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NORTHERN AREA COMMUNITY FORUM

Notes of the Northern Area Community Forum held on 21 February 2017 at 7.00pm at Ashford in the Water War Memorial Institute

PRESENT

Derbyshire County Councillor & Community Representative Derbyshire Dales - District Council	Councillor Judith Twigg (in the Chair) Councillors Helen Froggatt, Richard FitzHerbert, Neil Horton, Chris Furness, Lewis Rose, OBE, Colin Swindell, John Tibenham and Philippa Tilbrook. Dorcas Bunton (Chief Executive), Karen Henriksen (Head of Resources), Ashley Watts (Head of Community Development), and Ros Hession (Community Engagement Officer)
Derbyshire County Council	Stephen Cannon (Transport and Accessibility Manager) and Chris Hegarty (Senior Project Officer – Public Transport)
Peak District National Park Authority	Sarah Fowler (Chief Executive)
North Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group	Jonathan Wardle
Members of the Public	Bakewell resident – Leonard Twigg Bakewell Town Junior Football Club – Ruth Allen Bakewell Football Club – Ian Dutch Biggin – P Tapping Curbar Parish Council – M Games Eyam Parish Council – John Plant Foolow – Simon Wills Grindlow resident – Henry Folkard Hassop Parish Meeting - Nigel Anderson Matlock residents – John Green, Sarah Langdon Rowsley Parish Council – Kath Potter Tideswell – Clare Reading Pat Lunn, Peter Watts 15 in total

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Councillor Twigg 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:-

- The District Council has been allocated £383,000 of the Government's Community Housing Fund. The Housing Team is exploring ways to determine how best to use this funding and will be consulting with community groups to gain their views.
- Planning consent was recently achieved for 33 new affordable homes in Wirksworth with the scheme due for completion in early 2018.
- We have supported 12 local firms win over £450,000 in grants from the European LEADER fund, helping local businesses grow and take on new employees.
- Agreements signed to enable our Building Control Team to work across borders in Amber Valley and High Peak (additional income).
- Building Control income is up at £135K.
- Planning income is at £520K.
- Disabled Facilities grants completions already well above annual target (target = 35, completed = 40) meaning more people living with disabilities have been assisted.
- 99.6% of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days;
- 78.9% of undisputed invoices paid within 10 days;
- Average time taken to pay an undisputed invoice is 7 days.
- New play area installed on Hurst Farm Estate, Matlock (official opening 8 February).
- 94% of residents satisfied with refuse collection.
- New Touchtone Telephone Payment line to be introduced in April.
- 28% of the households in the Derbyshire Dales responded to last year's electoral registration canvass electronically. In cash terms that saved over £5,000 in postage costs.
- We will be supporting the 'Great British Spring Clean' (3rd - 5th March 2017) by loaning out equipment and arranging for the litter collected to be picked. Town / Parish Councils, community groups and Schools will be encouraged to participate.
- With the support of DDCVS, we are in the process of finalising the design / details for the Ashbourne Skate Park Project, which is now being taken forward by a community group, Skate Ashbourne, following the community meeting organised last year. Skate Ashbourne is leading on the project with support from DDDC, DDCVS and Ashbourne Town Council.
- Healthy Hurst newsletter in partnership with Friends of Hurst Farm to keep residents up to date with what is happening in the estate
- Another successful Hurst Farm holiday hunger session where we had 50 children and parents attend during the holidays. We now have plans to continue this throughout the school holidays this year
- Matlock Bath Illuminations had another good year in terms of tickets sales, selling £15k+ more in 2016 when compared to the previous year. Our online presence improved from 5k likes on Facebook to 14.5k, with a total reach of over 2m people. In turn this helped improve our online ticket sales by 102% compared to the 2015 event.

- The contract for a monthly Artisan / Specialist market in Ashbourne is currently out to tender.
- Partnership health walks with Enable start up again in March (first Monday of the month). Our previous walk along Cromford Canal had 64 walkers from disability groups across the District.

‘YOU SAID, WE DID’

Councillor Colin Swindell gave a short presentation ‘You Said, We Did’.

‘You Said’	‘We Did’
Asked for more publicity, particularly in the venue locality	Worked closely with businesses & local contacts to raise awareness in the host venue parishes
Suggestion to use LED lighting in DDDC premises	Already being used as premises are being upgraded eg Matlock Town Hall & Ashbourne Leisure Centre Pool
Concern about the possible close of Bakewell Post Office	Worked with partners to keep open the existing Post Office
Have a current local issue of interest on the agenda	DCC to talk about local bus services
Suggested that the frequency of black bin collections could be reduced to a 6 week cycle	This will be reviewed as part of any new waste contract in the future
Consider perennial flower bed planting	This has already been implemented within a number of bedding schemes and work will continue to increase the use of perennial plants
Introduce charging for use of Public Conveniences	This is being considered as part of the Public Conveniences Review in 2017/18

SPENDING PROPOSALS FOR 2017/18

Karen Henriksen provided an update on the District Council’s financial position and its spending proposals for the forthcoming financial year.

Savings

- Corporate Savings Target to achieve £1m savings from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2017
- Karen updated the presentation and advised that £1.1 savings had already been achieved

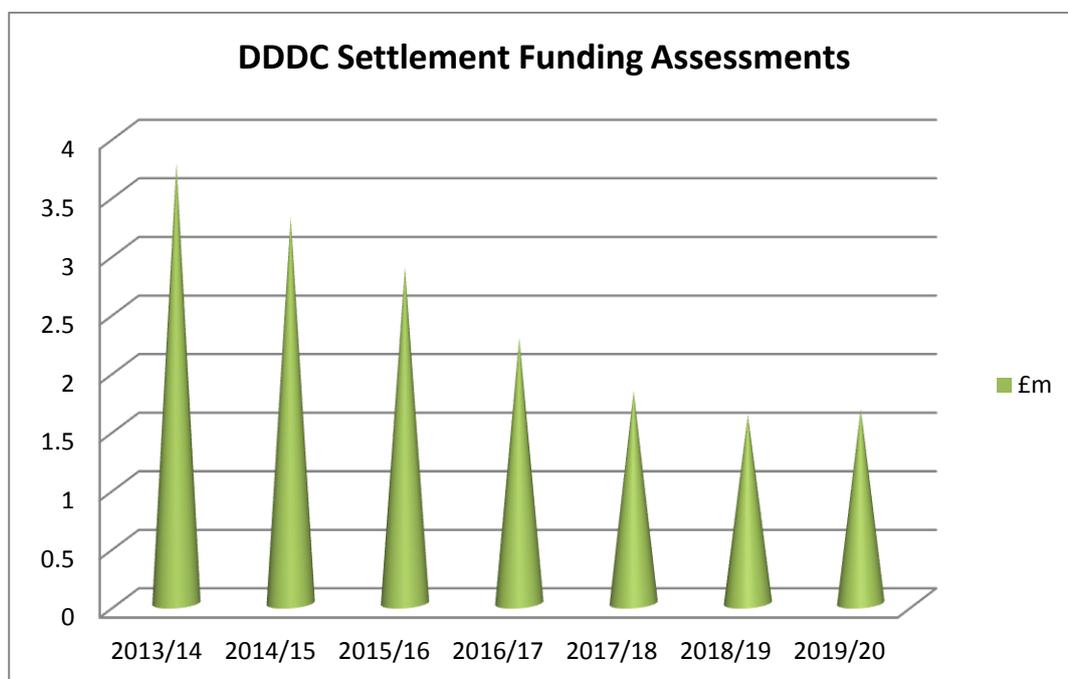
But since that target was set:-

- Low inflation, now rising;
- Brexit & value of £;
- Minimum / Living Wage introduced;
- Lower levels of interest on Council investment;
- Changes to business rates system;
- Reduced government funding

Local Government Finance Settlement (provisional)

	2016/17	2017/18	Change
Settlement Funding Assessment	£2,269,000	£1,816,000	-20%
Spending Power	£9,217,000	£8,647,000	-6.2%

It should be noted that the Government's spending power figure assumes that the council tax for DDDC will be increased by £5 for a band D Property (2.6%) in 2017/18.



	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Government Grants	1,702	924	827	365	270
Council Tax	5,707	5,819	5,982	6,148	6,317
Business Rates	2,107	1,969	2,036	2,093	2,152
Total funding	9,516	8,712	8,845	8,606	8,739

Where you money goes....

- Waste and recycling collections
- Four leisure centres
- More than 30 parks and gardens
- Keeping your streets clean
- Helping local business
- Providing affordable homes
 - + much more!

Capital Programme

	<u>2016/17</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Proposed</u> <u>2017/18</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Proposed</u> <u>2018/19</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Proposed</u> <u>2019/20</u> <u>£'000</u>
Affordable Housing	817	1,352	520	1,020
Leisure Centres	676	15	25	120
Market towns	546	59	0	0
Public conveniences	354	41	16	0
A clean and safe district	1,034	928	257	137
Business growth & job creation	25	215	0	0
Other	729	242	145	55
Total	4,181	2,852	962	1,332

- We are working hard to provide the services that you need, but to do this.....
- We propose an increase in the District Council's share of the Council Tax for 2017/18 of £5 for a band D property, which equates to 2.6%

	Council Tax 2016/17	Proposed Council Tax for 2017/18	Increase on previous year	Increase per week
Band A	£128.89	£132.23	£3.34	£0.06
Band B	£150.38	£154.26	£3.88	£0.07
Band C	£171.86	£176.30	£4.44	£0.09
Band D	£193.34	£198.34	£5.00	£0.10
Band E	£236.30	£242.42	£6.12	£0.12
Band F	£279.27	£286.49	£7.22	£0.14
Band G	£322.23	£330.57	£8.34	£0.16
Band H	£386.68	£396.68	£10.00	£0.19

Key Messages

- We've balanced the books for 2017/18 without a significant impact on frontline services, but we propose a 2.6% increase in council tax;
- We've achieved this by reviewing services to make them more efficient; some services are now delivered differently;
- We've looked critically at our revenue and capital spending, reviewed and rationalised reserves and sought ongoing savings or additional income;
- However, our medium term financial plan shows that we still have significant savings to make over the next 4 years, amid uncertainty over funding levels;
- This will require some difficult decisions to be made.

New Corporate Savings Target:

- Karen updated the presentation for a £1.6m savings target over 3 years which is 17% of current spending

Future savings to come from:

- Continuing with the programme of comprehensive service reviews as a means of reviewing & reducing spending levels across all services;
- Transformational and organisational changes e.g. considering shared services and other alternative service delivery methods;

- Reducing fixed and variable employee costs, whilst protecting existing employees as far as possible;
- Review of grants & discretionary rate reliefs;
- New income streams;
- Assessing the utilisation of reserves and balances;
- Consider future Council Tax increases.

What it costs you....

- The DDDC proposed budget for 2017/18 will cost 54p a day for a Band D property, but we also collect Council Tax for others:
- Of the whole bill for 2016/17:
 - 70% goes to Derbyshire County Council
 - 12% to Derbyshire Dales District Council
 - 11% to Derbyshire Police & Crime Commissioner
 - 4% to Derbyshire Fire & Rescue
 - 3% to your local town or parish council

Consultation

- This presentation will be placed on the Council's website www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk
- Councillors will meet on 2nd March to consider the proposed increase.
- Please use the feedback forms to let us know your views or email finance@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL BUS SERVICE UPDATE

Stephen Cannon and Chris Hegarty gave an update on local bus services.

Background

- Most bus services in Derbyshire are operated commercially
- In 2015/16 these services carried over 23.7million passengers 85% of the total bus journeys in county
- DCC's role is to work in partnership with the operators to develop these services
- We also fund the journeys made on these services using the Gold Card and B line schemes
- DCC does pay directly for a network of non-commercial bus services, these are either –
 - Local bus services in less populated areas
 - Additional evening and Sunday journeys on local bus services which are commercially operated during the day Monday-Saturday
 - Dial a Bus and Active Travel services
- In 2015/16 these services carried 4.2million passengers

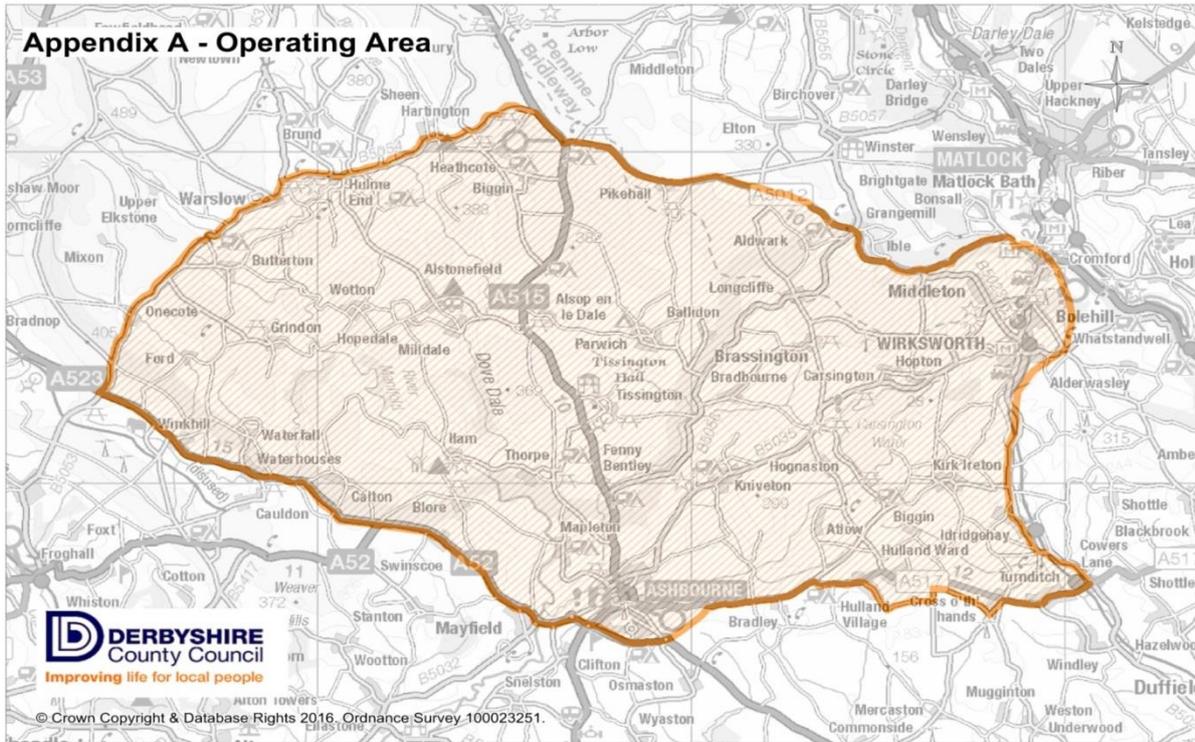
2016 Public Consultation

- Feb-April 2016 public consultation on proposals to end most funding for DCC supported services
- Over 4200 responses to consultation received back from individuals and groups
- Overwhelmingly against proposals
- In November proposals were reviewed and new arrangements were agreed by DCC cabinet

What will happen now

- Current network of DCC supported local bus services to be reviewed on an area basis over next 2-3 years
- Dial a Bus and Active Travel to be replaced by a new service from October
- More partnership working with operators
- Develop a bus strategy
- Pilot a new style service in the Ashbourne /Wirksworth area

Derbyshire Connect Pilot Service Area



DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL SERVICE REVIEW OF LEISURE

Ashley Watts gave a presentation on the current review of the District Council’s Leisure Services.

- Internal efficiency and improvement review started in December 2014
- Involved staff, management and customers
- Provided savings of approximately £113k pa

Phase One

- Internal efficiency and improvement review started in December 2014
- Involved staff, management and customers
- Provided savings of approximately £113k pa

Phase Two

- Appointed external consultants to consider alternative management options in 2015
- Provided five options to Members in February 2016
- Decision to outsource the management of the Leisure Centres was made on 1 December 2016

The Coming Year

- Consult with key stakeholders (partners, users and relevant organisations)
- Form a specification

- Advertise the contract
- Aim to implement in April 2018
- Links to the survey and further information on the Leisure Review will be posted on the District Council's website at www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk

QUESTION TIME

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

Use of Bakewell Recreation Ground

- Ruth Allen, along with Ian Dutch, explained their involvement with Bakewell Town Junior Football Club, a voluntary led organisation funded through subscriptions and fund raising. Approximately 100 children, aged between 6 and 18, benefit. Matches are played on Bakewell Recreation Ground. Ruth accepted that the club must pay (approximately £20) for pre-booked matches to cover the costs of mowing and marking out. However, she objected to having to pay for practice matches which can be weather dependent, especially when members of the public could play on there at any time. The goal mouths become damaged due to the public playing and Ruth asked if they could be fenced off. Ruth understood that the Recreation Ground had been gifted to the people of Bakewell and felt it unfair to be charged for practice sessions.
- Ashely Watts noted the points made, but highlighted that costs of repair and upkeep are not cheap and the ground needs to be kept to a certain standard. Ashley noted the inconsistencies and undertook for the District Council's Community Development & Wellbeing Officer to continue ongoing discussions with the club.
- Ashley added that in the future, it may be beneficial to users to take on the running of the recreation ground as they would be more likely to attract funding, including revenue streams, than the District Council.

Waste collection service

- Kath Potter was of the view that the District Council had ignored the findings of its consultation exercise and gone ahead with the introduction of charges for black refuse sacks.
- Councillor Rose replied that this had not been a decision taken lightly. With increasing financial pressures, the District Council sometimes had to make unpopular decisions.

Bus services

- John Plant, who had a vested interest in Bakewell & Eyam Community Transport, asked why the tender for Dial A Bus was for a 'gate to gate' rather than a 'door to door' service. John quoted from the Charities Act that 'door to door' is more expensive as it cannot be subsidised. He believed that no one Community Transport would be able to fulfil the tender requirements.
- Stephen explained that current Dial a Bus and Active Travel services were being operated by the various community transport schemes across Derbyshire using grant funding provided by the County Council. This grant funding was ending in September and a new type of service would replace in October. This service would be provided following a tender process which was open to community transport schemes and other operators such as commercial bus companies, community volunteers and taxi providers. This change had come about for two reasons firstly a legal challenge about the County Council providing grant funding to the community

transport operators which could be seen as unfair competition. Secondly the current services had to evolve to meet wider public transport demand in certain areas. Different standards are required across the county with one of the small changes being a requirement to provide transport from “gate to gate”. It is what some may call “door to door”.

- John continued that Bakewell & Eyam Community Transport had taken advice and would not achieve what was proposed because it would not meet their charitable status requirements.
- Chris Hegarty replied that the County Council’s legal department had not raised this as issue and it would see what response it received from other Community Transport schemes to the tender process which was due to close shortly.
- Pat Lunn asked about fees for carers as some people need to be accompanied by a carer all the time.
- Chris replied that carers travel free if they are a volunteer or a Gold Card holder themselves, otherwise a fee is payable.
- Councillor Furness asked who receives the fares from the services that are not operated by Derbyshire County Council.
- Stephen replied that the independent operators set their own pricing structure and retain revenue.
- Councillor Furness noted that Gold Card holders are not asked to state their destination and wondered how appropriate charges could be applied.
- Chris explained that an average fare calculation is applied of 60p / 70p per journey. Operators are compensated so they are no better or no worse off based on a complex formula from the Department of Transport.
- Ruth Allen asked why there was such a discrepancy in fares. An example being that the Transpeak to Buxton is £5, but a journey to Sheffield is £4.
- Chris explained that the bus companies set the fares with no intervention from County Council.
- Stephen added that 85% of bus services run commercially with County Council stepping in where the market fails.
- Henry Folkard presumed that demographics and the population profile are taken into account when modelling public transport services.
- Stephen responded that the County Council is trying to find smarter ways of using a diminishing budget.
- Henry Folkard further asked if holiday accommodation is factored in to which Stephen responded that the County Council is open to all areas and must see what the long term trends are.
- Henry concluded that it may be attractive for visitors to travel by public transport.
- John Plant noted the possible rationalisation of smaller hospitals into large ones and how this would place more demand on ‘Active Travel’ which also helps people gain access to medical appointments.
- Stephen explained that the County Council were looking at how services could be best integrated and also working with health services to look at transport that requires medical intervention.

- Pat Lunn noted the reduction in clinics at Bakewell's Newholme Hospital, with some being transferred to Sheffield hospitals, putting additional pressure on community transport.
- Stephen reported that Derbyshire County Council Members had made a commitment to 2020.
- Jonathan Wardle spoke about the consultation 'A Better Care Close to Home' which had now closed and the results were being absorbed. Some of the emerging issues included transport. The Clinical Commissioning Group is in discussion with Derbyshire County Council on transport to look at what services might have to be bought in.

Leisure Centre Review

- John Green, treasurer for 10 years of the former Matlock Area Recreation and Sports Group (MARS), which had provided match funding towards the new Arc Leisure Centre in Matlock. He asked about the Leisure Review – would user groups be consulted. What are the timescales? Would concessions be protected?
- Ashley replied that at the Special Meeting of the Community & Environment Committee on 23 February a communications report for the review would be agreed. Thereafter, consultation would take place until mid-April. This would be included targeting clubs and regular users as well as the public in general. Also bodies such as Derbyshire Sport, Sport England, the education authorities and the Anthony Gell Foundation would be consulted.
- It was anticipated that concessions would be an emerging theme.
- John asked Karen Henriksen if the figures in her presentation included savings to be achieved through the leisure review.
- The figures have not yet been included Karen replied and Ashley added that it was difficult to quantify savings at present.
- Karen explained that the capital programme included monies for leisure and gym equipment to refurbish the facilities.
- A member of the public noted that the leisure centres are a large local employer and asked what would happen to the staff.
- Ashley explained that staff transferred would be protected under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment). The District Council employs over 160 staff in its leisure services. Meetings are taking place to appraise staff of the situation and the trade unions are involved. Terms and Conditions are covered under TUPE. Further down the line, the contractor may consider re-structuring as the District Council might also have done.
- Kath Potter hoped for classes to encourage the older generation to become active.
- Ashley advised of the current broad programme encouraging classes to be inclusive, not just in leisure centres, but also through community activities and initiatives such as Walking for Health, 50+ classes and working with care schemes to deliver chair based exercise. All activities were advertised on the District Council website www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk
- Sarah Fowler added that the Peak District National Park Authority also provide health walks.

Blue Badge scheme, car parking fees

- Martin Games of Curbar asked about car park charges for Blue Badge holders.
- Dorcas explained that a Car Parks Public Order would be presented to the Community & Environment Committee on 16 March which would include parking charges for Blue Badge holders. Comments and representations made, as part of the statutory consultation, would be considered.

Gold Card Scheme

- Councillor Tibenham, on behalf of a parishioner, asked about the lead in time for renewal of a Gold Card. The parishioner had been unable to renew his card at Bakewell Swimming Pool.

Post meeting note – The District Council's Customer Communications Officer has since liaised with Councillor Tibenham and the parishioner to resolve the issue.

Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell

- Leonard Twigg asked what time the lights should be switched off at Bakewell's Agricultural Business Centre. He understood that a Peak District National Park Authority condition meant the lights should be off by 10 pm.
- Councillor Twigg added that the gates should be closed by 10 pm.
- Ashley Watts undertook to look into the matter.
- Pat Lunn added that the lights are off by 11 pm apart from some Derbyshire County Council safety lights.

CONCLUSION AND THANKS

Councillor Twigg thanked everyone for their participation.

Meeting closed at 8.50 pm