

**SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM**

**REPTON**

**Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at Ticknall Village Hall**

**PRESENT:-**

**District Council representatives**

Councillor Peter Smith (Chair), Councillor Andy MacPherson, Councillor David Shepherd.

Frank McArdle (Chief Executive).  
Claire Rawlins (Anti-Social Behaviour Officer).  
Tom Sloan (Clerk).

**Derbyshire County Council representatives**

None.

**Parish Council / Meeting representatives**

Fred Hill (Newton Solney Parish Council), Christina Oppenheimer (Ticknall Parish Council), Nigel Picken (Ticknall Parish Council), John Phillips (Willington Parish Council), Julie Tibbert (Ticknall Parish Council), Steve Toone (Bretby Parish Council).

**Members of the public**

Sue Carter, PCSO Harriet Dunn (Derbyshire Police), Pat Laughlin (Ashbourne Community Transport), PCSO Claire Statham (Derbyshire Police), PCSO Kerry Wallington-Waite (Derbyshire Police), Sam Watters, Pam Wood (CVS).

RA/19 **Apologies for absence**

Councillor Neil Atkin, Councillor Manjit Chahal, Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton, Charles Fellows, Councillor Martyn Ford, Brian Goodall, Heather Hall, Councillor Michael Stanton, Carol Wynn.

RA/20 **Declarations of interest**

None.

RA/21 **Chairman's announcements**

### **Ashbourne Community Transport**

Pat Laughlin from Ashbourne Community Transport gave a presentation on the Derbyshire Connect Shopping Service. It was designed to give every village in the county a public bus service once a week. In Ticknall, the bus ran on a Thursday to Burton on Trent. A single ticket cost £2 and a return ticket £3.80. She asked those present to pass the information on to people who would possibly benefit from it.

### **Future of South Derbyshire District Council Area Forums**

Councillor Peter Smith introduced a discussion on the future of SDDC's Area Forums and Safer Neighbourhood Meetings. A report was being written looking at their future and a possible merger of the two meetings.

Frank McArdle said he felt there was a fracture between the two meetings, with a drop off in attendance after the break, and attempts needed to be made to stop that. A debate was due to be held on February 26 and one meeting was an option to be discussed. The start time of 6.15pm was also to be reviewed, as was the top table format to perhaps make the meeting more interactive. Police officers and PCSOs had other pulls on their time but they could leave the meeting at an appropriate time. A new name was possibly needed.

Councillor Smith confirmed that nine people had walked out following the Safer Neighbourhoods Meeting and more needed doing to engage with them.

Councillor David Shepherd said the meetings had proven useful to him but something had been lost with Derbyshire County Council no longer sending an officer. Was there anything which could be done to bring an officer back? Councillor Smith replied that officially DCC had decided to remove that connection. Issues could be reported back by county councillors and by Tom Sloan.

A resident said they were relieved to hear a question mark against having two meetings in future. He didn't know what the second meeting was about. He also thought it was compulsory for councillors to attend and not just repeatedly send their apologies. Councillor Smith replied that county councillors were unable to attend as they were all in a budget meeting at County Hall. Setting dates for meetings were problematic with so many other meetings to fit around – it was almost impossible to avoid clashes. Mr McArdle added that county councillors did attend regularly and were prepared to do the job previously done by their liaison officer, holding themselves to account in bringing information back.

Councillor Shepherd said he felt a request of DCC from a forum carried more weight than from an individual. He hoped his concerns were passed on by Mr

Sloan. Mr McArdle replied that an officer from DCC would attend if there was a specific item of relevance.

A resident said they didn't know anything about area forums. In their brief experience as a parish councillor, they felt the best way to market the meetings was to wrap up all services offered to residents in one place and bring them to the meeting. They felt the meeting needed to be more engaging and less 'council heavy', with more presentations. Mr McArdle replied that he would like there to be a community debate. As for presentations, he felt the meetings needed to get away from them, with most information they contained available online.

A member of the public said it would be useful if residents could text their queries in.

Pam Wood (CVS) said she felt there was potential for her organisation to gather vital community intelligence. She also thought there was a chance for the CVS to play a bigger role in the meetings. The meetings seemed to be all about speeding and highways – they needed to be more rounded.

Councillor MacPherson said the meetings were a lynchpin joining up the different councils and agencies. He felt an occasional guest speaker could be a good idea.

A resident asked if there was any engagement with young people. Could sixth formers get involved with the meetings in some way? Mr McArdle replied that in his report going to Full Council there would be attempts to reach out to different groups.

Mr McArdle reported that, subject to Full Council approval, SDDC members had approved an extra 2% be given to voluntary bodies. That was an incentive for them to attend the meetings.

Claire Rawlins said she liked the idea that people could email or text questions in prior to the meeting. It would help to engage residents who had work or childcare commitments.

Councillor MacPherson said a meeting once a year with all agencies present would be a good idea. Mr McArdle replied that SDDC's Liberation Day achieved such a goal.

RA/22 **The minutes of the meeting held on October 10, 2017**

The minutes were proposed by Councillor MacPherson and seconded by Councillor Shepherd.

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

Mr McArdle reported that a debate would be had around reports back at future meetings. There was potentially no need to discuss the reports which had been published.

RA/24 **Public questions on issues raised by residents**

A resident complained about poor signage outside Repton Primary School, off Springfield Road, failing to alert drivers to the presence of a school in the area. There was only one small sign either side of the school. They wanted DCC to review provision of road safety measures in the area.

**ACTION: Tom Sloan to report issue to Derbyshire County Council**

Councillor Shepherd raised the following issues:

He asked for Repton Area Forum to request a meeting with Arriva as they had ignored him. He wanted to discuss changes to the bus service to the Royal Derby Hospital in light of its merger with Burton Queen's Hospital and a predicted increase in demand for parking.

**ACTION: Tom Sloan to ask Arriva to meet Councillor David Shepherd**

He asked why there had been six unsuccessful attempts to repair potholes, associated with utility covers, at the junction of Stenson Road and Wragley Way. The sixth repair had lasted only two weeks. The carriageway at the junction of Beaufort Road and Wragley Way was also seriously potholed. DCC had visited the site but didn't feel it warranted an intervention. Why had it taken six attempts to repair it? Why did the latest repair fail so quickly? Would DCC be paying for it?

**ACTION: Tom Sloan to report issue to Derbyshire County Council Highways**

Residents had raised with Councillor Shepherd the lack of road markings and give way signs on the new estate in Stenson Road. Could DCC please visit and determine the need for signage?

**ACTION: Tom Sloan to report issue to Derbyshire County Council Highways**

Councillor Shepherd had requested a DCC officer attend Stenson Fields Parish Council or his private surgery to discuss residents' concerns regarding streetlights being turned off at night.

**ACTION: Tom Sloan to report request to Derbyshire County Council**

A resident raised an issue with the playing fields in Kingfisher Lane, Willington. Children were playing at the site but there was a 1.5m deep balancing pond which had yet to be fenced off

**ACTION: Frank McArdle to provide a report back into situation at the playing fields**

A member of the public said the current crossings of the River Trent at Swarkestone and Willington weren't fit for purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. South Derbyshire and the East Midlands was the powerhouse of the UK economy. Was there any way to improve the infrastructure? Mr McArdle said he hoped an announcement could be made soon on the new crossing at Walton on Trent. Such works required massive investment. At the Melbourne Area Forum two days previously, Swarkestone Bridge had been discussed and there was a groundswell of opinion that the bridge needed modernising. It could be a solution.

Councillor MacPherson reported that the path alongside the road between Willington and the A50 island was overgrown and flooded near to the level crossing.

**ACTION: Tom Sloan to report location to Derbyshire County Council**

Councillor MacPherson complained at the lack of action by the Environment Agency to clear the brook in Willington of Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. Councillor Smith replied that it was best to go through Heather Wheeler MP to find a solution.

Councillor MacPherson asked if the level of acceptability of pot holes had changed at DCC. Councillor Smith replied that it was important to keep reporting them. There were occasions when the wrong location was identified.

Councillor MacPherson asked when streetlights were being upgraded to LEDs.

**ACTION: Tom Sloan to report request to Derbyshire County Council**

RA/25 **County Council issues**

None.

RA/26 **District Council issues**

Mr McArdle gave a budget presentation for SDDC. Reserves were healthy and the budget was balanced for 2017-18 and 2018-19. Income was being generated from growth and would be invested in extra services, including an extra refuse round. A deficit was predicted for 2019-20, so SDDC was still

looking for savings and efficiencies. However, compared to other authorities in the country, SDDC was in a reasonable position.

A pilot scheme where authorities in Derbyshire would retain 100% of their Business Rates would be undertaken. Local authorities were no longer able to rely on the Government grant which was being phased out in order to stay afloat. They would have to rely on the Rates they generated from Council Tax, Business Rates and the New Homes Bonus.

SDDC needed to ensure it provided a good service and equality of service.

A provisional increase of 1.95% in the Council Tax for 2018-19 was proposed, 1% below the Government limit. The proposal would go to Full Council on February 26. It was important to note that SDDC took just 11% of the total bill on an average Band D property.

It has been proposed that grants to voluntary bodies would go up by 2% and a proposal that £250,000 to be allocated for a Community Partnership Scheme would be put before a meeting of the Council on February 26.

A resident asked if there were alternative ways of generating income. Mr McArdle replied that SDDC had “sweated its assets” by working with the private sector. The sale of the old depot had created a net surplus.

RA/27 **Date of next meeting**

To be announced in due course.

**Councillor Peter Smith**  
CHAIR

The meeting terminated at 8.59pm.