

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

AREA 3 – MELBOURNE AREA

Tuesday, January 24th, 2017 at Melbourne Sports Park

PRESENT:-

District Council representatives

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

Stuart Batchelor (Director of Community and Planning Services), Tom Sloan (Clerk).

Derbyshire County Council representatives

Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton, Councillor Rob Davison.

Neill Bennett, Dave Connell (DCC Highways).

Parish Council / Meeting representatives

Ed Green (Weston Parish Council), Ann Heathcote (Barrow Parish Council), Alison Hicklin (Barrow Parish Council), Edward Hicklin (Aston Parish Council), Jean Longley (Aston Parish Council), Avril Record (Weston Parish Council).

Members of the public

Elizabeth Devey Smith, PCSO Emma Guest, PC Oliver Priddle, Lucy Stephens (Village Voice).

MA/19 **Apologies for absence**

Councillor Jim Hewlett and Paul Jameson. Councillor John Harrison reported that Councillor Hewlett was attending an extraordinary general meeting of Melbourne Parish Council to discuss a planning application for a new set of toilets next to Melbourne Assembly Rooms.

MA/20 **Declarations of interest**

None.

MA/21 **Chairman's announcements**

Councillor Harrison welcomed everyone to the first meeting at the Melbourne Sports Pavilion but had no further announcements to make.

MA/22 **The minutes of the meeting held on October 10th, 2016**

The minutes were proposed by Councillor Peter Watson and seconded by Councillor Neil Atkin.

MA/23 **Report back on issues raised at the last meeting**

Derbyshire County Council issues

Councillor Harrison reported that it was a disappointment to himself and regular area forum attendees that Derbyshire County Council Area Forum Liaison Officer Paul Jameson would no longer be attending on a regular basis. He may never even come at all after a somewhat ambiguous announcement from County Hall. Arrangements would be made to ensure views expressed at the meetings would be communicated to Derbyshire County Council.

South Derbyshire District Council issues

Stuart Batchelor reported that Part II of South Derbyshire's Local Plan had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

Mr Batchelor thanked the parish councils which had fed back on the recent consultation on the removal of payphones.

MA/24 **Swarkestone Causeway**

Neill Bennett and Dave Connell from DCC Highways gave a presentation on works connected with Swarkestone Causeway. Equipment to monitor traffic levels had been installed five years ago. It confirmed that overweight vehicles were using the causeway. The first port of call was enforcement but the timing was poor in terms of budget cuts. The next port of call had been the police but again resourcing was a problem. A softer option was now being considered: vehicle-activated signage, the next best thing to enforcement. Three signs were proposed – one on the north side of the bridge, one on the south side of the bridge (on the A514) and a third on the B587. After each sign, there will be a chance for the driver of an overweight vehicle to change their route.

Councillor Watson asked if signs saying there was a monitoring area around Swarkestone Causeway could be removed because a) it would help alleviate over-signing and b) it was untrue. Signs, however, were needed in Ingleby Lane. Mr Connell replied that signs could not be placed in Ingleby as it was inside an area-wide weight restriction.

Councillor Atkin asked if the signs would affect farmers and contractors with large vehicles using the causeway. Mr Connell replied that it didn't apply to farmers living within the area weight limit.

Councillor Watson asked when the signs would go live. Mr Bennett replied that it was in the hands of the contractor. He added that it was not an enforcement project but a deterrent.

Councillor John Harrison thanked Mr Bennett and Mr Connell for their attendance and hoped the scheme would have a positive impact.

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

The owner of Melbourne restaurant Amalfi White said she was trying to find a solution to the traffic problems caused by her increasingly successful business. Taxis and delivery drivers in particular were causing issues in Derby Road, Melbourne. She was getting two emails a week from disgruntled local residents – but there was only so much she could do. The restaurant had asked for a time-restricted zone or a parking spot outside. These requests had been turned down. Mr Connell said the request would be communicated back to DCC's Highways Department. Councillor Watson said a meeting had been suggested involving the restaurant, SDDC and DCC in an attempt to find a solution. Mr Connell confirmed that police permission was needed to use no parking cones.

Councillor Harrison reported that a 'no white lines' sign installed after works to resurface Robinsons Hill, Melbourne, two years previously had not been removed.

A resident said they had heard from police that a low bridge sign was going to be installed on the road to Weston on Trent. Mr Connell confirmed that two signs were being installed.

A member of the public raised the issue of how busy the junction from the A514 to Aston / Weston was. Was there any way of keeping tabs on traffic levels? Mr Connell replied that mobile monitoring equipment was available and it could be used, although the junction had never been flagged as one of the higher ranked ones in Derbyshire.

Councillor Atkin reported that foreign lorry drivers were getting lost and ending up going through Barrow on Trent to Sinfin and then Derby. Companies needed to stop this happening. Councillor Watson replied that hopefully the new Infinity Way development would stop it happening. Mr Connell said he would see if extra signage could be installed. Councillor Davison asked if the signs could be put in foreign languages.

Councillor Mrs Hilary Coyle asked if a sign opposite Aston Grange could be replaced. It had been knocked over by a crashing car three months previously but the sign had not been replaced. Mr Connell said he would report the issue.

ACTION: DCC to report back on replacement of road sign opposite Aston Grange

Councillor Watson reported that several signs near to Swarkestone Causeway had been covered by overgrown vegetation. Mr Connell said he would report the issue.

ACTION: DCC to report back on clearing of signs obscured by vegetation near Swarkestone Causeway

Councillor Davison added that DCC was simply not efficacious in completing tasks and it was the worst part of being a county councillor.

A resident said a sign indicating a narrow road was missing in Swarkestone Road, Weston on Trent, in the direction of Swarkestone just after the junction with Trent Lane. Mr Bennett said a sign would be fitted.

ACTION: DCC to replace the sign in Swarkestone Road

MA/26 **County Council issues**

None.

MA/27 **District Council issues**

Mr Batchelor said SDDC's current reserves were healthy but the Government's Rate Support Grant would be totally phased out by 2020. The council would need to rely on Council Tax, the New Homes Bonus and Business Rates to balance its budget. However, the latter two were being 'top sliced' to help pay for adult social care (provided in Derbyshire by DCC). By 2018-19 the budget deficit was predicted to be £800,000. A Council Tax increase of 1.95% was to be levied this year, subject to a meeting of Full Council on March 1.

Councillor Harrison thanked Mr Batchelor for a succinct summary of the situation and added that the books were fairly healthy at the moment and remedial action would be taken in the medium term to ensure the council's financial stability.

A resident said they had been to see SDDC Chief Executive Frank McArdle regarding the Infinity Garden Village proposed for the Stenson Fields area. What details did Mr Batchelor have on the project? He replied that all he

could update was that it was repackaged from the Local Plan. The announcement that the bid was successful came on New Year's Day, so there was no opportunity to update members on it. The timing was unfortunate but everything in the bid had been in the Local Plan. The proposal would be taken to the next meeting of the Environmental and Development Services Committee at SDDC. Councillor Watson said he would approach Mr McArdle before the committee meeting and he would get some information for the next Barrow Parish Council meeting.

MA/28 **Date of next meeting**

To be advised in due course.

Councillor John Harrison
CHAIRMAN

The meeting terminated at 8.43pm.