

Central Dudley Area Committee - 10th March, 2009

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Matters Raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 20th January, 2009 other than those relating to the Directorate of Urban Environment

Purpose

1. To note progress on issues raised at the meeting of the Committee held on the 20th January, 2009, other than those relating to the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

Background

2. The issues set out in paragraphs 3 to 8 (inclusive) below were raised at the meeting of the Committee held on the 20th November, 2009, progress on which is as follows:-

3. **Repairs to a Council House**

In response to a comment made by a member that repairs to a particular Council house had not been attended to for some six months, the issue has been investigated. The Principal Housing Manager for Dudley has established that, further to a service request to inspect the floor tiles in the hall raised on 8th July, 2008, the inspection was completed on 25th July and the work to remove the floor tiles was completed on 15th September.

No further jobs regarding floor tiles at the property are on record. Arrangements are being made, therefore, for the tenant to be contacted to discuss any further work required.

4. **Young people being housed in flats where residents are predominantly elderly**

Further to this issue being raised by a member at the last meeting, the Head of Housing Management (North) has contacted the member and explained the following. Age designations on a number of Council flats are applied to avoid, where possible, potential lifestyle clashes that sometimes occur when people of different age groups live in close proximity. On occasions, however, the designations of some blocks of flats have been changed to address the demand and housing needs of younger applicants but this has been undertaken only after consultation with residents of those blocks. No changes have been made to blocks within the Central Dudley Area for a number of years. The member has been asked to contact the Head of Housing Management (North) should he have

any specific concerns regarding recent lettings that he considers should be investigated.

5. **Dudley Wood Learning Centre**

The expeditious installation of a gate outside the Dudley Wood Learning Centre, for which funding had already been agreed, was requested by a member at the last meeting. The Assistant Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services (Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning), has confirmed that planning permission for the erection of the gate was received on the 14th January, 2009 and that the gate will be erected at the end of the alley during the week commencing the 16th February.

In relation to the request of the member to be advised of any proposals being considered in relation to the Learning Centre, the Assistant Director has confirmed with the member that the community facility at the Centre is considered to be an important facet and that this will not be compromised should there be any development proposals for the Centre in the future.

6. **Saltwells House**

Further to representations made from a bidder for this property, sale is being progressed through a tendering process and a number of tenders have been received. Tenders are evaluated in accordance with a pre-determined criteria and, at the date of the last Area Committee meeting, the bids were being considered by the Directorate of the Urban Environment. The bidder who raised the issue at the meeting has been apprised of the process.

7. **Thorns Campus**

At the last meeting of the Committee, a Ward Member asked to be advised of the exact items that would be provided for in the Phase I Scheme for the Thorns Campus.

The Interim Director of Children's Services has confirmed that funding has been found to ensure that Old Park School will be relocated to the Thorns Campus as Phase I of the development. This was always envisaged to be the first part of the development of the Learning Village. The funding has been drawn from the Department for Children's Schools and Families (DCSF) and Council budgets.

In relation to the Primary Capital Programme, the allocation for the first phase has been agreed with the DCSF and funding has just been released. Thorns Primary School was not in the Phase I proposals as it did not meet the criteria set.

The Interim Director has indicated, however, that as the 15 year programme of primary development progresses, Thorns Primary School will be considered.

The Building Schools for the Future proposals for the primary sector were submitted by the due date with the recommendation for Wave 8 or beyond. Information from the DCSF on developments in this area are awaited.

The member who raised the issue has been apprised of the above situation.

8. Northfield Road Primary School

At the last meeting of the Committee, an update on the rebuilding proposals for the Northfield Road Primary School and on the options appraisal in connection therewith, was requested by a Ward Member.

The Interim Director of Children's Services has responded that the Building and Estates Section are commencing initial options appraisal work and are currently undertaking desktop surveys on Northfield Road. Ward Members will be updated as and when additional information is available.

Finance

9. This report has no direct financial implications.

Law

10. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Council is empowered to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to, or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

11. This report complies with the policies of the Council on equality and diversity.

12. Children and young people have not been consulted in the preparation of this report, as the report seeks only to note progress on issues raised at its previous meeting.

Recommendations

13. That the information above be noted.



AREA LIAISON OFFICER

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List of Background Papers

Minutes of the meeting of the Central Dudley Area Committee held on the 20th January, 2009