

LINTON AREA MEETING

1st August 2002

**PRESENT:-**

**District Council Representatives**

Councillor Lauro (Chair) and Councillors Douglas, Knight and Southern.

Mrs. S. Whiles (Head of Community Services), Mrs. D. Cook (Democratic Services Officer) and Mr. B. Jones (Helpdesk).

**Parish Council/Meeting Representatives**

P. Ellis, J. Blythe (Linton Parish Council), C. Tagg (Netherseal Parish Council), V. Taylor (Walton-on-Trent Parish Council).

**Members of the Public**

P. Seeley (Linton Parish Council), L. Culpan and C. Vernon.

**Police Representative**

Inspector D. Hargreaves.

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from County Councillor Mrs. K. Lauro, District Councillor C. Shaw, Dr. Eaton, Dr. T. Elson, B. Laxton, Sandra Leigh and Gill Evans.

LA/1. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

It was agreed to appoint County Councillor Mrs. K. Lauro as Vice-Chair of the Meeting for the ensuing year.

LA/2. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th May 2002 were noted. V. Taylor asked that the Minutes be amended to refer to T. Elson as Doctor T. Elson and that it be noted that the Council had recently undertaken work on Dr. Elson's father's flat in Walton (rather than his own flat).

LA/3. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

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

With regard to the traffic problems experienced at Bailey Bridge, Walton-on-Trent, the Chair reported that a count had been undertaken in September 2001. V. Taylor outlined that she had compared the results of this particular count to the count undertaken in April 2000 and the count was 600 vehicles short. She advised that this was due to approximately 500 vans and lorries which had not been recorded.

With regard to the Catton to Rosliston Road suffering from subsidence, it was noted that the Area Surveyor had been contacted regarding this matter and was monitoring the situation.

With regard to the request for re-surfacing at Dag Lane, Lullington, the County Councillor had received a letter from Mr. D. Harvey of Derbyshire County Council who advised that the best solution for this problem was to re-profile the carriageway. A level survey was to be undertaken and if re-profiling of the carriageway was not possible, interconnecting gullies would need installing.

LA/4. **DIVISIONAL POLICING CHANGES – A TWELVE MONTH UPDATE**

Inspector Hargreaves was in attendance at the Meeting to report on this matter. He reminded those present that Divisional Commander Hurrell had addressed the Meeting in April 2001 and outlined a history to changes which had taken place since then. He stated that traditionally the police had acted alone but this had changed in the 1990's with the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Initiative. Crime and Disorder promoted inter-agency working because communities alone could not tackle crime. A divisional review across the County of Derbyshire (but particularly in South Derbyshire) was carried out accordingly. The South Derbyshire police section was made coterminous with the boundaries of the District Council. This meant that all the police work carried out in the District was with one local authority and resulted in effective Crime and Disorder Partnership working.

Inspector Hargreaves advised that a beat constable scheme had been introduced covering particular areas. A two-tier policy on policing had also been established. Reactive officers were also in place (each shift currently consisted of a sergeant plus eight officers but there was a minimum requirement of four officers). Beat officers had also been introduced to tackle local problems and there were ten such officers for the South Derbyshire area. Four beat officers were located in the urban area and six beat officers were located in the rural areas. The role of the beat officers was to establish links in the community and to be a local contact point and deal with ongoing problems. Beat officers had set up 'pub watch' schemes and were working with young people.

In February 2002 two rural officers had been introduced into South Derbyshire. These officers covered the whole of South Derbyshire but particularly the rural aspects. Their remit was to work with farmers and landowners.

In January 2002 a call handling department was introduced where all calls were forwarded to a centralised location in Derby and should be answered immediately. A larger volume of crime was therefore being reported. A mobile police station had been allocated to South Derbyshire and a rota for the mobile station was provided on the Area Meeting helpdesk for information. All beat officers had been furnished with mobile phones and could be contacted on these phones by members of the public.

Inspector Hargreaves emphasised that the police needed to know where the issues were and it was important that people reported crime as all calls were logged. Statistics were examined on a weekly basis to identify trends and crime "hotspots" and resources were targeted accordingly.

Inspector Hargreaves advised that sometimes individuals might report crime and perceive that it was not being dealt with straight away. This would usually be because Officers were dealing with more important matters. However, every endeavour was made to pass on the crime report to the

relevant beat officer. Beat officers would pick up trends in reported crime statistics and Inspector Hargreaves advised that Denise Hornblower was carrying out a lot of good work at Linton.

Referring to the mobile police station, Inspector Hargreaves advised that initially no visitors had been received at the station. However, the mobile facility was now proving to be more popular. Councillor Knight advised that the mobile station had visited Overseal during the previous week and residents were queuing to speak to Denise Hornblower due to a recent spate of vandalism in the village.

Councillor Southern expressed disappointment that members of the community were not getting a response from the police when reporting crime. He acknowledged that the situation had improved slightly over the last twelve months but emphasised that the police had received an increase of 22% in Council Tax and people were keen to see the benefits of such an increase. Inspector Hargreaves advised that he was to be allocated six extra officers but these officers would not be operational until November/December 2002.

V. Taylor referred to a recent incident which had taken place in Walton-on-Trent whereby an elderly lady had been harassed by a small group of young people. The incident had initially started with the young people kicking a ball against the lady's property and had progressed into severe harassment leaving the lady in a very distressed state. V. Taylor expressed concern and disappointment that it had taken five attempts to report the crime and a Police Officer had yet to visit the lady. It was noted that Denise Hornblower was aware of the incident.

John Blythe expressed concern that it had taken Denise Hornblower five weeks to action an incident where a young person had thrown a garden ornament through the Linton Post Office window. P. Ellis was keen to emphasise that Denise Hornblower carried out a lot of good work in Linton but that the police force had lost the confidence of parishioners because it was felt that no action was taken upon reporting crime incidents. Sandra Whiles advised that the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Group would be investigating whether a Neighbourhood Ranger service would be successful in the villages. John Blythe advised that he was under the impression that a lot of Denise Hornblower's time was spent on administration and was advised by Inspector Hargreaves that this matter was being addressed. A Crime Analyst had recently been appointed by the District Council.

V. Taylor advised that a selection of children from Walton-on-Trent went to schools in the Staffordshire area. One particular such school had advised that drugs were being supplied to the school by people from the Walton-on-Trent village. This matter was noted by Inspector Hargreaves for action. Sandra Whiles advised that the District Council had recently appointed a Community Drugs Officer funded by Crime & Disorder monies and this officer would be carrying out drugs prevention work in the District.

Councillor Douglas advised that personnel staffing the Central Call Centre did not know where most of the villages in South Derbyshire were and this caused both problems and delays in reporting crime.

The Chair thanked Inspector Hargreaves for an informative presentation.

LA/5. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS**

A resident reported that Mrs. B. Barlow of No. 28 Bells End Road, Walton-on-Trent, had been attempting to have works undertaken by the Council on her garden as it was currently very steep and difficult to negotiate. Sandra Whiles agreed to pursue this matter accordingly.

John Blythe asked for an update on the caravans situated at Caldwell Road, Linton. He queried why no action appeared to have been taken by the District Council. Councillor Southern advised that an injunction had been obtained to prevent caravans accessing the site. However, the applicants for this site had appealed as part of the planning process and whilst an appeal was lodged the Council could take no further action. The Council had some difficulty in that the occupiers of the caravans owned the land concerned. The offence being committed was an unauthorised campsite. Mr. Blythe's comments were noted however, and it was agreed to investigate the timescales involved in the appeals process.

A general discussion took place with regard to the Council's recent decision to charge for car parking at the Rosliston Forestry Centre.

Mr. Tagg advised that a bench seat at Netherseal had recently been damaged and accordingly reported to the Council's Direct Services Organisation. The seat had now been removed and Mr. Tagg asked that the Officers investigate and seek a replacement.

V. Taylor queried a recent article in the press regarding a ten year plan for development around the Walton-on-Trent area and was advised that no planning application had not been received by the District Council in this regard. A general discussion took place regarding the feasibility of creating a bypass for Walton-on-Trent. It was agreed to investigate the ten year plan for development and report back to a future Meeting.

LA/6. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next Meeting would be held on Tuesday 22nd October 2002.

LA/7. **CONSULTATION ON THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET**

The Area Meeting received a presentation from Sandra Whiles, Head of Community Services at the District Council. The Finance Consultation sought to follow-up presentations made at the last budget round in January and provide the next stage in developing budget consultation. It sought to raise awareness about the cost of current services, the spending pressures which the Council faced and to seek feedback on priorities. The annual cost of general fund revenue services amounted to £9.61million. A breakdown was provided of the cost of Environmental Services, the Community Services and Finance and Management Services. Details were given of current capital spending from the general fund which amounted to £1.1million this year. To provide a context, it was shown that South Derbyshire's expenditure amounted to only 11% of the resources generated through Council Tax. Current spending pressures were reported and an outline given for the Council's key aims. Feedback was sought about the Council's priorities and whether residents would be prepared to pay increased Council Tax for service

improvements. A questionnaire had been circulated to gauge residents' views and it was hoped that these could be completed and returned either at the end of the meeting or using the free post reply service. Details were also provided of those revenue and capital spending proposals put forward by Members and Officers. This included details of those schemes submitted for approval to the Finance and Management Committee and those other schemes considered but excluded due to insufficient resources.

P. Ellis queried why litter bins on the Ashby bypass had been considered as a bid by the District Council and it was agreed to investigate this matter and report back. John Blythe reported that insufficient dog litter bins were being provided in the village of Linton.

M.R. LAURO

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 9.00 p.m.