

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM  
SWADLINCOTE

31st March 2009

**PRESENT:-**

**District Council Representatives**

Councillor Taylor (Chairman) and Councillors Mrs. Gillespie, Mrs. Lane, Lane, Rhind, Southerd, Tilley (Vice-Chairman) and Mrs. Wheeler.

F. McArdle (Chief Executive), D. Townsend (Democratic Services) and C. Lukaszewicz (Helpdesk).

**Derbyshire County Council Representatives**

Councillors Mrs. Lauro and Southerd.

P. Jameson (Forum Liaison Officer).

**Derbyshire Constabulary**

Sergeant A. Wright.

**Members of the Public**

M.G. Brotherhood, R. Causer, Mrs. Causer, J.Grew, D. Horridge, S. Horridge, M.J. Hudson, W. Jackson, E. Key, P.E. Key, H. Kreft, M. Lunn, J. McCarthy, J. Pallett, O. Pallett, A.C. Sheriff, J. Williamson and Mrs. C.M. Wright.

SA/25. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from B.E. Harvey and M. Todd, M.P.

SA/26. **POLICE ISSUES**

Sergeant Wright gave an update on issues affecting Derbyshire Constabulary. He advised that figures for reported crime had recently reduced and there had also been a big reduction in assault crimes. However, burglaries had increased across the county.

He gave an update on Speedwatch and advised that this would be continuing throughout the next year, and was currently in Scropton.

Derbyshire Constabulary had recently signed up to the new "Policing Pledge", which stated Police aims and the levels of service members of the public could expect. There was also an initiative giving Officers more discretion on how they dealt with lower level offences, which would include asking the victims how they would like the matter dealt with. The Police would then attempt to facilitate this. He added that feedback from the pilot area had been very positive.

It was asked if the Police Station in Swadlincote could be opened longer hours on a more regular basis. Sergeant Wright responded that this Station was staffed by a civilian, and when they were absent the only alternative was to put a police officer in this post, which was not always possible.

A resident pointed out that there had be an 8.7% increase in the police precept for 2009/10, and asked what additional services this would provide. Councillor Southerd responded that this was the least the police could afford to increase the precept, and still maintain the existing service.

SA/27. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Swadlincote Area Forum held on 28th January 2009, were noted.

SA/28. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chairman reviewed those items raised at the last Meeting and reported the progress made in each case.

In relation to the wall adjacent to the Green Bank Leisure Centre (West Street), the Forum Liaison Officer reported that Derbyshire County Council had issued an instruction for the wall to be repaired, which would be completed within the next three months.

SA/29. **DISTRICT COUNCIL ISSUES – UPDATE ON VISION AND PRIORITIES 2009/14**

The Chief Executive gave an update on the Corporate Plan 2009/14. He advised that the new plan had been developed following a large consultation exercise and had provided a new vision, “making South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit”. It also introduced four new themes. The new themes were:

- Sustainable Growth and Opportunity.
- Safe and Secure.
- Lifestyle Choices.
- Value for Money.

He gave a brief overview of each of the new themes and ended with the values of the District Council, which included:

- Put customers first.
- Set clear targets.
- Act decisively.
- Lead for success.
- Actively listen and resolve problems.
- Develop our people.
- Maintain value for money via continuous improvement.
- Treat people fairly.

SA/30. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS**

It was asked if there was any further information on the request to raise the height of the kerbs on Church Street, Church Gresley.

**The Forum Liaison Officer responded that this had been passed to Derbyshire County Council's Traffic Team, and a response should be available by the next Meeting.**

Residents raised comments on the introduction of three-hour parking in the bus park car park and asked for the position to be clarified in the car park adjacent to the Civic Offices and Green Bank Leisure Centre. The Chief Executive clarified the arrangements and suggested that as this had only recently been introduced, if residents still wished, it may be more useful to discuss this at the next Meeting.

Further information was then requested on the powers and functions of PCSO's, which Sergeant Wright provided. The Chairman also added that an important role of the PCSO was to encourage good relationships with residents. This allowed them to gather information and intelligence, which they shared with the Police. A resident added that the PCSO working in Castle Gresley appeared to be working very successfully.

With regard to parking in the car park next to the bus park, it was requested that there be some short stay parking bays directly adjacent to the library.  
**The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to look into this, and report back to the next Meeting.**

It was pointed out that occasionally, users of mobility scooters were riding quite fast in pedestrianised areas. In addition, although the scooters were not taxed, they were seen regularly being ridden on the highway.  
**Sergeant Wright agreed to investigate if there were any powers the police had to stop them being driven on the road, and the Chief Executive agreed to write to Shopmobility expressing residents concerns over scooters being driven on public highways.**

Councillor Taylor advised residents that there were plans to make improvements to the town centre. The Chief Executive added that there was £2.9 million available for these improvements, over which the public had been consulted. One of the major aspects of this was that more pronounced definition of where vehicles could go would be made. A resident added that the current town centre signs were confusing and ambiguous.  
**The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to look at the signage in the town centre with particular emphasis on the vehicular access restriction, and report back to the next Meeting.**

A question was asked about the indoor market, and if further development was planned. The Chief Executive responded that he was trying to encourage private inward investment for this area.

It was asked if the District or County Council could influence local bus companies, with regard to bus routes. Councillor Taylor responded that there had been an attempt to influence them via the County Council Public Transport Unit. However, they were independent profit making businesses.  
**It was requested that Arriva be asked to attend a future Area Meeting to discuss bus routes.**

Concerns were raised with regard to the conduct of school children on school buses. It was alleged that on school buses travelling through the town centre, children often stood and crowded around the driver whilst the bus

was moving, which was considered unsafe. The Forum Liaison Officer advised that the public transport unit liaised with the bus operators and schools, and that this information would be passed on accordingly, for information and any action felt necessary.

A resident stated that in the previous day's newspaper, it was reported that concessionary travel was due to be either withdrawn completely or restricted. It was also rumoured that gold card users would be made to pay at weekends, which had allegedly been confirmed by a bus driver. Neither the District or County representatives in attendance were aware of any such proposals.

**It was agreed that clarification be sought on this matter, and reported back to the next Meeting.**

It was asked if an update could be given to the Area Forum on the regeneration of Swadlincote.

**The Chief Executive responded that a report was going to be produced, and if available would be included with the Agenda for the next Meeting.**

It was reported that the wall adjacent to the HSBC had been repaired, however it was alleged that the quality of the repair was very poor.

**It was agreed to submit further information on this item to the next Meeting.**

SA/31. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Meeting would be confirmed.

S. TAYLOR

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 8.00 p.m.