

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

SWADLINCOTE

1st February 2011

**PRESENT:-**

**District Council Representatives**

Councillor Taylor (Chairman), Councillor Tilley (Vice-Chairman) and Councillor Rhind.

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

**Derbyshire County Council Representatives**

Councillors Mrs. Farrington and Lacey.

P. Jameson (Forum Liaison Officer).

**Derbyshire Constabulary**

Sergeant Thompson and P.C. Careras.

**Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service**

S. White.

**Members of the Public**

M.E. Barsby, M.G. Brotherhood, L. Brooks, R. Causer, K. Dicken, M. Draper, N. Heath, C.R. Horridge, S.E. Horridge, Mr. & Mrs. E. Key, Mrs. Lacey, M. Lunn, J. McCarthy, J. Pallett, O. Pallett, J. Sargent, B. Stuart, R. Thomas, J. Williamson,

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillors Mrs. Gillespie, Lane, Mrs. Lane and Southerd and Mrs. N. Jackson.

SA/16. **POLICE ISSUES**

Sergeant Thompson gave an update on issues raised at the previous Area Forum.

With regard to the Remembrance Day Parade at Church Gresley, he reported that police officers would be present for the 2011 event.

He also advised that with regard to speeding traffic on Coppice Side, all officers had now been trained to use the laser speed gun, and this area would be given attention.

All local police staff were aware of cyclists riding on Swadlincote High Street, and were dealing with this appropriately when an incident was observed.

Sergeant Thompson also reported that the Police Inspector for the area did attend public meetings and might attend Swadlincote Area Forum in the future.

An update was provided on crime statistics in the area, which compared September to November 2010 to the same period of the previous year. He reported that crime had reduced by 7.7%, and burglary had reduced by 28%. In addition robbery, vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour had all decreased and a successful operation ran over Christmas, which had reduced violent crime considerably. Sergeant Thompson gave full details of incidents between December 2010 and January 2011.

The Safer Neighbourhood Team was running a number of surgeries, which were being advertised locally. All the Safer Neighbourhood Team were also being trained on the use of the laser speed gun. They had recently run Operation Safe Drive where they had dealt with seatbelt offences, mobile phone use, serious defects on vehicles, driving without due care and attention and those using red diesel.

Sergeant Thompson also reported that the Police were dealing with speeding traffic on Gresleywood Road, as well as other areas, and were introducing Community Speed Watch in this area. He added that the Police were looking for volunteers to operate this scheme.

SA/17. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reported that a series of drop-in events had been arranged by the District Council, beginning in February, to talk to local people about planning for their neighbourhood.

The events followed the Coalition Government's localism proposals to abolish centrally imposed building targets, and encouraged local people to get more involved with deciding how their neighbourhoods should change. Details were provided of dates and times of these events.

It was reported that an additional event would take place in Newhall, which would be announced within the next few days.

SA/18. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Swadlincote Area Forum held on 17th November 2010 were noted.

SA/19. **DERBYSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE – SERVICE PLAN CONSULTATION**

S. White introduced the budget consultation of Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service. They had received their financial settlement from Central Government for 2011/12 and 2012/13, and were now in a position to consult in more detail on the budget for 2011/12 after an initial consultation on service priorities. A

consultation document was provided for all present, and it was requested that these be completed and returned to the Fire Authority.

SA/20. **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.

An update was provided on the development at Wilmot Road, and it was confirmed that the contractor had been requested to make this area good. Following this, road markings would be renewed. Residents were concerned that markings in this area had diminished and posed a danger.

**The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to raise this concern and report any progress back to the next Meeting.**

The Forum Liaison Officer reported that Derbyshire County Council had not looked any further at the flooding on Coppice Side. However, it would be reconsidered as soon as possible. A resident expressed concern at the amount of time this was taking, and maintained that road levels were still not correct.

It was reported that the site at Blackshed Island had still not been cleared.

**It was agreed to report this back to the Senior Enforcement Officer.**

SA/21. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS**

A resident had read in the local press that the Council intended to look inside dustbins to investigate what rubbish was being put inside. The Chief Executive responded that the District Council needed intelligence on how well they were doing with recycling, to see if further education was needed. He confirmed that when the bin was on the highway, the District Council did not need permission to look inside. However, attempts would be made to advise residents that this was being done. He added that by the end of the summer the District Council would understand how successful residents were at recycling.

It was pointed out that a resident had attempted to warn the Police of a possible new encampment of travellers. However, this was on the border of Leicestershire and Derbyshire, and it was very difficult to contact the correct Police Force. The Chief Executive responded that he couldn't speak on behalf of the Police, but, if a resident needed to understand where boundaries were, they could look on the South Derbyshire website.

A resident requested that staff be commended for their bin collection service over Christmas, as a number of residents had left out the wrong bin and the Refuse Collectors had attempted to swap them for the correct bin where possible.

The Clean Team were also commended for cleaning up after travellers at the Memorial Club Site.

A lengthy discussion took place with regard to evicting travellers from common land and the Chief Executive confirmed the current legislation. He added that measures were being taken to secure the land at the Memorial Club, as to keep issuing Orders to evict travellers incurred ongoing expenditure.

Concern was expressed that over the Christmas period when residents had left out both the normal bin and recycling bin, both were being emptied into the same lorry.

**It was agreed that a response on this matter be provided for the next Meeting.**

A resident who had attended the Meeting regarding travellers, in the Leisure Centre, asked if the Police were using further powers to evict travellers, and what the Government was proposing to do about these issues. The Chief Executive responded that under the Localism Bill, changes were proposed to make it fairer to more permanent residents. However, the full effect of this Bill was as yet unknown.

It was reported that there were many roads within Swadlincote that were becoming very dirty due to various developments that were taking place around the town. Those that were mentioned included Wilmot Road, Coppice Side and Church Street.

**The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to look into these issues and report back to the next Meeting.**

An update on the footpath at Harebell Close was requested. The Forum Liaison Officer replied that Derbyshire County Council had received two petitions, one in favour of closing the footpath and one requesting that it remained open. He added that there had been a lot of investigations taking place, and this matter was nearly concluded. A report was being drafted to go to the Cabinet Member who would make the decision. Once a decision was made, it still would have to go through a lengthy legal process. It was also noted that, should the report recommend closure, it was likely that public consultation would have to be carried out.

It was asked why personal information on Gold Card holders had been transferred to Matlock. The Chief Executive responded that the District Council only acted as agents for Derbyshire County Council, which was why all information was held there.

It was reported that lorries attempting to access the golf course site, were queuing up to get on to the site and blocking the road from 6 a.m.

**The Chief Executive agreed to look into this and report back to the next Meeting.**

It was pointed out that following refurbishment works at The Delph in Swadlincote, the West Street disabled parking had partially gone. The Chief Executive responded that the markings would be put back onto the highways shortly, and he would request that an Officer contact the resident concerned to confirm disabled parking areas.

It was asked who owned an area of land at Blackshed Island, which needed maintaining.

**It was agreed to look into this item and report back to the next Meeting.**

It was asked if there were any restrictions on the proposed tables and chairs which were allowed outside Wetherspoons on The Delph, and, in particular, if there was to be no smoking outside. In addition to this, it was asked if the café's also on The Delph, had permission to put tables and chairs outside.

**It was agreed to look into this item and report back to a future Meeting.**

SA/22. **DISTRICT COUNCIL ISSUES 2011/12 BUDGET**

The Area Forum received a presentation on the Council's budget for 2011/12. Information had been circulated at the Meeting showing current council tax levels and the proportion that was received by the District Council. Charts also showed how the District Council was funded, its net general fund expenditure for 2010/11 and the initial budget for 2011/12.

A key issue was the financial settlement for 2011 – 13, and concerned the reduction in Government grant funding levels. This had resulted in key challenges for 2011/12 and the need to identify savings and efficiencies. The Council's aims were to reduce the deficit, maintain reserves and keep council tax low through cutting costs not services. The presentation concluded with the budget timetable and with advice on where residents could find out more information on the budget process.

SA/23. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Swadlincote Area Forum Meeting would be confirmed in due course.

S. TAYLOR

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 8.30 p.m.