified that the Council could express concerns, but not influence the level of precept set by the Police Authority. The Chair spoke about the level of the County Council and Police precepts and the District Council's efforts to limit rises in Council Tax. Sergeant Wright commented on the services provided by different parts of the Constabulary and there was a discussion about beat officers in particular. Frank McArdle, Chief Executive of the District Council spoke about the Police's consultation arrangements and it was hoped that a future consultation meeting would be held in South Derbyshire. Mr. McArdle explained the Constabulary's budget setting process. The Chair assured that the Council would seek to influence the level of precept levied.

For some time, requests had been made for speed enforcement cameras in Station Road, Hatton. Representatives of the Hatton Action Group provided statistics on the number of heavy goods vehicles travelling through the Village and it seemed that such cameras would not be provided until a number of fatalities occurred. The Chair referred to discussions with

Derbyshire County Council at a recent Hatton Parish Council meeting, but felt it sad that the need for such cameras was measured by the number of fatal road traffic accidents. Sergeant Wright explained the process to assess the need for such cameras and clarified that it was not just based on fatalities. There was recognition of the problems caused by heavy goods vehicles travelling through this Village, but at present there was insufficient evidence to support the installation of permanent cameras. However, it might be possible to have a periodic presence using mobile speed detection cameras and residents' concerns would be referred back to the Constabulary. Mr. Buxton explained that he had nearly been involved in a serious accident recently. He understood that speed camera warning signs could not be erected unless there were cameras in the vicinity, but felt that this approach was not adopted in neighbouring East Staffordshire.

Councillor Ford referred to problems with speeding traffic in the Willington and Findern areas and he asked for mobile speed detection equipment to be used in these areas. Sergeant Wright explained that this equipment was sited at known problem areas. In response to a question from Councillor Bale, the Sergeant advised that there were insufficient staffing levels to provide cover when beat officers were not on duty.

Mr. Orme of Willington referred to the use of locally gathered evidence to enable action to be taken where weight restrictions were abused. He questioned whether a local group could be provided with a mobile speed camera to enable details to be forwarded to the Derbyshire Constabulary. He realised that a formal prosecution could not take place, but it would give evidence of the need for permanent speed cameras. Sergeant Wright was aware that this approach had been used in Sussex and it had been considered by the Derbyshire Constabulary. However, because of the potential for other problems, this approach was not considered prudent. Sergeant Wright then noted the concerns raised by a resident and the perceived lack of action in response to a near traffic accident. A question was submitted about the effectiveness of the County Council's campaign to reduce the speed of traffic. County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn responded that this campaign had been proven to be effective. However, there was a need to ensure that signs were not left in place for too long. In response to a further question, she confirmed that the County Council was aware of problems caused through heavy traffic build-ups along the A50 during the "rush hour" which led to increased traffic through Scropton.

A resident referred to the problems caused by traveller encampments and an alleged comment made by a Staffordshire Police Officer that Derbyshire was considered a "soft-touch" in its approach to dealing with travellers. Sergeant Wright explained the approach adopted by the Derbyshire Constabulary, which chose not to use Section 61 enforcement powers. It was difficult to comment on the approach taken by Staffordshire Police without knowing its policy. The Chair spoke about the problems caused by constantly moving travellers on. He felt there was a need for a more proactive approach and explained that discussions had been taking place with the Constabulary to secure a more effective way of dealing with traveller issues. It was hoped that over the next few months a sustainable solution could be progressed that would be acceptable to authorities and the Gypsy community. The cost of tidying sites following encampments was also raised. The Chair thanked Sergeant Wright for his attendance.

A request was made for the riparian ditch on Fishpond Lane, Egginton to be cleared. With the recent dry weather it was felt that this task would be easier to complete now and it should prevent potential flooding problems over the winter months. It was confirmed that the District Council had powers to require landowners to undertake maintenance works to riparian ditches, or it could undertake the work itself and charge the landowner afterwards. It was thought that the District Council had some riparian responsibilities for a section of this ditch and it was agreed to refer this matter to the appropriate Officer at the District Council.

County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn spoke of the need for an additional street light in Egginton along a section of road linking Main Street to the new housing development. This was primarily a matter for the County Council, but it was possibly something that could be addressed through the Crime and Disorder Partnership. Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn asked that the partnership consider this request. She then spoke of the successful public meetings held to pursue the highway issues raised at the last Area Meeting. Correspondence had since been received from the Environment Agency which sought to answer residents' concerns and this information was available to the public. She spoke of the planned revisions to street lighting along the Hilton western link road following representations made, which should reduce light pollution.

Mr. Banton referred to a planning application and voiced specific concerns. It was noted that the discussion of planning applications was outside the remit of Area Meetings and the resident was encouraged to lobby his local councillor so that these concerns could be raised at the appropriate time when the planning application was determined.

Mr. Bell of Findern asked when recycling initiatives would be introduced into that area. Councillor Ford explained that it was hoped to include Findern within the catchment area for the Brightstar Project. This initiative, based in the City of Derby was currently experiencing some difficulties. If the project did not proceed, efforts would be made to introduce the composting scheme to the Findern Area.

Mrs. Cowley referred to the scheme for collection of dry recyclable materials and asked when this would be introduced. It was agreed to circulate details of the commencement of the scheme. Another resident referred to a change in the date of refuse collection to Mondays and questioned how the service would be provided on Bank Holidays. It was confirmed that a Saturday refuse collection took place prior to Bank Holiday Mondays. Side refuse was also permitted in certain circumstances. The Chair commented on the need to recycle more effectively and to reduce reliance on the landfill of waste. Mr. Ireland of Etwall Parish Council commented on the need for further recycling facilities for things such as cardboard and car batteries. The Chair responded acknowledging Mr. Ireland's concerns and he explained the District Council's incremental approach and the progress being made.

Following the earlier discussion about the clearance of riparian ditches, a request was made for a ditch at Watery Lane, Scropton to be cleared. Mr. Cramp referred to parking problems in Station Road, Hatton and the current resurfacing works being undertaken. In particular, he understood that the dropped kerbs adjacent to a local car showroom would be replaced with full height kerbs. County Councillor Mrs. Littlejohn explained that a site visit

had been held the previous day and the resurfacing work was ongoing at present. There were public and private drainage problems and it had been decided to retain the dropped kerbs on this section of roadway. She offered to raise the issue again with the County Council and it was agreed to send a letter from the Area Meeting to reinforce the concerns raised.

EA/16. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was confirmed that the next Etwall Area Meeting would be held on Wednesday, 4th February 2004 at the Hilton Village Hall.

EA/17. **DRAFT REVISION OF SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: HOUSING AND DESIGN**

It was reported that supplementary planning guidance (SPG) was used by local planning authorities to add detail to and aid the application of policies contained in the Local Plan. The Council was required to consult widely on the format and content of such guidance, prior to its adoption. SPG's were a material consideration when planning applications were considered.

The Housing and Design SPG required revision due to the publication of a revised Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note No. 3 on housing. The basic thrust of the PPG was that new development should be located within urban areas wherever possible and in sustainable locations, having regard to local distinctiveness. The PPG placed greater insistence that new housing layouts should be more intensive in terms of the number of houses per hectare and that there should be a higher quality of design and layout promoted. The draft SPG sought to interpret this and moved away from the Council's traditional stance, which sought to ensure that spaces about and between dwellings were at a set level, to a position where only existing dwellings were protected from intrusive and overbearing forms of new development. This would allow developers to accommodate a larger number of houses within new developments, with innovative and interesting designs, whilst maintaining existing standards for occupiers of existing dwellings. The draft SPG reflected the stance of the PPG and the latest revision to the Local Plan in promoting lower levels of car parking provision, reflecting the Government's intention to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle. Comments on the draft guidance could be submitted to the Planning Services Manager at the District Council.

The Chief Executive responded to questions about the application of the guidance to property extensions and siting caravans in gardens.

B. WHYMAN

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 8.35 p.m.