

SWADLINCOTE AREA MEETING

31st October 2005

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

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

Frank McArdle (Chief Executive), P. Spencer and D. Townsend (Democratic Services Officers) and B. Jones (Helpdesk).

Derbyshire County Council Representative

Councillor Southerd and G. Roberts (Democratic Services).

Derbyshire Constabulary

Sergeant A. Wright.

Members of the Public

R. Adley, M.G. Brotherhood, R. Causer, J. Grew, E. Hill, K. Hough, P. Laughlin, D.E. Staley and B. Wright.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District Councillors Harrington and Murphy.

SA/10. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Area Meeting held on 30th August 2005 were noted.

SA/11. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

The Chair reviewed those items raised at the last Meeting and noted the progress made. Reports were given on restoration works at the Maurice Lea Memorial Park, HGV route - Hearthcote Road, Swadlincote, the recycling centre at Sainsbury's, safety measures on Church Street, Church Gresley, the Civic Amenity Site in Newhall and untidy land at Thorpe Downs Road, Church Gresley.

In respect to parking outside the Tesco Express Store in Church Street, Church Gresley Mr K. Hough asked when roadside kerbs would be raised. Councillor Southerd confirmed that these works had been approved and would be actioned. There was a brief discussion about particular vehicles that continued to park outside the store. Councillor Southerd added that it might be necessary to liaise again with Tesco. However, the central reservation should assist and deter on-street parking. It was also confirmed that the police had issued a number of fixed penalty tickets for illegal parking.

SA/12. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE LOCAL DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mr R. Causer pointed out that temporary signage was obstructing the pavement near to the Morrisons development in Coppice Side, Swadlincote making it difficult for pedestrians. He added that this could be rectified, by the temporary signs being erected on poles.

With regard to the Sunday car boot sale in Swadlincote Town Centre, it was noted that the site was being left in an untidy condition, with bins overflowing.

A resident expressed concern over the “zebra” crossing at Church Street, Church Gresley. He asked if the overhead lighting could be improved to distinguish it from the crossing lights. Mr. G. Roberts agreed to look into this item and to report back to the next Meeting. Councillor Southerd outlined plans to change this crossing to a pelican crossing.

It was requested that an additional police presence be provided in Swadlincote Town Centre, particularly on Friday afternoons as there were incidents of young people causing nuisance. Sergeant Wright confirmed that a new Beat Officer, PC Tina Kanellos had recently been appointed. The Chair confirmed that there were also four police community support officers on patrol within South Derbyshire and there are plans to recruit an additional 28 Officers within the next year.

Councillor Taylor asked which area PC Kellempko was responsible for. He was aware of problems on Frank Bodicote Way and wished to raise this on behalf of residents. Sergeant Wright confirmed that PC Kallempko was responsible for this area and was also aware of this issue.

Mrs. Wright reported that in New Street, Church Gresley residents were experiencing problems of cars parking near to a public house, making it difficult for those opposite to access their driveways. Sergeant Wright confirmed that there were currently no parking restrictions on this road. For the police to be involved there would have to be proof of an obstruction. Geoff Roberts agreed to relay the problems back to Highway Engineers at Derbyshire County Council for consideration. Sergeant Wright also agreed to ask PC Newman to monitor the situation.

Mrs. Staley took the opportunity to complement the improvements made at Swadlincote Woodlands, also commenting on the abundance of woodland and wildlife now present. She asked if a board could be provided at the entrance to the site for people to write on their sightings. This could be stored securely overnight by the Wardens to reduce any risk of vandalism. The Chief Executive suggested asking the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to provide such a sign.

Councillor Isham remarked how clean the Town Centre had recently become. This was in contrast however to the walkway adjacent to ‘In-Store’, which had persistent litter problems. It was confirmed that this was a privately owned piece of land, but it was suggested that the Council contact the owners and request that the area be kept clean. Councillor Lane made periodic requests for the Council’s Senior Enforcement Officer to pursue this problem.

Mr. Causer asked if the provision of new railings around the Maurice Lea Memorial Park would include the War Memorial and an area near to Tesco Express. It was confirmed that there were no plans to provide such railings for those areas, as part of the Park improvements.

Mrs. Wright raised an issue regarding the surface of paths at Maurice Lea Memorial Park. Councillor Southerd advised the Meeting that he was currently dealing with a complaint about the path surfacing. He confirmed that this was a gravel embedded path, which needed time to “bed down” and would then be swept.

SA/13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was reported the next Swadlincote Area Meeting would be held during January/ February 2006 and residents would be advised of the date and venue in due course.

Note: Councillors Isham and Taylor left the Meeting at 7.35 p.m.

SA/14. **CORPORATE PLAN**

The Chair introduced this item and explained the importance of the Corporate Plan and the consultation exercise being undertaken. This was residents opportunity to shape where District Council funds were spent. He explained that the District Council’s Members and Officers had devised six themes, each with two priorities. Residents’ feedback was sought to shape these priorities and hopefully to condense them into three or four key priorities. Council spending in some areas might be reduced or even withdrawn, whilst for other areas, levels of resources would be ‘inflation proofed’. A questionnaire had been circulated and the Council sought a thoughtful response from residents to ascertain priorities. Following the consultation, a further report would be provided to the next round of Area Meetings.

Frank McArdle, the Council’s Chief Executive confirmed the importance of the Corporate Plan, which set out the ambitions for South Derbyshire, the plans and priorities for delivering improved services and a framework for partnership working. The new style document had better links with the Community Strategy, a new Vision for South Derbyshire, with six cross cutting themes and a clear indication of the challenges to be faced, priorities and action areas.

The presentation then looked at the detail of each of the six themes. They comprised You at the Centre, Safe and Strong Communities, Prosperity for All, High Quality Services, Rural South Derbyshire and Strong in the Region. The presentation concluded by looking at the next steps, following the community consultation. The Council would develop detailed proposals, consult, short list and then agree the final Plan, linked to the budget. The Chief Executive added that this new Corporate Plan was different to its predecessors and was the most inclusive that the Council had produced. The consultation being undertaken was real and the document would provide the way forward in delivering Council services over the next three years.

The Chair encouraged residents to complete the questionnaire and thus have an input into the future priorities of the Council.

The Chief Executive invited questions. It was asked whether new people moving into the area were canvassed on their opinions, as it was considered that new residents might not automatically use Swadlincote Town Centre. The Chief Executive was aware of this issue and development work was being undertaken to encourage use of the Town Centre of Swadlincote.

A resident requested that a cinema be provided in Swadlincote. The Chief Executive confirmed that there were plans to house a small-screen cinema within the Sharpe's Pottery Centre.

It was also stated by a resident that South Derbyshire District Council should continue its policy of not charging for car parking.

It was asked whether Swadlincote could develop facilities for housing larger events such as the Youth Orchestra. The Chief Executive confirmed that events were held at the Pingle School and there were concerts and performances held in the Kiln at Sharpe's Pottery Centre. Councillor Lane added that there was a partnership project to provide a Performing Arts Centre in Swadlincote. Funding was being sought, and more information would be available shortly.

Mr. Causer reported that on weekend evenings most people left the Town Centre to go into Burton. He asked if any future developments would be made to the Town Centre to encourage people to stay and provide a thriving evening environment. The Chief Executive responded that progress had been made and there were now some excellent establishments in the Town but further development and private funding was being pursued. He added that Morrisons would assist in attracting future development to help sustain the Town Centre.

Mrs. Wright expressed her concern over alterations to bus services between Swadlincote and Derby. Geoff Roberts agreed to pursue this issue and to provide feedback to the next Meeting.

T. SOUTHERD

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 8.10 p.m.