

SWADLINCOTE AREA MEETING

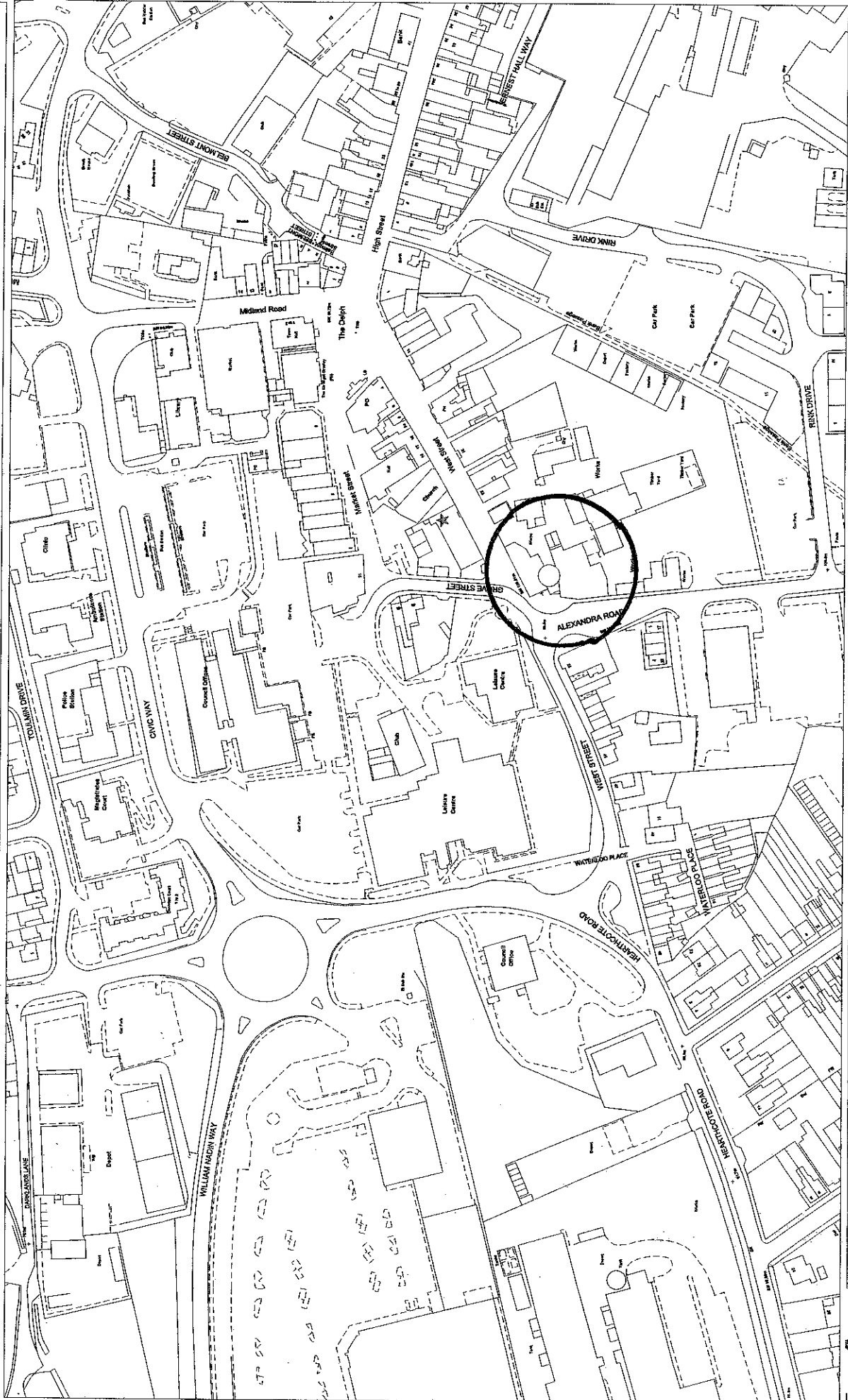
**AGENDA
AND
REPORTS**

WEDNESDAY, 21ST JANUARY 2004

**CONFERENCE SUITE
SHARPES POTTERY CENTRE
WEST STREET
SWADLINCOTE**

7.00 p.m.

Sharpe's Pottery Centre



South Derbyshire District Council

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Estates

Date Plotted 23/7/2003

Scale 1:2500



SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SWADLINCOTE AREA MEETING

(Covering Church Gresley and Swadlincote)

Meeting to be held at
Conference Suite,
Sharpes Pottery Centre,
West Street,
Swadlincote
on Wednesday, 21st January 2004
at 7.00 p.m.

(Light Refreshments will be available at 6.30 p.m.)

Members:

District Councillors: Councillor Southerd (Chair), Councillor Stone (Vice Chair) and Councillors Harrington, Isham, Lane, Murphy and Taylor.

County Councillor: Councillor Southerd.



BUSINESS

Ordinary Business

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To note the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th November 2003 (copy herewith).
3. Chair's Announcements (if any)

4. Report back on issues raised at the last Meeting.
5. Public Question Time and suggestions for future local discussion items.
6. Date of Next Meeting.

Community Items

7. Council for Voluntary Services – Volunteering.
8. Swadlincote Crime Survey.
9. Consultation on the Council's Budget.

SWADLINCOTE AREA MEETING

4th November 2003

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Southerd (Chair), Councillor Stone (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Isham, Lane, Murphy and Taylor.

M. Alflat (Director of Community Services), P. Spencer (Democratic Services) and B. Jones (Helpdesk).

Derbyshire County Council Representative

Councillor Southerd.

Derbyshire Constabulary

Inspector R. Hargreaves.

Members of the Public

M. Brotherhood, R. Causer, D. Crookes-Williamson, J. Lane, C. Rose, M. Rose, A. Sheriff, D. Simkins, T. Sloan, D. Sutton, G. Sutton, J. Tilson, J. Tomlinson, R. Wagstaff and J. Williamson,

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District Councillor Harrington and M. Lunn.

SA/13. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Area Meeting held on 13th August 2003 were noted.

SA/14. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair confirmed that the Thorpe Downs Estate in Church Gresley had now been adopted by Derbyshire County Council. He had recently been appointed as a member of the Derbyshire Police Authority and explained planned changes to the Police Authority and its public consultation arrangements. An open forum would be held to give residents the opportunity to air their views on how Police funding should be allocated. The Chair then referred to the problems caused by fireworks and a Government announcement earlier in the day. A Bill was proposed to introduce a licensing regime and restrictions on the use of fireworks. He spoke of particular problems and the safety concerns associated with the use of fireworks.

SA/15. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chair reviewed those items raised at the last Meeting and gave an update. With regard to the Swadlincote Bus Station, an assurance had been given that the remaining resurfacing works would be completed within the next two weeks. It was planned to install five traditional seats within the bus shelters to supplement the seating "perches". The Chair repeated his

previous criticism of the perches and felt that these should have been tiered. Enquiries had been made about their replacement with traditional seats and it was estimated that this would cost approximately £10,000. Ownership of the bus shelters had been passed to the District Council. If significant problems were reported with the seating perches, he felt that the Council might consider funding to replace them with traditional seating. In response to a question, he hoped that the additional seating would be installed prior to Christmas.

The Chair then referred to the request for improved lighting on a pedestrian crossing in Market Street, Church Gresley. Enquiries had been made about the replacement of this crossing with one controlled by traffic lights. If this could not be achieved, efforts would be made to improve the lighting on the existing pedestrian crossing.

At the last Meeting, several comments had been made about litter problems and Mark Alflat, the Council's Director of Community Services explained planned initiatives. An Action Plan had been prepared which included such things as installing more litter bins, designating litter control zones, the use of fixed penalty notices, coupled with publicity and education. A new inspection regime was required to comply with a Best Value Performance Indicator and there would be a graded approach to prioritise inspection of sites dependant upon their location.

A resident complained about the mess caused by falling leaves and he felt that the methods employed to pick litter were inadequate. It was confirmed that a mechanical sweeper was used within Swadlincote Town Centre each day and there were two employees responsible for picking litter within the Town. Former District Councillor Rose spoke of recent improvements to cleansing, but questioned the use of mechanical "blowers". It was explained that these were used to gather leaves into piles so that they could be swept up. Mr. Alflat publicised the Council's Clean Team, which provided a responsive service to deal with problems of litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling. The Chair referred to the rigorous inspection regime and increasing targets to improve service levels. Councillor Stone welcomed the plans for additional litter bins and submitted a specific request for a litter bin at lower Midland Road, in the vicinity of the Fire Station. The education of schoolchildren was a key issue and it was explained that the Council's Recycling Officer undertook school visits. A request was made for the Clean Team to visit the Maurice Lea Memorial Park, where there were persistent problems with dog fouling. In response to a question about the Dog Warden, an outline was given of the duties of this post and the opportunity for Members of the public to provide evidence, so that the Council could seek to prosecute irresponsible dog owners. It was agreed to notify the Clean Team of the specific dog fouling problem reported.

Councillor Murphy sought more information about the use of litter control zones and particularly how shopkeepers would be educated on this initiative. Mr. Alflat clarified that no firm decision had been taken about the use of litter control zones, but he gave an outline of how such a scheme could operate. Councillor Murphy stated the need for more frequent emptying of some Town Centre litter bins and the feeling amongst shopkeepers that extra litter bins were required. There was a need to educate the public and to take enforcement action against those who dropped litter. It was felt that a successful prosecution linked to publicity should provide an effective

deterrent. It was also felt that a Police presence was needed within the Town Centre and a comment was made on the type of uniform worn by local police officers.

SA/16. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Swadlincote Area Meeting would be held on 21st January 2004 at the Sharpe's Pottery Centre.

SA/17. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS**

The Chair introduced this item and suggested that it be linked to the item on policing issues later in the agenda.

Mr. Brotherhood had given Notice of a question about car parking within the Town Centre and enforcement of the time restrictions on certain "short stay" car parks. He gave an example of parking congestion in three Town Centre car parks and had since undertaken a survey of their usage. Usually, the car parks were full by 8.45 a.m. and he considered that it was Council employees and staff at other local businesses that were responsible. He questioned whether the Council monitored mis-use of the short stay car parks, but was advised that this was a voluntary scheme, which made enforcement difficult. To fund the cost of employing someone to monitor car park would likely require the introduction of car parking charges, which the Council had always tried to avoid. It was confirmed that traffic wardens could not undertake such enforcement action. Mr. Rose referred to previous efforts to encourage staff at local businesses to park away from the Town Centre, but sadly this had proved ineffective. Councillor Murphy commented that the Community Scrutiny Committee would be considering car parking over the coming months.

A complaint was submitted about a Council employee at the Maurice Lea Memorial Park. Certain allegations were made, but it was considered inappropriate to discuss this further at an Area Meeting and the resident was asked to speak to the Director of Community Services after the Meeting.

Mrs. Rose complained about youths on motor cycles using a footpath near to the Pennine Way Junior School. She asked the Police to patrol this area. The Chair spoke of plans to erect bollards at either end of the footpath and an alternate suggestion made was to use staggered barriers, which might prove even more effective. It was noted that problems with motor cycles and "quad bikes" were experienced on the Gresley Old Hall site and the problems caused by motorised scooters were also discussed. Inspector Hargreaves confirmed that the issues reported were an offence and he spoke of the Polices' efforts to deal with this nuisance. Through the crime and disorder partnership, a Motor Bike Action Group was looking to establish a suitable site for noisy sports. Councillor Stone spoke about the development of motorised scooters and questioned whether there had been any successful prosecutions where these vehicles were used illegally. A resident commented that in Staffordshire a covert Police operation led to the confiscation of unroadworthy machines. Inspector Hargreaves confirmed that new powers were available to the Constabulary to take such action.

There was criticism of police response times. Inspector Hargreaves reminded those present of the prioritised approach used to respond to incidents. The resident referred to a particular problem with youths threatening elderly residents and felt that police patrols would provide a deterrent. Inspector Hargreaves noted residents' concerns, but explained that in the majority of cases an offence was not committed when young people congregated in certain areas. The Police monitored requests for service on a daily basis and then sought to target patrols into known problem areas. A recent example was the Melbourne Wakes where the Constabulary had become aware of a potential problem and then taken a proactive approach to ensure that the problem did not occur. He then spoke about the resources available to the Constabulary, the increase in the number of beat officers and the reactive officers that provided cover at all times. It might be possible to review the way that beat officers operated to improve this service even further. Residents were encouraged to report any incident, to ensure that these were recorded.

A resident referred to the weight restrictions in place along a section of road adjacent to the Maurice Lea Memorial Park. Whilst the Constabulary undertook speed monitoring, it was felt that the weight restriction was not enforced. The Chair advised that residents could take registration numbers and details of vehicle owners and report these to the Police, or their local Councillor. Inspector Hargreaves reminded of the consultation on Police Service provision and residents' views were sought. The Police operated a participation scheme and any person interested in seeing how the Police operated could write to the Constabulary at St. Mary's Wharf, Derby.

A resident criticised the design of shelters at the Swadlincote Bus Station, particularly that they were open to the elements and susceptible to filling with diesel fumes from waiting buses. The Chair confirmed that the shelters were constructed to a standard County Council design.

It was questioned when the Morrisons Supermarket would open within the Town Centre and understood that the project would be completed by mid 2005. In response to a question from Mrs. Rose, there was a discussion about the presentation made at the last Area Meeting on the "LIFT" Project and the development of new facilities on the Civic Way site. Councillor Lane offered to provide further details to Mrs. Rose after the Meeting.

The Chair responded to a question about the planned future use of the Oaklands. He explained plans to convert this property to provide specialist care for dementia patients and the construction of new premises in Castle Gresley for elderly people. Councillor Lane referred to the consultation exercise and the concerns of local residents. A petition with more than 4,000 signatures had been submitted and consultation was ongoing on the options for future service delivery. He confirmed that no decisions had yet been made. The Chair added that because of the representations, the County Council had reconsidered this matter and he reminded those present of the need for specialist facilities for people suffering from dementia.

SA/18. **DRAFT REVISION OF SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: HOUSING AND DESIGN**

It was reported that supplementary planning guidance (SPG) was used by local planning authorities to add detail to and aid the application of policies

contained in the Local Plan. The Council was required to consult widely on the format and content of such guidance, prior to its adoption. SPG's were a material consideration when planning applications were considered.

The Housing and Design SPG required revision due to the publication of a revised Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note No. 3 on housing. The basic thrust of the PPG was that new development should be located within urban areas wherever possible and in sustainable locations, having regard to local distinctiveness. The PPG placed greater insistence that new housing layouts should be more intensive in terms of the number of houses per hectare and that there should be a higher quality of design and layout promoted. The draft SPG sought to interpret this and moved away from the Council's traditional stance, which sought to ensure that spaces about and between dwellings were at a set level, to a position where only existing dwellings were protected from intrusive and overbearing forms of new development. This would allow developers to accommodate a larger number of houses within new developments, with innovative and interesting designs, whilst maintaining existing standards for occupiers of existing dwellings. The draft SPG reflected the stance of the PPG and the latest revision to the Local Plan in promoting lower levels of car parking provision, reflecting the Government's intention to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle. Comments on the draft guidance could be submitted to the Planning Services Manager at the District Council.

The Chair explained that the document gave the Government's view on new house building. He spoke of the demands for new house building at the national level and the impact for the South Derbyshire area. In response to comments from Mr. Rose, he spoke about transport issues and the partnership approach with the Primary Care Trust and Derbyshire Education Board, to ensure that appropriate health and education facilities were provided. Funding was required through Section 106 Agreements attached to planning consents to maximise income for the provision of local facilities.

Mr. Crookes-Williamson submitted specific comments about sympathetic consideration of developments that were in keeping with the surrounding area. He spoke about the development of terraced houses and a particular high density development in Newcastle that had been designed with non-car users in mind. In that scheme, occupiers of the properties had covenanted not to have private motor cars. A response was provided and Mr. Crookes-Williamson was asked to submit his comments to the Planning Services Manager. The Chair commented that in a rural area like South Derbyshire, there would always be a reliance on the private motor car unless effective public transport was provided. A resident commented that bus companies would require subsidies to operate services that were not commercially viable.

Further discussion took place about the provision of health and education facilities. By way of example, reference was made to ongoing developments in the Castle Gresley area and the Chair explained planned school facilities associated with this development. There was a discussion about the principles of back land development and house building allocations in general. A resident reported a specific problem with an overgrown hedge in Hearthcote Road. The Chair confirmed that enforcement action could be taken and he asked for details to be provided to him after the Meeting. Councillor Stone voiced his concerns over the increasing density of

development, the loss of family gardens which provided a safe play area for children and he felt this might be a cause of future social problems.

SA/19. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Lane reported on the formation of the Local Strategic Partnership. This body had been charged with producing the Community Strategy and various working groups would be formed to look at specific topics. Any person interested in participating in a working group was asked to contact the Council or their local District or County Councillor. Councillor Stone commented on the lack of young people that attended the Area Meeting. The Chair felt that the District Council was taking an active role in engaging young people.

T. SOUTHERD

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 8.50 p.m.

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SWADLINCOTE AREA MEETING

(Covering Church Gresley and Swadlincote)

21st January 2004

REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING

At the last Swadlincote Area Meeting held on 4th November 2003 at the St. George and St. Mary's Parish Rooms, the following issues were raised. The issues are listed below, together with progress made to date:-

ISSUES	PROGRESS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
1. Litter Bin – Midland Road, Swadlincote	The request for an additional litter bin has been submitted.	Direct Services Manager
2. Dog Fouling	Complaint about dog fouling in Maurice Lea Memorial Park was referred to the 'Clean Team'.	Direct Services Manager

