

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

AREA 3 – MELBOURNE AREA

Monday, June 19th, 2017 at Melbourne Assembly Rooms

PRESENT:-

District Council representatives

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

Kevin Stackhouse (Director of Finance and Corporate Services), Tom Sloan (Clerk).

Derbyshire County Council representatives

Councillor Neil Atkin, Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton.

Parish Council / Meeting representatives

Rachel Cheshire (Barrow Parish Council), Edward Hicklin (Aston Parish Council), Jean Longley (Aston Parish Council), Avril Record (Weston Parish Council), Margaret Sharpe (Melbourne Parish Council).

Members of the public

Lucy Stephens (Village Voice), M Wheatley.

MA/1 **Apologies for absence**

Councillor Mrs Hilary Coyle, Michelle Skinner (CVS).

MA/2 **Declarations of interest**

None.

MA/3 **Chairman's announcements**

Councillor John Harrison announced that Part II of South Derbyshire's Local Plan was out for consultation. The aim was to have the consultation completed and the plan in place by the end of the year.

MA/4 **The minutes of the meeting held on January 24th, 2017**

On the proposition of Councillor Peter Watson, the minutes were AGREED as a true and correct record.

MA/5 **Report back on issues raised at the last meeting**

Missing sign in Weston on Trent

Councillor Watson said the missing sign was at Cuttle Bridge and should tell motorists that there was a narrow bridge. In the previous minutes, at MA25, Derbyshire County Council Highways officer Dave Connell stated that two signs were being installed on the road to Weston. Where were these signs?

ACTION: Tom Sloan to ask Derbyshire County Council for a report on the signs

Swarkestone Causeway

Councillor Watson said he was unhappy with the electronic weight limit signs which had been introduced as they weren't a long-term solution to the problem. Lorries were ignoring them and driving straight across the bridge. How many overweight vehicles had been reported on the causeway since January, 2016 – and how many of these had been prosecuted? How many HGVs had been warned by the signs and changed route and how many had continued over the causeway? Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton said there would be an officer or two at the next meeting to answer questions regarding the causeway. Highways officer Neill Bennett had asked for data showing the number of overweight vehicles which had been recorded going over a monitoring station to the south of the causeway. He said that DCC was taking action where it could, but the new signs didn't record the number of vehicles which triggered them. He had also reported that it was difficult to get a Moving Traffic Order (needed for cameras) outside of London – the Department of Transport had turned down a request.

Councillor Harrison added that it had been some years since a traffic count had been undertaken on the causeway. He recalled that 25,000 cars a day used the road but suspected the number was now significantly higher. He thought it warranted another survey.

Councillor Watson asked why two officers were sent from DCC to deal with matters surrounding the causeway – surely this was a waste of public money. Councillor Mrs Chilton replied that the two officers in question – Mr Bennett and Mr Connell – had been to another meeting and were returning home.

Councillor Watson said that weight limit signs around the area needed reinforcing. A resident reiterated this view and said that signage needed

improving as far afield as Woodville. Councillor Mrs Chilton replied that work was ongoing around the issue.

Amalfi White

Councillor Watson reported that a meeting had taken place with the owner of Amalfi White, police and South Derbyshire District Council officers. The restaurant had not done anything illegal and work was being done to solve issues around the venue. Councillor Harrison suggested possible amelioration work by having artificial refuges in the area.

Chapel Street, Melbourne

A resident said they felt Chapel Street was a bigger problem than Derby Road because of a curve which prevented a motorist from seeing oncoming traffic. Councillor Jim Hewlett added that a refuge could be built by the BT building's garden, if a wall was demolished.

ACTION: Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton to report issues back to Derbyshire County Council

MA/6

Public questions on issues raised by residents

Councillor Harrison said pot holes were so deep in Ingleby that a motorcyclist could easily be killed if they hit one and fell off their bike. Councillor Mrs Chilton replied that £30 million was being invested by DCC to tackle pot holes around the county.

Councillor Watson reported on behalf of a Stanton by Bridge resident that since works at Junction 23A / 24 of the M1 there had been absolute chaos all the way to Kings Newton and continuing to Stanton and beyond, mainly due to a pinch point on the Causeway. Could anything be done to stop this?

A resident said he felt that the problem with Swarkestone Causeway was that vehicles had got wider and it made pinch points an issue. Removing these points would help solve the problem. Councillor Mrs Chilton replied that English Heritage would probably object to such work as the bridge was an ancient monument.

ACTION: Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton to consult with English Heritage over possible work to pinch points on Swarkestone Bridge

A resident complained about weeds and grass growing in the gutter in Chapel Street, Melbourne. Could weed killer not be used to combat it rather than workers pulling it out only for it to return?

ACTION: Tom Sloan to report issue to Derbyshire County Council and ask if alternative approach to weeds could be taken

Councillor Watson reported that residents of Aston and Weston were still unhappy with the Cuttle Bridge junction. Could lights not be installed as they were at a junction in Willington with Findern Road near the humpback bridge, with the developer of Stenson Marina footing the bill? DCC needed to do a proper investigation into the potential for traffic lights. Councillor Neil Atkin replied that he had been emailed by Simon Tranter from Highways, who was aware of the request for improvements to the junction. He said costly measures had to be justified by a collision history at a location. Traffic signals cost between £70,000 and £200,000 and had to be prioritised along with other requests across Derbyshire. Richard Hanbury from Highways would have another look at the junction, but it would still be difficult to justify lights. Councillor Atkin's view was that officers were blaming driver error. He felt the solution would be to raise the road surface in one or two locations. Councillor Watson felt DCC had passed the buck for years over the issue.

ACTION: Councillor Neil Atkin and Councillor Mrs Linda Chilton to meet and discuss possible options for the Cuttle Bridge

MA/7 **County Council issues**

Councillor Mrs Chilton reported that there was a driving course for older people in Swadlincote on July 22. It would test eyesight and hearing.

An extra £30 million was being invested by the Highways department and extra money was also being put into adult social care.

MA/8 **District Council issues**

Kevin Stackhouse reported that SDDC recently produced its accounts for 2016-17 and they were now subject to audit. Full accounts were on the SDDC website and all residents had the chance to talk to external auditors independent of the council between July 3 and August 4.

SDDC's revamped website was due to be launched. Residents should notice a difference from the current site once the new version was operational, which wasn't as user friendly as the new version.

A resident asked if funding was available to help the shopkeepers of Melbourne as the footfall had dropped with the closure of the NatWest Bank. Councillor Atkin suggested that shops in Melbourne needed to stay open later as they did in Aston, with most residents at work during the day and unable to shop during regular hours. The resident replied that SDDC needed to look at the usage of buildings around the village – she felt that too many were becoming offices and not domestic properties which would increase the population of the village.

MA/9 **Date of next meeting**

To be advised in due course.

Councillor John Harrison
CHAIRMAN

The meeting terminated at 8.41pm.