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CENTRAL AREA COMMUNITY FORUM

Notes of the Central Area Community Forum held on 9 February 2015 at 7.00pm at the in the Committee Room, Town Hall, Matlock

PRESENT

Derbyshire Dales - District Council Councillors Ann Elliott, (in the Chair), Sue Burfoot, Garry Purdy, Lewis Rose, OBE, Geoff Stevens, MBE, Jacquie Stevens and Colin Swindell

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

Derbyshire Constabulary Alan Charles – Police & Crime Commissioner, Superintendent Graham McCloughlin, Inspector Richard Booth and Paula Painter (Office of the Police Crime Commissioner)

Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Services Neil Moulden – Chief Executive
David Allen - Business Development Manager

Derbyshire County Council Paul Jameson - Local Area Forum Liaison Officer

Members of the Public Beeley Parish Council and Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group - Siobhan Spencer
Cromford Parish Council – Joyce Pawley, Sue Mosley
Darley Dale Town Council – Ingrid Pasteur
DDCVS and local resident – Patricia Leake
Hurst Farm Residents' Association - Tom Casem
League of Friends – Diana Dakin
League of Friends, Boys' Brigade, First Taste, Tennis Club – Tom Pilkington
Matlock Bath Parish Council – Councillor Michael Wilderspin
Resident – A J Mumby
Tansley Parish Council – Vicki Raynes
Tansley resident – Kath Camm
Nick Dibben, John Evans, Ben Fearn, Paul Gibbons, R N E Walsh (17 in total)

A Twitter feed was also provided.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Councillor Ann Elliott introduced Members and Officers from the participating authorities and welcomed everyone to the Forum.

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Alan Charles, the Police & Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire began, by explaining that the B Division, within which the Derbyshire Dales sat, covers a large geographical area from Tintwistle in the north to Doveridge in the south. He emphasised that the area had low crime rates.

Also, in a recent report by the Independent Police Complaints Commission, complaints against the Derbyshire force had reduced from 504 (2012 / 2013) to 443 (2013 / 2014), a reduction of -12%. In Nottinghamshire (+67%), Leicestershire (+46%) and Lincolnshire (+21%) complaints had all increased.

Just over £20 million savings had been achieved in recent years, mainly through internal savings and without impact on the public. Police divisions within Derbyshire had been reduced from 4 down to 3.

Austerity measures continue with a budget announcement on 17 December 2014 of a 5.1% / £5.4 million cut and further cuts expected for future years up to 2019 / 2020. He noted that the May 2015 elections may bring about change, but for now, savings must be identified.

For 2015 / 16, Mr Charles proposed no changes to the Police and Crime Plan, but savings had to be identified and there were difficult decisions to make.

In 2010, the force had 2,100 officers. Reductions in Police Officer numbers are now predicted to reduce to 1,650 by 2019 / 20, plus staff reductions of a further 250. Chief Constable Mick Creedon had said that the force would soon be back to the same staffing levels as the 1980s. If staffing levels reached below 1,500 officers in 2019 / 2020 this would render Derbyshire Police 'on the edge of viability'.

Alan Charles noted that the government is still making decisions centrally rather than giving power to new crime commissioners and wondered why Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is getting more resources while constabularies have to make cuts.

For Council Tax to increase by 2% or more, a referendum has to be held. If a rise of the maximum of 1.99% is not levied, there will be 160 officers less. The Derbyshire Police & Crime Panel had approved the proposal to levy a police precept for 2015 / 16 of £173.61, 1.99% Council Tax increase, on a majority vote. It was a difficult recommendation to ask local people for 1.99% Council Tax increase, but Derbyshire needs to be safe. An increase of less than 1.99% may bring Derbyshire Constabulary on the edge of viability, along with three other forces in the country. Band A Council Tax would increase by £2.26 per annum.

Mr Charles noted that people are attached to buildings and value a physical police presence, but operationally the Chief Constable prefers officers to buildings. A local policing delivery plan will be in place before any proposed building closures are made.

Derbyshire Constabulary has 58 buildings which are being reviewed to reduce and rationalise their usage. Shared buildings are a good use of resources, for example in Belper, the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) use Babington Hospital as a base. In Bakewell a base is to be shared with East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS).

Discussion had taken place with Tesco with a view to police officers using their facilities such as toilets and subsidised canteen.

Mr Charles recognised the importance and value of SNTs which exist in all parts of Derbyshire.

Although buildings are closing, it doesn't mean that there won't be the same level of service, it may be delivered in a different way. He wanted every officer to be equipped with a mobile device such as a 'tablet' to allow reports to be logged straight into the system to avoid duplication and paper copies. GPS tracking devices were also being considered.

Mr Charles also noted that crime is changing. There is an increase in online crime and identity fraud is a big issue. Last year, the value of cyber-crime in Derbyshire was around £7 M and that was possibly a low estimate as some goes unreported.

Mr Charles emphasised that a 'bobby' on the street is reassuring, but we can't have officers on the street if they are not solving crime.

Members of the public were then offered the opportunity to ask questions.

- A member of the public commented that police officers on the street have a deterrent value. He asked if there was a need for police officers for all investigations, for example can cyber-crime be investigated in a different way.
- Alan Charles replied that other staff can be utilised, but there is still a requirement for police officers. He emphasised Priority Based Budgets and looking at how the service is delivered. Police visibility contributed to crime prevention and public reassurance and in an ideal world would like to see a police officer on every street, but this was not possible. He noted that cybercrime investigations were complex.
- In response to a question about an increased use of Specials, Mr Charles advised that the constabulary is looking at reactive Specials who commit for a minimum of 4 hours per week. Some see joining the Specials as a stepping stone to becoming an officer whereas others want to contribute to the community.
- Dr Wilderspin had been a victim of fraud carried out by a carefully crafted organisation who had operated in at least 3 areas in the country including Derby and Nottingham. He had contacted the police station to report the incident and was told to contact Action Fraud in London. He completed a lengthy online form, at the end of which was advised that there was no guarantee that any resolution could be offered. Superintendent McClaughlin would further speak to Dr Wilderspin after the meeting as this type of traditional fraud should have been picked up locally.
- Alan Charles added that this type of crime should be investigated just as a traditional burglary would.

- It was confirmed that Action Fraud is run by the London police who collate data and assess whether it is reasonable to investigate the crime. The National Crime Headquarters are looking at how Action Fraud operates.
- John Evans was pleased to hear that crime rates in Derbyshire are reducing and noted how the community also plays a part for example through the provision of youth clubs. He asked if the police could contribute any funding or resources to assist these activities.
- Alan Charles agreed that activities such as youth clubs contribute to crime prevention, but because of the police's financial position, were unable to contribute. In any case, youth clubs were the responsibility of Derbyshire County Council and he understood that not all had closed.
- He cited the OzBox project which could no longer be supported as lottery funding had ceased, DCC had also withdrawn from the project and the police could not justify expenditure on this £430,000 per annum project when £430,000 would fund 16 new recruits.
- Details of a crime prevention fund could be found on Derbyshire Constabulary's website - applications must link in with crime objectives. The scheme is funded by Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) which is assets gained through criminal activity. £65,000 is currently available.
- Diana Dakin felt that the Police & Crime Commissioner had given a clear picture of a difficult situation. However, on a practical level had concerns for more vulnerable residents who may be a victim of crime. Where would they report an incident if enquiry desks were closing?
- Mr Charles advised that the enquiry desk at Matlock is open for the time being and the one in Ashbourne is open four hours a day. The police can be contacted by telephone.
- Inspector Booth appreciated that difficult decisions had to be made. Matlock police station remains open and there are also the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs). He added that, in the future, the enquiry desk at Matlock will close, at which time the yellow phone could be used. The police could be contacted on 101 and would also schedule appointments for home visits.
- Mrs Dakin continued with an example of shoplifting where a quick response was required to prevent incidents spreading and crimes escalating.
- Inspector Booth noted the valuable work of Shopwatch.
- Mr Charles had been meeting with supermarkets to tackle shoplifting and realised that shoplifting would also have a significant impact on small businesses.
- Mrs Dakin urged that local people need to know where to go and who to contact on police matters; Inspector Booth advised that options were continually being looked at and gave an assurance that the SNTs would remain local.
- Mr Charles also noted the use of technology. GPS devices were being investigated which would allow the location of officers to be determined and deployed to incidents as soon as possible.
- Mr Mumby asked if police officers could still retire on a full pension after 30 years.
- Inspector Booth explained that 60 is now the retiring age with 35 years' service to qualify for a full pension. The officers themselves make a 12.5% contribution to their pension fund.

- Mr Mumby noted that within the Police Federation there are several associations and questioned their necessity. Alan Charles advised that the establishment of certain groups may be due to specific issues or special interests. Personally, he also wondered whether all the associations are necessary.
- Inspector Booth added that they are a support mechanism and by and large don't take up a deal of time.
- In response to a question from Dr Wilderspin, Mr Charles confirmed that the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner would also possibly be subject to cuts. The force must run efficiently and effectively and Inspector Booth added that the police continue to work smarter and that last year crime rates were down by 10% with a 43.5% detection rate.

DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL – SPENDING PLANS AND PRIORITIES

Dorcas Bunton began her presentation with the results of some consultation.

Priority services that you say the Council should spend most on:

1. Keeping streets and public areas clean and presentable
2. Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
3. Creating local employment opportunities
4. Affordable housing

Services that you say the Council should spend least on:

1. Reception opening hours
2. Subsidising special events
3. District Council Communications

Budgeted Gross Revenue Spending 2015/16 (Excluding Housing Benefits)

Affordable Housing	£1.8
Car parks & Transport	£0.8
Central Services	£1.2
Democratic Representation	£1.6
Health and Grants	£1.7
Parks and Tourism	£1.3
Regeneration	£2.6
Sport and Arts	£4.1
Street Cleaning	£1.0
Waste and Recycling	£3.1
Total	£19.2

Local Government Finance Settlement

	2014/15	2015/16	Reduction
Settlement Funding Assessment	£3,353,000	£2,891,000	13.8%
Spending Power	£9,615,000	£9,322,000	3.1%

Main Messages for 2015/2016

- No significant service reductions
- No increase in Council Tax by the District Council – frozen for the 5th year

What it costs you

Our services cost you around 50p a day....but we also collect Council Tax for others:

- 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

Five-Year Financial Plan

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Forecast Spending	8,781	8,970	9,112	9,329	9,551
Income from Council Tax, Business Rates and Government Grants	-9,558	-9,403	-9,112	-8,869	-8,573
Capital Improvements / Replacements	777	433	0	0	0
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	460	978

Reserves and Balances

	Actual Balance 1 April 2014 £000s	Estimated Balance 31 March 2016 £000s	Estimated Balance 31 March 2020 £000s
Working balances	1,919	1,951	1,951
Earmarked Reserves & Provisions	6,682	3,955	3,031

Approach to achieve savings

- Future savings will come from a programme of service reviews.
- Review & reduce spending across all services while minimising as far as possible the impact on residents
 - No significant service reductions in 2015/16
- All services to be reviewed over a five-year period. Service reviews include:
 - Grounds Maintenance / Street Cleansing – savings of £120,000 identified
 - Administration - £200,000 savings identified
 - Leisure – £111,500 of savings identified so far; phase 2 in progress
 - Tourism – savings of £23,000 p.a. from 2016/17
 - Discretionary Grants – identified savings of £20,000 p.a. from 2015/16
 - ICT Transformation – In Progress
 - Housing – In progress
 - Development Management (Planning)– In Progress
 - Building Control – In progress
 - Highways Agency – In Progress
 - Reprographics – In progress

- Environmental Health – Due to start in 2015/16
- Licensing – Due to start in 2015/16
- Consider shared services & other alternative service delivery methods, e.g. those agreed for:
 - Revenues & Benefits
 - ICT Service
 - Internal Audit
- Reduce fixed and variable employee costs while protecting existing employees as far as practicable
- Making best use of our assets
- Assess utilisation of reserves and balances
- Generation of additional income
- Increase fees and charges
- Consider future Council Tax increases
 - No increase proposed for 2015/16

Future Consultation

- Further, more detailed, consultation on the Council's spending plans and priorities is expected to take place over Summer / Autumn 2015
- This will help us to develop our spending plans for 2016/17 and future years

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

- Dr Wilderspin noted that Dorcas had stated that there would be no significant change in service levels as a result of budget cuts. He spoke as Vice Chair of Matlock Bath Parish Council and a member of the Parochial Church Council. In recent years, the churchyard was being well maintained by the District Council and this level of maintenance had been agreed with Keith Postlethwaite (the District Council's Grounds Maintenance and Car Parks Manager). However, these levels were now not being maintained and Dr Wilderspin asked if this was now no longer possible or there were no resources which he believed to be the case. Dorcas admitted that the Council doesn't always get it right. Consultation had taken place on the amalgamation of services to create the 'Clean & Green' team, but with hindsight, some of the services may not be as the Council would wish. The Community Committee has recently undertaken a first year review of the 'Clean & Green' service and a further report will be presented to consider how future improvements that are needed within the service might be funded. Dorcas noted that one of the areas to re-visit was churchyards and that the District Council was looking to work more closely with Town / Parish and Parochial Church Councils. Dr Wilderspin asked that a reasonable solution be reached for a reasonable problem.
- Mr Walsh noted the merging of services and queried the levels of street cleansing and gully emptying. Dorcas explained that the District Council empties gullies on behalf of Derbyshire County Council according to a schedule and will respond to complaints and emergencies if requested. She appreciated the impact of adverse weather on gullies and drains. The re-engineering of the street cleansing service has resulted in £120,000 by bringing workforces together and making better use of resources.

- Mr Walsh went on to question the sustainability of a 3 tier local government system which Dorcas felt worked and could be maintained. People wanted to see local elements such as Town and Parish Councils.
- Mr Walsh also noted proposals for a Derbyshire combined authority. Dorcas clarified that the proposal is not to merge the authorities, but to look at sharing services to attract economies of scale. The proposal included the setting up of a body that could control and access funding and take strategic decisions on issues such as the local economy, jobs and transport.
- Councillor Rose added that Councils expect that, in years to come, there would be no government grant and Councils would be expected to manage their own affairs. Councillor G Stevens added, that at a recent meeting he had attended, the Government Minister and Shadow Minister had emphasised that councils would not be forced into joint working.
- Diana Dakin asked if reduced street lighting had also been identified to make cost savings. Dorcas agreed on a valid point, but advised that street lighting was a Derbyshire County Council function. Dorcas advised that the District Council was asking itself about services:-
 - Do we need to deliver the service?
 - Can we deliver it in a different way?
 - Does the Council have to deliver the service or could another organisation deliver it?
- Paul Jameson explained that 2 or 3 years of a 4-year programme of part-night street lighting had been rolled out and now ceased. Derbyshire County Council are investing £23m in the LED street lighting programme. The money will be borrowed and paid back over 20 years. The LED lights have a life expectancy of 25 years, which will lead to lower maintenance costs and they also use less electricity. The amount DCC paid in electricity for street lights has gone up in recent years because of increases in fuel prices. As LEDs use less electricity – and as prices keep going up – it is envisaged that the £23m investment could be paid back in just over 8 years from the savings made.
- Paul Jameson undertook to take comments about the colour temperature of LED lighting back to the County Council. Dr Wilderspin explained that white light cuts out night light vision and the ability to see and recommended for yellow light to be used.
- In response to a question from Mr Mumby, Dorcas explained that the District Council's £2.9 Settlement Funding Assessment for 2015 / 2016 consisted of revenue support grant, retained business rates and government grants (efficiency support for rural areas grant, Council Tax freeze grant and homelessness prevention grant).
- Vicki Raynes asked if new homes bonus would be ploughed back into the community. A cumulative total of £2.582 M had been available over the last 6 years, but was now running out. Dorcas continued that of the £6 M business rates collected, the District Council receives £1.5 M. New homes bonus is not ring fenced, but is used to fund core services including the provision of affordable homes. It was uncertain for how long the new homes bonus would continue.
- Vicki Raynes noted business rates paid by businesses on Tansley industrial estate, but it was not apparent that the monies were being ploughed back in for example to

repair the industrial estate road approach. Dorcas highlighted that revenue is spent on the provision of services and not pigeon holed for specific areas.

- In response to a question from Mr Mumby, Dorcas confirmed that the District Council would receive £57,000 from the government for retaining its Council Tax increase below 1%. There would be no increase in the District Council's Council Tax precept which Mr Mumby applauded.

EREWASH CREDIT UNION'S EXPANSION INTO DERBYSHIRE DALES – COMMUNITY UPDATE

Neil Moulden, Chief Executive of Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Services explained that this was a joint project between Erewash Credit Union and Derbyshire Dales Council for Voluntary Service, but is also supported (in some cases providing financial support to underwrite ECU loan book and support ECU's on-line banking and website) by a wide range of voluntary and public sector bodies:-

- Derbyshire County Council
- Derbyshire Dales District Council
- Dales Housing
- Peak District National Park
- Police – Illegal Money Lending Team
- Rural Action Derbyshire
- Financial Advice and Action Derbyshire
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Local CVS

What is a Credit Union?

- Credit Unions are financial cooperatives owned and controlled by their customers (members)
- They are not for profit – like a community bank
- They help promote savings and loans at reasonable rates.
- Loans are fixed rate with no penalty for early repayment
- Credit Unions are regulated and authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority and are part of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Erewash Credit Union

- Established in 2006
- Largest credit Union in Derbyshire
- Operates in Erewash, Amber Valley, Derby City and Derbyshire Dales and accounts open to people living or working in Derbyshire
- Loans and savings book in excess of £1,000,000
- Loans and savings can be deducted direct from salary where employer registered with ECU
- Offers branch based and on-line accounts

Background

- No tradition of credit unions operating in Derbyshire Dales
- Perception that there may be insufficient demand

- Credit Unions have tended to focus on areas of urban social and financial deprivation
- Financial recession highlighted that people struggling to cope with family finances everywhere - likely to be a long-term trend
- Credit Unions can only lend if they have sufficient number of people saving and investing

The ECU Plan

- To set up information points in:
 - Matlock
 - Wirksworth
 - Ashbourne
 - Bakewell
- Operated by local trained volunteers
- ECU need to recruit as many new members as possible
- Balance between borrowers and savers
- Majority of new customer expected to transact on-line

Need more information?

To find out more about ECU membership or services contact:

Erewash Credit Union

Ilkeston Co-op Department Store

Market Place

Ilkeston

Derbyshire DE7 5SG

T: 0115 932 9493

W: <http://www.erewashcreditunion.org.uk/>

To find out more about volunteering for ECU contact:

David Allen or Neil Moulden

Derbyshire Dales CVS

Agricultural Business Centre

Bakewell

Derbyshire DE45 1AH

T: 01629 812154

W: <http://ddcvs.org.uk/>

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

- In response to a question from Councillor Rose, David Allen advised that the rate of return had recently been 0.5%, but in the past had risen to as much as 1.5%.
- Neil noted John Evans' suggestion that if the ECU wanted people to invest, they should state their approximate rate of return.
- In response to a question from Tom Pilkington about levels of borrowing, Neil advised that as an example a loan of £5 k may be taken out to purchase a car. The greater the loan the more beneficial to ECU.
- Neil did not believe that you have to save with ECU before applying for a loan – a question raised by Councillor Burfoot.

- Councillor Burfoot encouraged responsible management of money and noted problems that arose when housing benefit was paid direct to clients. The ECU worked closed with the Citizens' Advice Bureau on such matters to encourage responsible financial management.
- In response to a question from John Evans, Neil responded that loans are subject to credit checks and the ECU is regulated like a high street bank.
- Mr Mumby queried the benefits of investing with ECU versus a high street bank. Neil cited investing with credit unions as an ethical investment which was a well-established concept with an understanding that investment may perform less well. The investor however, has the satisfaction of helping the local community and disadvantaged people.
- In response to a question from Vicki Raynes, Neil advised that the District Council supported the Citizens Advice Bureau who offered advice on managing finances so the District Council indirectly offered help.

STAND UP – YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU! – THE X FACTOR – MAY 2015

Sandra Lamb gave a presentation on the forthcoming elections, information on how to stand as a candidate and what being a Councillor entailed.

Being a Councillor – What's it all about?

- Are you concerned about your local area?
- Do you want to represent the views of local people?
- Are you passionate about services provided to your community?
- Do you want to contribute to making a real difference in the communities of the Derbyshire Dales?

If yes, then Stand Up to the X factor and consider being a Councillor.

Elections to the District Council and 71 of the town and parish councils in the Derbyshire Dales takes place on 7 May 2015

What the job entails?

You could be the fresh new talent that your council is looking for.

- District parish and town councillors have a common purpose -
- They are elected to represent their local communities, not just those who may have voted for them
- They get involved in decision making by attending meetings and committees with other councillors to decide
 - What services should be delivered and how
 - How money should be spent

The District Council plays a bigger part in the local economy and may have a greater influence overall on many aspects of the lives of the people who live or work here. All Councils do the best they can for their local community

Some frequently asked questions (and answers)

Who can be a councillor?

Almost anyone as long as you are:-

- Over 18, British, Commonwealth or European Union citizen
- Registered to vote in the area or have lived, worked or owned property there for at least 12 months before an election

You cannot be a councillor if you:

- Work for the council you want to be a councillor for
- Are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order
- Have been sentenced to prison for 3 months or more during the 5 year before election day

Can I be a Councillor and have a job?

- Yes. By law your employer must allow you to take reasonable time off. Discuss this with your employer before making a decision

I have a disability, can I be a councillor?

- Yes. Your council will work with you to overcome any barriers you may come across as a result of your disability

Will I get paid for being a councillor?

- Councillors do not receive a salary. However most councils reimburse expenses incurred on official business and the District Council pays an allowance in recognition of time incurred. More information from your local council or through its website.

I don't have the time

- How much time you spend as a councillor is largely up to you and will depend on the particular commitments you take on. As a rough guide a district councillor can expect to spend from 5 to 20 hours a week . A parish/town councillor can expect to spend about 3 hours a week.

What's the next step?

- Decide if you want to represent a political party or want to be independent?
- If you want to represent a political party get involved with your preferred party as soon as possible. Contacts at the end.
- If you want to stand independently, start building your profile so that local people know who you are.
- Get up to speed on local issues and what your local council is doing – get ready to be challenged on the door step.
- Get a nomination pack call 01629 761335 or download from
- www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Key Dates

- 3 March 2015 Candidates Briefing to run through nomination process. 6pm Town Hall, Matlock
- 16 March 2015 - Notice of election for District and Parish Council Elections
- 16 March through to 4pm 9 April (working days 10am – 4pm receipt of nominations
- 3 April Candidates Briefing – run through of election do's and don'ts including the count procedure. 6pm Town Hall, Matlock
- 20 April – deadline to register to vote
- 4pm 9 April – close of nominations
- 7 May – Election day if contested
- 8 May – 1pm Count for District Council Elections
- 9 May – 10am Count for Town and Parish Council Elections

Key contacts

- Election Helpdesk

- To make an appointment to check a nomination paper, enquiry about the electoral register or election process.
 - Tel. 01629 761335
 - Email electoral@derbyshiredales.gov.uk
 - Web site www.derbyshirdales.gov.uk –
 - nomination packs including information, role profiles and nomination papers
 - Parish and town council contacts
- Electoral Commission
 - www.electoralcomission.org.uk -
 - Guides for candidates and agents
- Political Parties
- To find out how to represent a political party please visit the following web sites. Please note this list is not intended to be a complete list of all political parties
- Conservative: www.conservatives.com/getinvolved/become_a_councillor.aspx
- Green Party: www.greenparty.org.uk
- Labour: www.labourcouncillor.org.uk
- Liberal Democrat: www.bealibdemcouncillor.org.uk
- UKIP: www.ukip.org.uk

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

- Councillor Swindell asked about arrangements for the delivery of nomination papers. Sandra recommended that an appointment be made. Papers could be received between 10 am and 4 pm on working days during the nomination period with provision being made at Ashbourne and Bakewell for one day each during the period. The procedure has been reviewed to make the process more 'snappy'.

QUESTION TIME

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

Road signage

- Diana Dakin felt that there were too many road signs in Tansley on the A615 and yet additional signage for the Whitworth Hospital has been refused – this seemed inconsistent.
- In Tansley, Paul explained that the signage (Holly Lane, Thatchers Lane) was not to encourage vehicles to use the road, but rather to warn drivers of side roads and traffic joining the main road. Mrs Dakin felt that these junctions were quite visible without signage.
- With regard to the Whitworth Hospital, Paul noted that overprovision of signage can have a detrimental effect.
- Paul would urge his colleague, Mark Sloan, to respond to outstanding issues raised in a letter from Mrs Dakin.

Local Plan and planning & highways issues

- In response to a question from Vicki Raynes about progress with the Local Plan, Dorcas reported that a 'call for sites' exercise had taken place and detailed work on assessment of need was being commissioned. The list of sites was not yet available to the public. Further consultation would take place in June.

- Mrs Dakin understood that traffic management was not a consideration for developments of less than 80 dwellings, but in a village like Tansley, the traffic generated from additional housing would have an impact.
- Dorcas explained that the highways authority (Derbyshire County Council) is a statutory consultee for planning applications.
- Mrs Raynes was of the view that the highway authority had let Tansley down and felt did not listen.
- Paul highlighted that the County Council has a development control section who must adhere to strict planning laws and give due consideration to highways issues.
- Councillor G Stevens added that the District Council takes into account comments made by the highways authority. In reaching a decision, the planning committee takes into account all consultation and recommendations received.
- A comment was made that the District Council should be more in touch with the Parish Councils and added that planning consultation could be difficult to access online.
- A member of the public noted recent traffic congestion in Tansley which had prevented an ambulance accessing Tansley House.
- Councillor G Stevens suggested that a way forward may be for the Parish and District Councils to collate highways issues and concerns together and then write to the highways authority.
- Paul would take back Councillor Burfoot's request for a member of the highways section to attend the District Council's planning committee when it is considering a 'controversial' application, to allow questions to be asked.
- In response to a question from Vicki Raynes, Dorcas advised that planning applications are placed in the Peak Advertiser rather than the Matlock Mercury because it is a free publication, has a wider catchment area and offers a more economical advertising rate.

Revenues service

- Mr Mumby was surprised that the District Council's revenue function had been outsourced to a German based company and if the outsourcing had been the subject of a tender exercise.
- Dorcas explained that this was under the auspices of shared working and had come about following talks with Chesterfield Borough Council. Derbyshire Dales had been able to join with the arrangement which had brought about financial benefit to the District Council.
- Dorcas appreciated the importance of maintaining a quality service, particularly noting dealing with vulnerable people. The District Council wished to provide the same level of service, maintaining standards, but at a cheaper cost.
- Mr Mumby queried if Chesterfield Borough Council had appointed as a result of a tender exercise and if UK based companies had had an opportunity to bid for the service.

CONCLUSION AND THANKS

Councillor Elliott thanked everyone for their participation and reminded attendees to complete a Feedback Form.

The next Central Forum will take place in summer 2015, date and venue to be determined.

Meeting closed at 9.35 pm