

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

AREA 3 – MELBOURNE AREA

January 26, 2016 at Melbourne Assembly Rooms

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor John Harrison (Chair), Councillor Neil Atkin, Councillor Mrs Hilary Coyle, Councillor Jim Hewlett, Councillor Peter Watson.

Mike Haynes (Director of Housing and Environmental Services), Tom Sloan (Clerk).

Derbyshire County Council Representatives

Councillor Rob Davison.

Parish Council / Meeting Representatives

Paul Bickerton (Elvaston Parish Council), Wendy Earp (Melbourne Parish Council), AR Jefferies (Elvaston Community Group), Dave Smith (Melbourne Parish Council), Robert Wheat (Stanton by Bridge Parish Meeting).

Members of the Public

None.

MA/20 **Apologies for absence**

Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton (Derbyshire County Council), Paul Jameson (Derbyshire County Council), Avril Record.

MA/21 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

MA/22 **Chairman's Announcements**

Councillor John Harrison announced that South Derbyshire District Council's Scrutiny and Overview meetings were going to be peripatetic for a time. The next meeting, on February 10, would be held at the Melbourne Assembly Rooms and discuss Section 106 agreements. Details and timings would be

circulated in due course. Councillor Neil Atkin confirmed that the meetings start at 5pm for the public. This was criticised as being too early. Councillor Mrs Hilary Coyle said the Council was looking at ways a meeting held later could be temporarily suspended to hear the public's views.

MA/23 **The minutes of the meeting held on October 29, 2015**

The minutes were proposed by Councillor Mrs Coyle, seconded by Councillor Atkin and approved.

MA/24 **Report back on issues raised at the last meeting**

Swarkestone Causeway Enforcement Project

Neill Bennett, Derbyshire County Council's Senior Project Officer (Transportation), provided a report to Councillor Rob Davison on a meeting he had with the Derbyshire Police chief of the Casualty Reduction Enforcement Resource Team (CREST) operation. The feedback Mr Bennett received early in the New Year was that Swarkestone did not feature in the police threat and risk priorities and as such the CREST unit could not support enforcement operations and the demands it would place on the back office, unless DCC could fund that operation. Given the current state of finance this was not an option.

Councillor Harrison said the response seemed to lack appreciation of the gravity of the problem of overweight vehicles on Swarkestone Causeway; it was this and not speeding traffic that needed enforcement. He pointed out that the bridge was a Grade A listed monument and had tens of thousands of vehicles travelling across it including lorries which should not be there, causing danger of future damage and even the collapse of the structure. Councillor Harrison said this demanded immediate attention. Councillor Davison reiterated his belief that Mr Bennett was committed to getting enforcement on the Causeway but was faced with the issue of costs. Councillor Peter Watson thanked Councillor Davison for the report but added that the information should have been available in advance and that the two issues which DCC were asked to report back on from the last meeting had not been adequately answered.

Councillor Davison reported that five truck drivers had been prosecuted for breaching the weight restriction on the Causeway. Total fines imposed: £1,526. Total of costs / court charges imposed: £1,178. In addition, three drivers were scheduled to appear in court on February 22 and three more reports were under consideration. Two further drivers had been issued with formal cautions and six drivers had received warning letters. One driver had been prosecuted for breaching the weight restriction through the village of Stanton-by-Bridge. He was fined £450 with costs of £305.

A resident added that a leaking water main under the A514 at Swarkestone had caused part of the road to collapse. Another resident reported that traffic lights put up around road works at the Cuttle Bridge were allowing too few cars

through in one direction. Councillor Mrs Coyle said that traffic was not allowed to back up onto the A50 island, so that was the reason for the lights' timing. Councillor Harrison added that what was happening at the Cuttle Bridge was a microcosm of what would happen if the Causeway collapsed.

MA/25 **Public questions on issues raised by residents**

Councillor Jim Hewlett reported that a motorist had blocked the entrance to the car park of Melbourne Senior Citizens' Centre with its members' cars parked and unable to get out. It took half an hour to find the driver responsible. Councillor Hewlett asked if pressure could be brought on the highways authority to put double yellow lines down to discourage parking across the entrance, or even paint a white line to draw attention to it. He asked a year ago for measures to be taken. Councillor Harrison said the issue should be taken up by Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton upon her return. Councillor Mrs Coyle asked if it was a police matter.

ACTION: Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton to raise issue with Derbyshire County Council.

A resident reported that the road through Thulston was showing serious signs of stress right through the village. There was a large hole near the Harrington Arms and the resident said it was fortunate there had been no accident there. A motorcycle which hit the hole would be in difficulties, he added. He felt the roads in rural areas such as Thulston were not suitable for the levels of traffic they were now experiencing with the growth in South Derbyshire's population. Councillor Davison noted the complaints.

ACTION: Councillor Rob Davison to notify Derbyshire County Council of complaints.

Councillor Watson raised the issue of the kerb stone outside the Bay Tree in Melbourne. It had not yet been repaired, despite Derbyshire County Council carrying out works elsewhere in the village. Councillor Harrison added that South Derbyshire District Council's previous Heritage Officer had insisted on the kerb stones being made from sandstone. Very large vehicles' back wheels go over it and the sandstone cracks. During Councillor Harrison's time as a county councillor, efforts had been made to fill in the gaps created with concrete, which didn't take, and later with tar, which had also failed. Since then, he said, nothing had been done about this eye sore in the centre of the village. Councillor Harrison added that what was needed was a granite kerb, only it didn't fit in with the niceties of the conservation area. Councillor Hewlett said a similar repair (granite) had been carried out along the road at the junction of Chapel Street and Derby Road. Councillor Harrison said a precedent had therefore been set.

ACTION: Councillor John Harrison and Councillor Jim Hewlett to pursue the issue at South Derbyshire District Council and Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton to do likewise at Derbyshire County Council.

MA/26 **County Council Issues**

None.

MA/27 **District Council issues**

Local Plan

Mike Haynes (Director of Housing and Environmental Services) reported that South Derbyshire District Council's Local Plan Part 1 was now with the Government Planning Inspector awaiting her final recommendations. If there was a positive response, the plan would be adopted in the spring. The Local Plan Part 2 was currently under consultation. SDDC's Open Space Strategy was also being consulted upon and Mr Haynes reminded the meeting that facilities needed to ensure their inclusion to avoid missing out on Section 106 money.

South Derbyshire District Council finances

Mr Haynes also spoke about the forthcoming £1.5 million savings needed to be found by SDDC by 2018-19. He said he was confident the authority would meet the challenge head on and bring about the savings needed. Councillor Harrison added that the financial situation in the short-term for SDDC was satisfactory, with £5 million in reserve. He said the savings needed would be made. A resident asked by how much Council Tax was going up and Councillor Harrison confirmed it would be by 1.95% for SDDC, subject to Full Council approval. Mr Haynes added that Derbyshire County Council was free to increase Council Tax by a further amount to help fund adult social care. Councillor Harrison said the cut in Central Government grant to SDDC would be to some extent offset by the New Homes Bonus, which rewarded authorities for approving housing developments, and the retention of Business Rates. Councillor Davison added that DCC had raised Council Tax by 3.9% and was facing a £12m rise in care for elderly residents.

MA/28 **Date of Next Meeting**

To be advised in due course.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting terminated at 8.25pm.