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CENTRAL AREA COMMUNITY FORUM

Notes of the Central Area Community Forum held on 8 November 2017 at 7.00pm at the Town Hall, Matlock

PRESENT

Derbyshire Dales - District Council

Councillors Ann Elliott (In the Chair), Jason Atkin, Martin Burfoot, Sue Burfoot, Albert Catt, Susan Hobson, Joyce Pawley, Lewis Rose, OBE and Jacquie Stevens

Dorcas Bunton (Chief Executive), Karen Henriksen (Head of Resources), Sandra Lamb (Head of Corporate Services), Ashley Watts (Head of Community & Environmental Services), Jim Fearn (Communications & Marketing Manager) and Ros Hession (Community Engagement Officer)

Members of the Public

Cromford Parish Council - Barbara Bowman, Sue Mosley
Darley Dale – Kathleen Dyson
Green Party – John Green
Local residents – David Barker, A J Mumby, Janet Pinder
Matlock Hospital League of Friends – Pam Wildgoose
Tansley Parish Council – V J Raynes, Ian Strange
Tansley resident – K Camm
Sheila Burton, Stephen Gibbons, Roman Jivkon, Tom Pilkington, Geoff Stevens plus 2 others
18 in total

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Councillor Elliott welcomed everyone to the Forum, introduced participating Councillors and officers then outlined the plan for the evening.

DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL – GOOD NEWS

Dorcas Bunton talked about some of the District Council's recent successes which included:-

Leisure Centres: We have completed a fabulous refurbishment programme of each of the Fitness Suites, plus the new functional space at Ashbourne and new viewing area too. New Indoor Cycling Studio at Arc is amazing and has seen participation rocket.

Hall Leys Park MUGA: Work has been completed to convert the single tennis court in Hall Leys Park into a Multi-Use Games Area, improving recreational facilities in the park, including enclosed football and basketball activities and - we hope - reducing anti-social behaviour.

Ashbourne Thursday Market: Is now at its new location, prompting us to consult on the possibility of switching the Saturday market to the same site.

... and we awarded the tender to The Market Co. for a monthly artisan market in Ashbourne Market Place, this started in September.

Great British Spring Clean: Following on from the success of the 2016 'Clean for the Queen' initiative, this year we encouraged more than 25 groups to take part in the 'Great British Spring Clean', including schools, parish councils, women's institutes, businesses and various community groups.

Invoices: For 2016/17 99.65% of invoices were paid on time. This is our best ever performance, and helps the Council's suppliers operate successfully (many are local firms)

Minor Planning Applications: 77.9% determined in 8 weeks, well above target and second best performance in 5 years.

Business Advice: In the last 12 months, our Derbyshire Dales Business Advice Service has helped 22 local firms win £800,000 in grants – creating 72 new jobs in the Derbyshire Dales.

...**26 New Businesses** were started in the Derbyshire Dales last year with direct assistance from the District Council's business support schemes, and a further 101 existing firms got business advice from us.

CCTV: We have tendered and are now installing a new CCTV System to cover our 4 main town centres and help people who live, work and visit the area feel safer.

Regeneration: We have worked with the residents' association on Hurst Farm estate in Matlock to win a £200,000 investment from DCLG to identify the regeneration needs of the estate.

Vulnerable People: Derbyshire County Council has agreed a two year deal with us for £300,000 additional Council Tax raised on 2nd homes to be invested in services for vulnerable people threatened with homelessness in both 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Accreditation: Our Homelessness Team has achieved the Bronze level of accreditation with DCLG's Gold Standard award and is now working towards the Silver level.

Housing Investment: Working in partnership with Derby City Council and all of the Derbyshire authorities, we have led a project to fund a 2-year post that will help to bring additional housing investment to the county. Financed from an external grant, it will start in September.

Disabled Facility Grants: We completed 59 of these grants in 2016/17 – the highest ever number, meaning more people helped than ever before.

Jack Rabbits, The Green Man, Ashbourne and Sudbury Courtyard were both Building Control project finalists - the Sudbury Courtyard was an actual winner in the Best Small Commercial Project category at the East Midlands 2017 Building Excellence Awards.

Matlock Town Centre: We've given £10,000 to Matlock Community Vision (a local community-led company) to carry out a viability assessment of their initial plans for land off Bakewell Road.

Ashbourne By-Pass: We've given £10,000 to Derbyshire County Council (DCC) as a contribution toward the work required in assessing the feasibility of a by-pass. Together with an Officer from DCC and a local representative, the Corporate Director attended a meeting with the Secretary of State (arranged by the MP) to discuss potential funding sources.

Active Everyone: Our popular Active Everyone project is to be extended thanks to Sport England funding. Since 2014 it has engaged with 1,500 people in some of the Dales' most deprived communities.

Walking for Health: This growing scheme hosted Nordic Walking taster sessions at Whitworth Park - a huge success with more than 60 people attending.

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues were raised as follows:-

CCTV

- In response to a question from Mr Mumby about CCTV, Dorcas advised that the District Council fund the system and also employ an officer who helps maintain it. It is mainly for use by the police should they need it. The current replacement programme is ongoing with a new system up and running in Matlock at any time.
- Roman Jivkon felt that anti-social behaviour was on the increase in Matlock, not helped by premises being licenced into the early hours. In response to his question about the positioning of the CCTV cameras, Ashley undertook to talk further after the meeting, but advised that the positioning of the cameras had been arrived at in consultation with the police. There were 5 cameras in areas in and out of the town and at known congregation points.

Disabled Facility Grants

- In response to a question from Mr Green, Dorcas confirmed that the budget for Disabled Facility Grants is around £430,000.

LEADER

- In response to a question from Barbara Bowman about any plans to replace LEADER grants and initiatives, Councillor Rose advised that the scheme will continue to 2020 and the District Council, along with others, was pressing for a replacement scheme for rural areas. The LEADER scheme had been successful and much lobbying was taking place for a similar scheme and urged for local support.

Disabled parking facilities

- Mr Mumby noted that Blue Badge holders now have to pay to park on District Council car parks and he also noted the distance of the pay station from the disabled bays at the Lido car park in Matlock. He suggested that Blue Badge holders be issued with some sort of scratch card permit for a small charge which would allow them to park on an agreed number of occasions.
- Dorcas explained that charges for Blue Badge holders had been introduced 1 April 2017. Consultation had taken place widely and specifically with disability forums who were not against charging and also advised on the positioning of the pay stations and disabled bays. She clarified that Derbyshire County Council issues Blue Badges.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF OUR EFFICIENCY PLAN?

Karen Henriksen gave a presentation on the District Council's Efficiency Plan.

We need to find ongoing savings of £1.7m a year by 2020/21.
That's almost 17% of current spending!

Q. How do we hope to achieve those savings?

A. With the projects set out in our Efficiency Plan

This is your chance to give us your views on the proposals

An overview of the proposals

| | 2018/19 £'000s | 2019/20 £'000s | 2020/21 £'000s | 2021/22 £'000s |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Savings required (as MTFP) | 683 | 1,049 | 1,709 | 1,513 |
| Service Reviews | -625 | -775 | -775 | -775 |
| Service Changes | -485 | -485 | -485 | -485 |
| Transformation | -130 | -155 | -165 | -165 |
| Additional Income | -150 | -150 | -150 | -150 |
| Net Spending Requirement | -707 | -516 | 134 | -62 |

Proposed savings from service reviews

| | 2018/19 £'000s | 2019/20 £'000s | 2020/21 £'000s | 2021/22 £'000s |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Outsourcing management of leisure centres | -350 | -500 | -500 | -500 |
| Public conveniences: close some | -200 | -200 | -200 | -200 |
| Public conveniences: introduce charging | -75 | -75 | -75 | -75 |
| Total | -625 | -775 | -775 | -775 |

Proposed savings from service changes

| | 2018/19 £'000s | 2019/20 £'000s | 2020/21 £'000s | 2021/22 £'000s |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Markets Review | -40 | -40 | -40 | -40 |
| Boundary Review Fewer Members | -25 | -25 | -25 | -25 |
| Cease pest control service | -15 | -15 | -15 | -15 |
| Gulley Emptying | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Review of leases | -425 | -425 | -425 | -425 |
| Total | -485 | -485 | -485 | -485 |

Proposed savings from transformation

| | 2018/19 £'000s | 2019/20 £'000s | 2020/21 £'000s | 2021/22 £'000s |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Review of car user expenses | -40 | -40 | -40 | -40 |
| BSU savings | -15 | -15 | -15 | -15 |
| Support services following outsourcing of leisure management | -75 | -100 | -100 | -100 |
| STEP Review | | | -10 | -10 |
| Total | -130 | -155 | -165 | -165 |

Proposed areas for additional income

| | 2018/19 £'000s | 2019/20 £'000s | 2020/21 £'000s | 2021/22 £'000s |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Charge for car parks that are currently free | -60 | -60 | -60 | -60 |
| Council Tax Premium for Empty Homes (DDDC share) | -10 | -10 | -10 | -10 |
| Planning fees, pre-application, waste bins etc | -80 | -80 | -80 | -80 |

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total | -150 | -150 | -150 | -150 |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|

Efficiency Plan: Key Messages

The MTFP shows a balanced budget for 2017/18 with savings required for later years; Our EP has identified savings that will balance our books. Members have already given approval for officers to explore the areas but some tough decisions will have to be made; If these savings can be delivered, we shouldn't need to look at any other areas for savings over the next few years.....

Further public consultation will be required before some of these proposals can be implemented.

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues were raised as follows:-

Planning Fees

- In response to a question from Barbara Bowman, Karen confirmed that central government set planning fees. However, the pre-application advice is a discretionary service which the District Council has recently introduced.

Empty Homes

- Mrs Bowman asked about empty properties and how long they were to be empty before the District Council may take action. Karen advised of a 3 month relief period. Mrs Bowman agreed in principle with the intention to bring empty properties back into use, but noted an issue with the elderly who may have moved into a care home and that they, and their family, may be reluctant to give up the property.

Gulley Emptying

- Vicki Raynes asked if the District Council was going to cease gulley emptying. Karen replied that this was the case as it currently undertook the work on behalf of Derbyshire County Council, but arrangements were in place to take the agency work back. This would result in an initial £20,000 loss which is monies that covers overheads.

Car Allowances

- Vicki Raynes sought clarification on what allowances are paid for. Karen explained for business use, not journeys to and from the work place.
- In response to a question from Mr Mumby, Karen replied that the rates vary – some are paid a monthly allowance, others are paid for mileage incurred.
- Mr Mumby noted the HMRC rate at 45p per mile. Karen noted that some allowances are above this hence a review to rectify.

REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Purpose of the Review

- District Council funding gap of £1.6M over next 4 years
- 26 Public Conveniences owned/managed by the District Council
- Cost of Public convenience service is £470K per year
- Derbyshire Dales is a tourist area attracting 4.2 million visitors per year
- Trying to find ways of saving money whilst maintaining services

Options for the Review

- Charging for use
- Community Toilet Scheme
- Sponsorship
- Community Asset Transfer
- Closure

Current Position

- Assessing numbers that use facilities
- Consultation on charging at:
 - Matlock Hall Leys Park
 - Granby Road, Bakewell
 - Shawcroft Car Park, Ashbourne
 - Nether End, Baslow
 - Memorial Gardens, Matlock Bath
- Consultation on basis for Community Toilet Scheme
- Criteria agreed for assessment of closure as a last resort

Next Steps

- Completing the public consultation
- Assessment of consultation responses
- Obtaining quotes for charging units
- Report to Committee in New Year with recommendations for each facility

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues were raised as follows:-

- David Barker asked if the District Council has considered a season ticket scheme for use of its public conveniences. There is a demand from locals as well as visitors to the area.
- Sandra noted the idea of a season ticket and some authorities have pre-payment systems similar to Oyster cards. This option had not yet been factored in, but could be considered.
- Barbara Bowman urged for contactless payments as it will allow more flexibility in the future eg scope for 20p to be increased to 22p.
- Sandra explained that contactless payment was an option, but it may be dependent on the mobile network which is not always good in the Dales.
- Vicki Raynes asked if community toilet schemes already existed in the Dales or is this what is planned.
- Sandra had written to some local businesses and had so far received one reply, from The Peveril of the Peak Hotel who already opened up their facilities to visitors. If male, female and disabled facilities could be offered, some small revenue support could be offered (in the region of £500 per annum). Sandra noted that this type of scheme would not work in large town centre areas, but may work in smaller areas.
- In response to Vicki Raynes suggesting that churches may be able to offer this facility, Sandra confirmed that the District Council would look favourably on this sort of arrangement provided that the right facilities could be offered.
- Mrs Burton was in favour of charging for public convenience facilities, but asked where the money would go and what benefit would there be.

- Sandra explained that the purpose of the review was to save money and reduce the £470,000 current expenditure. Charging may reduce that figure; some facilities may become self-sufficient. All financial figures would need to be known before costs could be fully calculated, but the aim was to reduce the overall financial burden on Derbyshire Dales. She assured that any review would be used for the upkeep of the public conveniences and would not be side lined for other services.
- Mr Green noted the potential for some public conveniences to be sold off and have a shared usage which may include a commercial element.
- Sandra noted this may be viable for some facilities.
- Mr Green continued stating his concerns that the public convenience element may be lost in the future and how could it be safeguarded.
- Sandra explained the potential for Community Asset Transfer (for example to Parish Councils) which would include a restrictive covenant. Innovative solutions were welcomed, particularly for facilities which may currently be underutilised, but did not envisage this model being applied to the larger facilities such as those in Hall Leys Park.

DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL – PROVISION OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR DERBYSHIRE DALES LEISURE CENTRES

Ashley Watts gave an update on the leisure review.

The timetable

| | |
|---------------|---|
| December 2014 | Introduction of Service Reviews - Does the service have to be provided? - DDDC or other provider? - What level of service is required? |
| January 2016 | Options presented to Elected Members - 5 options |
| December 2016 | Decision on final options |
| January 2017 | Specification and Contract - Consultation |
| June 2017 | Approval of Specification |

Specification includes:

- Contract Terms
- Contract Length
- Pricing Policy
- Programming
- Opening Hours
- Maintenance and Lifecycle Cost
- Energy
- Surplus Share Agreement
- Performance and Review

Next steps

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| July 2017 | Advertisement of Contract |
| October / November 2017 | Evaluation Phase One |
| November 2017 | Negotiation |

| | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| January 2018 | Evaluation Phase Two |
| March 2018 | Award Contract |
| June 2018 | Implementation |

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues were raised as follows:-

- In response to a question from Mrs Dyson about likely timescales for the bridge at Arc Leisure, Matlock to re-open, Ashley replied before the end of November.
- There had been difficulties in sourcing bespoke fabrics and he appreciated the unfortunate position had caused inconvenience to some users.

Post meeting note – the bridge re-opened 13 November.

- In response to comments made by Mrs Dyson about car parking enforcement at Arc Leisure, Matlock, Ashley replied that the District Council does work with the car park enforcement company and in addition, leisure staff do what they can to ensure correct use of parking facilities, but this is not their primary duty.
- Mr Green asked what would happen to staff at the District Council leisure centres to which Ashley replied that staff would be transferred and protected under their current terms and conditions. If they applied for other roles, they would transfer to the terms and conditions offered by the company. Ashley noted the staff development investment made by private contractors and also the aggressive nature of the leisure market.

QUESTION TIME

Questions and comments were then invited from the floor and issues were raised as follows:-

Hall Leys Park, Matlock

- Mrs Burton noted what a wonderful facility Hall Leys Park is, providing many activities and is well kept by good staff. However, she suggested two small improvements which should not cost much.
- When the bandstand is painted next time, please could it be green instead of white which would make it look less dirty. Ashley replied that he was unsure if there were any heritage conditions on the bandstand dictating paint colour, but would take the point on board.
- In response to Mrs Burton's request for a couple of lights on the skate park until around 9 pm, Ashley responded that in other areas, lights have attracted people to congregate around the skate park and not for the purpose of using it and in some cases anti-social behaviour has been experienced – there is a balance to be had.
- David Barker spoke of the fire that had been suffered at the work men's facilities and also the Heras fencing around the churchyard which he now believed to be unnecessary.
- Ashley noted the significant damage caused to the ranger station which was taking longer to rectify that first appreciated. The Council has been awaiting insurance confirmation.
- Ashley undertook to look into the fence around the churchyard.

Planning issues

- Mr Mumby asked a question about the latest position with planning applications for the Cawdor Quarry site and if the developers were the same company who had built the existing houses. Dorcas undertook to provide this information to Mr Mumby.
- **Post meeting note** – a meeting of the Planning Committee, to be held 20 December 2017, at 6 pm at the Town Hall, Matlock will consider:-
 - Application No. 16/00923/OUT Revised scheme - Development of 487 dwellings, 2800m² commercial floor space (Class B1), shop and cafe, with associated vehicle, cycle and pedestrian infrastructure (Outline) at Cawdor Quarry, Permanite Works and part of Snitterton Fields, Matlock Spa Road, Matlock.
 - Application No. 17/00294/FUL Erection of 79 dwellings and 235 sq. m retail (Class A1) unit with associated vehicle, cycle and pedestrian infrastructure at former Cawdor Quarry site Snitterton Road, Snitterton, Matlock.
- The site owners are Groveholt and they were the owners when Limestone Croft was built. A company called Woodhall Homes built the houses at Limestone Croft as a joint venture with Groveholt.
- Vicki Raynes asked what consultation took place, on planning applications, with Clinical Commissioning Groups with regard to health provision. At Tansley there had been two recent applications, one for 49 houses (now approved) and one for 27 where there appeared to be no responses from the CCG. Tansley is 2.5 miles from Matlock where the nearest doctor can be accessed with 10 day waiting lists for appointments. Mrs Raynes wondered why, as the planning authority, Derbyshire Dales is not insisting that all necessary infrastructures are in place.
- Dorcas advised that the District Council do ask the CCGs for their comments in its determination of planning applications. The recent Local Plan process included an Infrastructure Delivery Plan arrived through consultation with other agencies including Derbyshire County Council highways and the health authorities. The Local Authority is not the expert on highway or health matters so we are reliant on the CCGs and Highway authority for their advice.
- A remote question from John Lowe was received via email 'Unfortunately I will be unable to attend November's Meeting. I have one question:
- 'Will the housing (new builds) figure contained in the emerging Local Plan be subject to revision during the life of the Plan (2013/33.)' Meaning ...an increase...or decrease is a possibility?
- Paul Wilson, Corporate Director and Deputy Chief Executive, has responded:-
- There is a requirement to regularly monitor delivery of the Local Plan policy objectives, particularly in regard to the delivery of land for housing. In this regard, housing land completions are monitored on an annual basis against the proposed annual delivery target of 284 dwellings per annum. The details of this will be contained in the Annual Monitoring Report which will be published in December each year. The Government has recently indicated that Local Plans should be reviewed at least every 5 years; therefore there will be a number of interim progress reviews undertaken in the period up to 2033. At each review, due regard will need to be given to the latest published population projections and housing delivery rates in the area. Unless there is a significant change in population projections which would render the Local Plan housing requirement and delivery target as unrealistic, it is unlikely (although not impossible) that the overall target will change.

Play Areas

- Mrs Raynes noted the tired state of the play area in Tansley which was owned by the District Council. The Parish Council could not afford to take on the ongoing maintenance of the facility, but might be prepared to take on the equipment and apply for grant aid.
- Ashley noted a number of play areas across the district that are becoming increasingly difficult to maintain due to financial pressures. The District Council tries to work with Town & Parish Councils and community groups to take on some of these facilities through Community Asset Transfer. Other organisations are often better placed to access funding and this enables local community amenities to be protected – he cited the Matlock Bowling Green as a good example.

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Roman Jivkon noted anti-social behaviour on Dale Road on Friday and Saturday evenings – he felt Matlock to be a fantastic place which should not suffer anti-social behaviour. He believed a major contributory factor to be bars serving until 3 am and beyond and understood that there were further planning applications in the pipeline for licenced premises on Dale Road. He asked what was being done to tackle anti-social behaviour and crime and has the District Council power to withdraw licences to sell alcohol?
- Councillor Elliot advised that some of these issues were matters for the police which would be forwarded to them.
- Ashley advised that the District Council was part of the Safer Community Partnership and worked with the police who were the authority to tackle these issues. The District Council helps with initiatives such as Pub Watch, but tackling anti-social behaviour and crime is police led.
- Mr Jivkon noted the delay with the police attending and asked if there was any police presence in Matlock.
- Ashley advised that there is a police presence in Matlock, but could not comment on response times, but would pass comments on and would raise at the next partnership meeting.

Parking for disabled

- Mr Mumby suggested that the pay station in the Lido car park be relocated to enable easier access for disabled persons.
- Ashley took the point on board, but wanted to understand the level of complaint as he had received nothing direct, only comments made this evening and one via a Ward member.

Recycling facilities

- Mr Jivkon had noticed the disappearance of recycling facilities at local car parks and understood this may be due to increased household recycling facilities. However, the recycling bins at Sainsburys are often full. What was the reason for taking away the bins and would they be re-introduced?
- Ashley explained that bring sites were reduced as kerbside recycling was introduced. There were no plans to re-introduce bring sites. The one at Sainsbury's was operated by them so any complaint of it being overfull should be directed to Sainsbury's.

Speed limits

- Mr Jivkon noted the exceeding of speed limits in and out of Matlock and did the District Council have any power to address this issue.
- Councillor Elliott noted this was a matter for the police and Derbyshire County Council as the highways authority and the issue would be forwarded on.
- Mr Jivkon added that it would be good to have the police at a future meeting.

On street parking

- Mrs Dyson noted the number of vehicles parked on the street in areas such as Woolley Road around Matlock. This caused congestion and made it difficult for local residents to park at times.
- Ashley advised that this was a public highways issue and comments would be taken back to Derbyshire County Council.
- Councillor Martin Burfoot added that Derbyshire County Council will not accept that it is often their staff who are parking on street. Various surveys have been carried out to gauge appetite for a residents' parking scheme, but as the County Council insist on zones, there has been little support from locals who would prefer a street specific scheme – this type of scheme works in other areas such as Chesterfield.
- Councillor Sue Burfoot, as a Derbyshire County Councillor, added that she had been approached by several local residents on the matter and she knew that feelings ran high about local parking issues. Derbyshire County Council's criteria for any residents' parking scheme has to be self-financing and when the last survey was done, because the area was too wide, there was little take up. She undertook to discuss further with County Council officers, but this was not an easy problem to solve.

CONCLUSION AND THANKS

Councillor Elliott thanked everyone for their participation.

Meeting closed at 8.40 pm