

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE AREA FORUM

LINTON

25th November 2009

PRESENT:-

District Council Representatives

Councillor Wheeler (Chairman) and Councillors Grant and Timms.

M. Alflat (Director of Community Services), P. White (Democratic Services) and C. Lukaszewicz (Helpdesk).

Derbyshire County Council Representative

G. Duckworth (Forum Liaison Officer).

Derbyshire Constabulary

Sergeant M. Sisman.

Community Transport (Swadlincote)

B. Corbishley and P. Harrison.

South Derbyshire Partnership

J. Smith.

Parish Council/Meeting Representatives

S. Jackson (Castle Gresley Parish Council), K. Bradford and W. Wadsworth (Coton-in-the-Elms Parish Council), J. Powell (Linton Parish Council), T. Nicklin and A. Wing (Netherseal Parish Council), M. Patrick (Overseal Parish Council), M. Horne and V. Taylor (Walton-on-Trent Parish Council).

LA/11. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District and County Councillor Jones (Vice-Chairman), County Councillor Lacey, Dr. T. Elson and C. Knight.

LA/12. **POLICE ISSUES**

Sergeant Sisman addressed the Meeting, giving an update on police issues. He advised that the next Area Safer Neighbourhood Meeting would be held on Tuesday, 1st December 2009 at 6.30 p.m. at Netherseal Village Hall. It was intended to set the next three months' priorities until March 2010 at the Safer Neighbourhood Meeting.

An update was given on crime statistics to October and the precise definition of burglaries and robberies was discussed.

The Police were thanked for their assistance with regard to a parade through Overseal, which had unfortunately been cancelled during the previous year due to road closure issues. It was noted that a police representative had travelled the route and discussed the issues prior to the event, which had contributed to its smooth running.

LA/13. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Linton Area Forum held on 22nd July 2009, were noted. Reference was made to the attendance of P. rather than W. Marbrow at the previous Meeting. With regard to paragraph three of Minute No. LA/4, it was clarified that the increased litter in the Walton-on-Trent area was from a takeaway premises in Branston.

LA/14. **PRESENTATION BY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**

Bill Corbishley, Managing Director and Paul Harrison, Assistant Managing Director of Community Transport (Swadlincote) gave a presentation on the services provided by this organisation. The intention was to promote greater awareness of Community Transport and the services it provided. Community Transport was not a commercial operation, but a Registered Charity and Limited Company. The organisation had commenced during the mid 1980's with the assistance of Central Government funding from which it had enabled the provision of accessible transport throughout the County. The first scheme had been provided in High Peak in 1985 and a later scheme for South Derbyshire in 1989. Initially, each scheme had comprised one vehicle, one driver and a part-time administrative assistant. Transport was normally booked for shopping trips in the Burton-on-Trent and Swadlincote areas. It was also used by bone fide groups associated with activities of benefit to the community, which had to be affiliated to the scheme. Demand began to exceed resources and a further grant was made available from Derbyshire County Council.

After a few years, the scheme co-ordinators requested a more formal arrangement with the County Council in terms of a service level agreement. The agreement specified the provision of a fixed number of vehicles for a specific total cost. The resulting tendering contract included a fleet of vehicles and drivers, in order to provide a more diverse operation. Funding was currently in place for six vehicles, although in excess of twenty buses were operated. The company was contracted to provide eighteen "Dial-a-Buses", although actually provided forty.

Most passengers used the Gold Card, although there was a very low cost for those that had to pay for the services. There had been some criticism regarding group travelling, since a vehicle was not always available, due to contract arrangements with other organisations. This sometimes resulted in a lack of available drivers. Since most drivers worked on a full-time basis, it was considered unreasonable to request them to work additional hours. Additional volunteer drivers were always welcomed. In order to assist groups, where

their own drivers could be provided, this decreased the hire costs. Suitable driver training was provided, since Community Transport was a ROSPA agent. In such cases, drivers would not be unaccompanied unless they were both confident and competent. No cost was levied for the training.

Reference was given to the literature circulated, which included details of the services available, volunteer opportunities and a service timetable. It was noted that the “Dial-a-Bus” service was over subscribed and that priority was given to wheelchair users.

A number of comments and queries were raised arising from this presentation, which included working with the Community Voluntary Service in order to acquire additional volunteers; the qualifications available for volunteer drivers; consideration of suggested routes to other locations and advertising of the services available. Detailed responses were provided.

Bill Corbishley and Paul Harrison were thanked for their presentation.

LA/15. **SOUTH DERBYSHIRE PARTNERSHIP: NEW SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

Jo Smith, Vice-Chairman of the South Derbyshire Partnership (formerly Local Strategic Partnership) provided a presentation on the Sustainable Community Strategy. She explained that this statutory plan for the District linked the various sectors to meet challenges for the future. Information had been circulated explaining how the Strategy had been developed, its background and future aims. Details were provided of the Partnership’s vision, followed by explanations of each of its priority areas: safer communities, healthy communities, vibrant communities, sustainable development and children and young people. Details were also provided about the measurement of achievement and associated indicators. A number of action plans were being delivered and would be monitored by the South Derbyshire Partnership Board.

A number of comments and queries were raised arising from this presentation. This included the improvement of infrastructure arising from further residential development; the retention of a sense of community in the District; an increase in public transport provision; further details of the Partnership’s action plans; provision of a sustainable community and various community events and schemes throughout the District. Detailed responses were provided.

Jo Smith was thanked for her presentation.

LA/16. **REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RAISED AT THE LAST MEETING**

A report had been circulated with the Agenda, which provided an update on the issues raised at the last Meeting.

With regard to a request for overgrown hedges to be cut back that were obscuring visibility at Flint Mill Crossroads, it was advised that the County Councillor had recently met with an Officer to discuss this issue, following the Highways Inspector’s response that no visibility problems had been identified.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to pursue this matter and report back to the next Meeting.

Following the response from the County Council's Traffic and Safety Manager, which had advised of little benefit in undertaking a traffic survey on Station Lane, Walton-on-Trent, local residents stressed their concerns regarding this issue. It was asked that this matter be revisited since the response received was considered unacceptable. It was suggested that the matter be referred to the local County Councillor.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to advise the County Council of the Area Forum's comments, requesting that the matter should be revisited and would report back to the next Meeting.

In view of the number of highways issues raised at each Area Forum Meeting, it was suggested that a County Highways Officer be requested to attend a future Meeting.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to request the attendance of a County Highways Officer at a future Meeting.

A request was received to undertake a speed survey at Acresford Road, Overseal.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to investigate the matter further and would report back to the next Meeting.

LA/17. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS**

The protocol for evicting travellers from Council-owned and private land was questioned. It was advised that the District Council had powers to evict travellers from its own land, although it had no jurisdiction with regard to privately-owned land. Reference was made to a particular incident where travellers had caused damage to a football pitch at Castle Gresley. Sergeant Sisman advised that the Police were able to take action where evidence could be provided. The Chairman suggested that any specific issues be raised at the Safer Neighbourhood Meeting.

It was questioned whether blue bags for paper recycling could be provided with handles. It was noted that East Staffordshire Borough Council provided reinforced bags with handles.

It was agreed to investigate this matter further.

Concern was raised that the proposed modifications to the junction between the A444 and The Cricket's Public House, Acresford had not been undertaken. The County Council had advised that a requested 40 miles per hour sign could not be provided in this location.

The Forum Liaison Officer agreed to investigate this matter further.

Reference was made to an incident of dog fouling in Bells End Road, Walton-on-Trent. Requested notices were still awaited and the local Ward Member advised that the matter was being addressed.

It was advised that there were currently faults with street lamps in the Bells End Road area of Walton-on-Trent. The Forum Liaison Officer advised that

cards were available on the Helpdesk containing the relevant contact details at the County Council.

LA/18. **DISTRICT COUNCIL ISSUES: - ELECTORAL REVIEW OF SOUTH DERBYSHIRE.**

A presentation was made by Mark Alflat, Director of Community Services at the District Council, on behalf of the Boundary Committee for England. Copies of presentation slides had been circulated and residents were encouraged to consider and respond to this consultation process. The presentation slides explained why South Derbyshire had been selected for an Electoral Review and the purpose of the Review. It gave details of the issues that could be considered by the Boundary Committee, those that were outside the Review's scope and the Review processes, leading to final recommendations.

South Derbyshire was the sixth fastest growing area in the Country. It was noted that the District and County boundaries of the Seales Ward currently differed, although there could be a possible future parish boundary review. Parish councils were made aware that they would be consulted as part of this process.

LA/19. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was reported that future Linton Area Forum Meetings would be held on Monday 1st February 2010 at Castle Gresley Children's Centre and on Monday 15th March 2010 at Coton-in-the-Elms Community Centre.

R. WHEELER

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 8.35 p.m.