

**SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM**

**NEWHALL**

**November 4, 2015 at William Allitt School**

**PRESENT:-**

**District Council Representatives**

Councillor Sean Bambrick (Chair), Councillor Paul Dunn, Councillor Kevin Richards, Councillor Mrs Linda Stuart, Councillor John Wilkins.

Kevin Stackhouse (Director of Finance and Corporate Services), Tom Sloan (Clerk).

**Derbyshire County Council Representatives**

Councillor Sean Bambrick, Councillor Paul Dunn, Paul Jameson (Area Forum Liaison Officer).

**Parish Council / Meeting Representatives**

S Brown (South Derbyshire CAB), Barry Woods (Friends of Newhall Park).

**Members of the Public**

A Argent, P Bambrick, Mr Hobson, Mrs Hobson, Mike Laud, Councillor Pat Murray, M Richards, Jim Seaton, R Trim.

NA/11 **Apologies for absence**

Councillor Robert Pearson, Pamela Foy and Richard House.

NA/12 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

NA/13 **Chairman's Announcements**

Councillor John Wilkins gave a presentation on behalf of the Money Spider Credit Union. Councillor Wilkins explained how the local union is a financial co-operative with members able to safely save money with an advantageous rate of interest. He also told the meeting that junior and Christmas savings accounts were available.

NA/14 **To note the minutes of the meeting held on July 16, 2015**

Councillor Sean Bambrick noted the minutes of the previous meeting and agreed them as a true record.

NA/15 **Report back on issues raised at the last meeting**

**Wellwood Road pot holes**

A member of the public reported that pot holes in Wellwood Road have not been adequately repaired. The Area Forum Liaison Officer (AFLO) advised that he had visited the location and noted that there had been some recent pothole repairs. The issue had been attended to by a Rapid Response Team, who would only attend to emergency defects. The Area Maintenance Team would decide on whether any more permanent works are required. Councillor Paul Dunn said it should be borne in mind that the team of repairers was taking care of hundreds of thousands of miles of roads in Derbyshire.

It was mentioned that the road is currently being used by construction traffic and the AFLO added that DCC would be unlikely carry out any more permanent works until the local development works had been completed.

**Overgrown bushes in Park Road**

The AFLO confirmed that overgrown vegetation had been cut back. A member of the public confirmed that although the pavement is once again passable on foot, some of the road signs were still not clear.

NA/16 **Public questions on issues raised by residents**

A member of the public stated that six years ago, and two years ago, he had asked a question regarding a demolished hostel in Plummer Road, Newhall. The land, belonging to Derbyshire County Council, was going to be used for housing but has stood derelict for several years and is now in a “disgraceful” state littered with rubbish. Councillor Dunn responded by saying the county council is going through a process of launching its own development company and would be able to develop the land itself, ensuring the taxpayer benefited from the redevelopment.

**ACTION: AFLO to get state of land investigated by Derbyshire County Council**

Councillor Kevin Richards told the meeting he had been approached by disabled residents who were hoping to have white lining marked across their vehicle access. They have been told that Derbyshire County Council no longer provides the service, even if residents offer to pay for the work. The AFLO reported that administration costs are the reason behind the decision to no longer provide the white Protective Entrance Marking (PEM). The cost to the

member of the public was around £99. However, the process involved a lot of officer time which made the actual costs of providing these lines substantially higher. PEMs, although only advisory, provided an effective deterrent to parking across driveways. Unfortunately, given the financial climate, a decision was made by DCC's Cabinet Member in 2014 to no longer provide these markings, given the additional costs involved. As an alternative solution, we now often suggest to residents that they display polite notices on their boundary, advising of the need for access to be maintained. AFLO would return the sentiments of the meeting to county HQ. Councillor Bambrick asked why the service could not be maintained, but with the cost of officer time taken into account.

A member of the public asked about the status of a proposal for 14,500 solar panels between Park Road and the A511 and what officers thought of it. Councillor Bambrick said it was a question he couldn't answer as the planning application had not yet come in and a consultation would take place if it did. Another member of the public enquired as to whether solar panels were due to be placed around the Swadlincote Golf Club site.

Barry Woods from the Friends of Newhall Park said he had seen anti-littering signs in Scotland and wondered if similar signs could be introduced in South Derbyshire. Councillor Bambrick said that although he agreed with Mr Woods there was already concern regarding excessive signing which reduces their effectiveness. Councillor Wilkins said he agreed with anti-littering signs in principle but said he would prefer funds be put into educating young people over littering.

NA/17 **County Council Issues**

None.

NA/18 **District Council issues**

**Combined Authorities**

Kevin Stackhouse, SDDC Director of Finance and Corporate Services, reported that the situation regarding Combined Authorities had progressed since the previous meeting. He said that authorities in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire were coming together to agree measures related to devolution. A progress report would be going to the next full council meeting of SDDC (November 5). Mr Stackhouse explained that the Government was offering incentives regarding funding but also attaching certain conditions regarding Combined Authorities. The issue was set to become quite an important one for all authorities in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. He confirmed that there was still quite a way to go before any deals were reached. Responding to a comment that it would make sense for South Derbyshire and East Staffordshire to have closer ties, Mr Stackhouse said that a Combined Authority with councils in Staffordshire was unlikely to happen as East Staffordshire is part of the Birmingham Region.

A member of the public asked whether the proposed mergers would bring another layer of bureaucracy. Mr Stackhouse answered by saying the difference would be Central Government powers being devolved to the regions. Councillor Richards added that “D2N2” has been brought into the mix with a board of 19 leaders from all the related authorities. He said that no authority would lose autonomy and that increased capital expenditure would be available to local authorities. He cited the example of Sheffield, where £30 million extra funding had been gained for the city. Mr Stackhouse said “one big council” would not be created by Combined Authorities.

NA/19 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 3.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting terminated at 8pm.