

DARTON AND DODWORTH AREA FORUM

Held at Mapplewell and Staincross Village Hall

3rd July 2000

- 21G (1) **Present:-** Councillors Miller (Chairman), Cullum, Lofts, Ryan, J.M. Shepherd and Staples, together with Mr. P. Landon (Co-opted Member).

22 members of the public were also present.

(2) **Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest**

Councillor Shepherd declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of the item headed "Mapplewell Library - Proposed Relocation" due to him being Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee.

(3) **Guidance on the Structure of Meetings**

The Borough Secretary submitted a report outlining the structure and rules for the participation by the public together with the basic purpose and simple operating rules of the Forum.

IT WAS AGREED that the report be received.

(4) **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 12th June 2000 at Dodworth Junior School were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

(5) **Report of the Area Forum Officer**

The Area Forum Officer reported on the following matters which had arisen from previous Forum meetings:-

- (i) In connection with the Dove Adolescent Services' application he stated that four children aged between 11 to 17 together with two staff would be in residence at the proposed home and that consequent thereto no planning approval was required. It was

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envisaged that the application for registration would be considered by the Social Services Committee in August and that a report and a petition from residents on Withens Court would also be presented to the Committee.

- (ii) In connection with the possibility of Objective 1 monies consultations would take place with community representatives on the 5th July to identify schemes covered in the appropriate Priority 4 area of the Darton Ward.
- (iii) In connection with the footpath issue at the back of Dodwoth Junior School proposals for its re-alignment had been forwarded the Dodwoth Ward Members for consideration.

(6) **Mapplewell Library - Proposed Relocation**

Mr. S. Bashforth (Acting Head of Library Services) made a presentation to the Forum on the proposed relocation of Mapplewell Library to the Village Hall.

He stated that the current building where the library was functioning was near to shops and close to schools. However on the negative side it was in a poor state of repair, was unsuitable as a modern library, the provision of the first floor children's library was unsuitable, there was inadequate heating on the first floor, no opportunities to further develop services i.e. IT and AV material, no designated car parking, no disabled access, the exterior and grounds were poorly maintained and were a fire hazard, it suffered vandalism and periodic break-ins, poor fire escape from the first floor and that there was a potential threat of imminent closure if no investment was provided in the current location.

He produced a plan of the Village Hall which outlined the advantages of the Village Hall being utilised for library purposes and these were that it was a modern building, there was flexibility of space, disabled access/facilities, parking facilities, plans for new services, study support, ICT, a secure building, increased safety for staff, display facilities, potential for a one stop shop. It also serves

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part of the community. There were however negatives to the provision of the Village Hall as a library and these were that it was out of the centre of Mapplewell, the approach to the Village Hall was “uphill”, long walk from schools.

He stated that there were 1,322 members with approximately 400 children being members of the current library which contained 8,000 books in total.

He also outlined the mobile halts in the area.

A Forum Member stated that unsuccessful attempts had been made in order to access financial resources for the current library building and the Village Hall Management Committee had offered assistance with providing accommodation in the Village Hall, however he expressed concern for the aged gaining access to the Village Hall. A reply was given that the Library Service provided “house bound” facilities for the house bound and infirm however he appreciated that there was no particular answer to the access problems to the Village Hall because of it’s location.

A Forum Member stated that there was very few facilities for computer provision in the current library building and the possibility of relocation to the Village Hall would allow for increased computer usage. A reply was given that every library would be provided with facilities for the Internet with 2-14 computers provided at each library with CD provision.

A Forum Member asked if the path from Towngate to this Hall would be refurbished in the event of relocation. A reply was given in the affirmative.

A Forum Member asked if wheelchair access would be provided. A reply was given in the affirmative.

A Forum Member stated that approximately 18 months ago the Authority had expressed an interest to relocate the library to the Village Hall, however it was apparent that financial resources needed to be raised in order for this to go ahead. He stated that it would cost approximately £90,000 for the relocation and adaptation of the Village Hall and it was hoped that 50% of this would be raised by

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the sale of the current site and that the current study support centre located in the Village Hall would be integrated into the library facilities to provide an enhanced service and that the Darby and Joan Club who currently use the Village Hall would be able to utilise the facilities when attending their meetings etc.

A Forum Member asked if a survey had been carried targeting the use by school children of the current library facilities. A reply was given that this had not been carried out.

A member of the public asked if we could add Staincross to the Mappelowell name for the proposed new library. A reply was given that it was envisaged to call it Darton Library in order that relevant funding may be accessed.

A member of the public asked what would the transitional arrangements be regarding the closure of one library and the relocation of the service to a new location. A reply was given that these issues would need to be examined in the report to Cabinet but it was proposed that there would be no “gap” in provision whilst the changeover was taking place .

A member of the public stated that as a Darton resident with a young family he would appreciate the provision of any library with ICT facilities which was better than the current situation and he expressed a view that usage of the library and associated facilities should be made available for use in the evenings.

A member of the public stated that if the library did not relocate to the Village Hall were there any other options for relocation to another building. A reply was given that without financial resources it would not be possible to provide library facilities in another location.

(7) Youth Issues in the Forum Area - Presentation

Mr. F. Thompson (Youth Services and Youth Forum Co-ordinator) made a presentation on current issues and initiatives in the Forum’s area. He stated that the provision of initiatives targeted youths aged 13 to 19 years old together with a junior provision of

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youngsters aged 11 to 12 years old. These young people were targeted on social education and development themes on a voluntary basis. The Service aimed to provide priority areas of educational support, training, health link and social being, crime and community safety prevention.

He stated that the Darton Ward had one unit currently operating on two evenings per week on two hours per session at Kexborough and the Dodworth Ward had two units in place namely the Barugh Green Youth Club on two evenings with two hourly sessions per week and the Dodworth Detached Project which operated on three evenings with two hours per session.

He stated that a major problem was the recruitment of youth workers and retention was a significant concern.

He also outlined other initiatives in the Darton Ward as follows:-

- Darton Youth Project
- Youth Action
- MAPP Crew

A Forum Member asked what resources were needed to provide an adequate youth service in the Darton and Dodworth areas. A reply was given that purpose built premises were urgently needed for this together with the provision of fully resourced detached outreach youth workers

A Forum Member stated that youth clubs in all areas were now in a minority and that the establishment of new youth clubs in the areas should be encouraged.

A Forum Member asked how many youth workers were established in the Darton/Dodworth Wards. A reply was given that this was equivalent to one full time post split between both Wards which was under considerably under resourced.

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A member of the public stated that major house developers in the area should be approached in an attempt to obtain financial resources for provision of community facilities i.e. purpose built buildings for a Youth Club etc. A reply was given that on all planning applications for major developments developers had to donate 15% of open space for community use. This was the only regulation in accordance with the law at the present time and there was no legal requirement for developers to provide purpose built community buildings.

A member of the public stated that Forums had been operating for a considerable amount of time now and it was apparent that no significant financial resources had been identified for future improvements within this area. A reply was given that the Darton Ward was seen as a “well off ward” on the whole although there were a good number of areas of deprivation within the area and this was why financial resources were not forthcoming.

A Forum Member stated that there was certainly a need for better youth provision within the wards areas and that a grant for the establishment of a Christian outreach worker within the areas had received Government approval

A member of the public suggested that the inadequacy of Youth Service provision in the Forum Area, and the Darton Ward in particular be brought to the attention of the Cabinet.

(8) Community Planning in the Forum's Area

The Area Forum Officer reported on forthcoming “Think Local” public consultation events which would be held at various locations within the Darton Ward during the next few weeks. He stated that Citizens Panels had outlined pro-active issues i.e. housing and the environment, crime reduction, employment and education, leisure facilities for the young and old being the priorities.

A Forum Member stated that regarding “Think Local” events not many of these had been provided at venues within the Dodworth Ward and on one of the last events it was organised on Council day of which no elected Members were able to be present at the event.

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(9) **Date and Times of Future Meetings**

The Area Forum Officer outlined a timetable for meetings in 2000/2001 and stated that there was a problem with the availability of the Mapplewell and Staincross Village Hall on Monday evenings and it was proposed to look at suitable alternative venues i.e. Mapplewell Primary School, Darton Primary School, Darton High School and Kexborough Primary School for meetings in this Ward and that it was proposed that the next meeting to be held in Darton on 14th August would be held at Mapplewell Primary School.

He stated that meetings in the Dodworth Ward would remain on Mondays at venues as agreed at a previous Forum meeting.

(10) **Items of Future Business**

IT WAS AGREED that law and order policing issues, highway matters together and problems regarding mobile estate caretakers in the Dodworth area would be matters to be addressed at the next meeting of the Forum to be held on 24th July at Gawber Church Hall, Church Street, Gawber.

(11) **Public Questions and Answer Session**

A member of the public expressed concern at the provision of the mini-roundabout situated just past the Pioneer store at the junction with Park Close in Mapplewell and why was there a need for this to be located there when that road was a cul-de-sac, and he added that the provision of the road humps in the area were not of a good appearance. A reply was given that the provision of the roundabout at this location was an attempt to slow traffic down.

A member of the public stated that there were traffic problems that needed addressing at Barugh Lane and also that there was only a pavement provided on one side of the road.

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A member of the public stated that the provision of a 20 mph speed limit through Mapplewell was causing problems to the under carriage of cars going over the humps. A reply was given that the majority of people in the area were in favour of the provision of the humps which were slowing traffic down.

A member of the public asked if there was any truth in the rumours that the police were proposing to re-open the old police station in Darton. A reply was given that no information was available however further enquiries will be made.

A member of the public asked with regard to planning permission and in particular the Blacker Road development, was there a statutory responsibility for a seven day notice to be posted on lamp posts etc. A reply was given that this was not the case and that statutory notices on this type of development was placed in the local press.

A member of the public asked if the Churches on Blacker Road and Greenside had been granted planning permission for conversion into flats. A reply was given in the affirmative and this had been approved at the Council's last Planning Regulatory Board.

A member of the public asked if hedges over-hanging public footpaths and in particular the problems that this had led to on Sackup Lane were trimmed back by the Council. A reply was given that due to budgetary restrictions this service was not now operative however it was a highways issue which could be addressed at a future Forum.

A member of the public asked if there were any proposals for the redevelopment of the Mapplewell Ex-Servicemen's Club. A reply was given that no information was available however further enquiries would be made to ascertain if there were any proposals.

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A member of the public expressed concern that a couple of churches in the area had invited American visitors over to visit schools and a re-assurance was sought that we were not promoting a cult and religious sect and had parents been consulted. A reply was given that the Education Service were concerned and would be looking at this issue.

A member of the public asked if the car park at the Ex-Servicemen's Club was in the ownership of the Council. A reply was given that the Council did not own the car park however they leased the car park to allow public usage during the day and that the standard and condition of the surface of the car park was the responsibility of the Ex-Servicemen's Club.

A member of the public expressed concern at the cleanliness of pavements within the Forum's area and asked if the Council carried out a cleansing service as previously. A reply was given that further enquiries would be made with regard to this concern and brought back to a future Forum meeting.

(12) **Appointment of Chairman for the Next Meeting**

IT WAS AGREED that Councillor Ryan be appointed the Chairman for the next meeting of the Forum to be held at Gawber Church Hall, Church Street, Gawber on Monday, the 24th July 2000 at 6.00 p.m.

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Chairman