

STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE

Monday 12th March 2007 at 7 pm
at Hob Green Primary School, Hob Green Road, Stourbridge

PRESENT:-

Councillor Adams (Chairman)
Councillors Attwood, Banks, Mrs Collins, Mrs Cowell, Donegan, Jones, Knowles, Lowe, Rogers, A Turner, Mrs Walker and C Wilson: Mr I Green

OFFICERS:-

Director of Law and Property (as Area Liaison Officer), Head of Public Protection, Group Engineer Traffic and Road Safety, Town Centre Manager, Regeneration Project Manager, Principal Policy Officer, Project Development Officer, (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Group Accountant (Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement) and Mrs J Rees (Directorate of Law and Property)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:-

Inspector P Boardman (West Midlands Police) together with 35 members of the public.

78

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Kettle and Mrs Martin, and Mr G Downing, Ms P Shepherd and Miss R Hill.

79

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs Collins declared a Personal Interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of Agenda Item 12 – Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisals for Four Canal Based Conservation Areas, in view of her son being a director of the Stourbridge Navigation Trust.

Councillor Donegan declared a Prejudicial Interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of Agenda Item 8 – Capital Allocations, in view of his Membership of the Lye Football Club and took no part in the discussion on this matter.

Mr I Green declared a Prejudicial Interest in respect of Agenda Item 8 – Capital Allocations, in view of his Membership of the Friends of Wychbury Park, the Pedmore Fields Residents' Association and the Fantasy Dance Group and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of these matters.

80 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22nd January, 2007 be approved as a correct record and signed.

81 RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

A petition was submitted by residents living in close proximity to Sandringham Way, Withymoor Village, objecting to lorries travelling down Sandringham Way. The petition was referred to the Director of the Urban Environment for consideration and attention. A question on this subject was deferred for consideration until the Public Forum agenda item.

82 YOUTH ISSUES

It was reported that there were no youth issues to be considered.

83 PUBLIC FORUM SESSION

Before reading questions received prior to the meeting and from the public, the Area Liaison Officer stated that any questions which were not addressed would receive a written response from the appropriate officer.

Questions and answers were then given as follows:-

- (1) From a resident, unable to attend the meeting, regarding previously reported concerns relating to parking restrictions in Old Ham Lane and adjoining roads and the alleged lack of progress in addressing the issue of illegal and dangerous parking by parents delivering and collecting children from school. The Group Engineer Traffic and Road Safety advised that the Officer dealing with this issue had recently passed away. The case therefore had had to be reassigned to another Officer who it was anticipated would arrange a meeting in the near future with the Headteacher and local residents to progress the matter. Ward Members requested that they also be invited to the meeting.

- (2) A member of the public requested an assurance that the Dell Stadium will continue to be maintained, following reports that a Sports Village was proposed for Dudley. The Head of Environmental Protection confirmed that proposals for a Sports Village in the north of the Borough were being considered. He advised that this would not adversely affect the Dell Stadium. There had been no evidence to support concerns that the Dell stadium was not up to standard.
- (3) In support of the petition referred to in Minute 81, a question was asked as to why Sandringham Way was unsuitable for lorries and what was to prevent the use of Kirkstone Way being used as an alternative. A resident commented on the number of accidents in Sandringham Way within the last six months. The Group Engineer Traffic and Road Safety advised that the situation was under review. He undertook to arrange for a site visit to be organised to the area, together with Ward Members and complainants to discuss the issue and to submit a report on the findings to a future meeting.
- (4) A member of the public questioned the relevance of a Planning Committee when applicants could appeal against the Committee's decision to refuse applications and have the decision reversed in their favour. Concern was also expressed that residents objecting to planning applications did not have the right to appeal. The Chairman and the Director of Law and Property advised that although the situation appeared unfair, this was the law and the Council were obliged to abide by the law.
- (5) Another resident questioned why an application for a change of use at a premises in Lye had been approved, despite numerous safety issues having been raised during consideration of the matter. The Group Engineer Traffic and Road Safety undertook to have a written response sent to the resident, with a copy to the Ward Councillors, as no officer from Development Control was in attendance to answer this question.
- (6) A member of the public requested an update of the situation regarding reported proposals by Tesco to open a supermarket in the Crown Centre and their plans for the Angel Passage site. The Area Liaison Officer advised that Tesco had lodged an appeal against the Council's decision to refuse planning permission for a superstore at the Angel Passage site and that a public enquiry would be held. The Area Liaison Officer also advised that the owners of the Crown Centre had published a scheme for the redevelopment of the Centre, which would include a large supermarket and the development of the multi storey car park. Tesco had indicated that they would wish to be part of this development.

- (7) The same member of the public requested an explanation on the funding for the Oldswinford Hospital School extension which appeared to be in jeopardy due to the Council's actions. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services explained the process for funding school expansion projects for voluntary aided schools. She explained that there had been some misunderstanding over how the proposed expansion at Oldswinford Hospital School was to be funded. She confirmed that funding was available within the Locally Controlled Voluntary Aided Project. The Council fully supported the expansion in principle and was endeavouring to resolve the problem to enable the expansion to proceed.

APPLICATIONS IN RESPECT OF LAND AND PROPERTY OWNED BY THE COUNCIL

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted on reports relating to land and property controlled by the Council.

The Area Liaison Officer advised that the application to extinguish rights of way at 108 Dobbins Oak Road, Wollescote had been withdrawn by the applicant. Ward Councillors requested copies of the background papers for this application prior to it being resubmitted at a later date for consideration.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Cabinet Member for Transportation be advised to declare the reduced area of land adjacent to 5 Bath Road, Stourbridge, as shown hatched on the plan attached to the report submitted, surplus to requirements for sale on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property and that the Director of the Urban Environment maintain the remaining land as highway verge.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member for Housing be recommended to approve the sale of land at Queensway, Wollescote, as shown hatched on the plan attached to the report submitted, to the St Andrew Scout Group, on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
- (3) That the capital allocation of £5,000 awarded to the St. Andrew Scout Group in November 2006 for the refurbishment of their Scout Hut be re-allocated for the following work:-
 - provision and erection of fencing and gates
 - supplying and installing a security camera
 - supplying and erecting security lighting.

CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on applications for capital funding from the Committee's Capital Allocations budget. In presenting his report the Area Liaison Officer advised of a verbal request by the Lye Football Club for an extension to the time allowed to claim their grant of £5,000 to resurface the car park at the Club, to enable them to secure the remaining required funding. The delay in obtaining additional funding had been beyond their control.

The Area Liaison Officer also drew attention to the options, as described in paragraph 38 of the report in view of the fact that there was insufficient funding to grant the full amounts to all the applications from the current available budget.

RESOLVED

- (1) That Lye Football Club be granted an extension of six months to claim their grant of £5,000 to resurface the car park at the Club, to enable them to secure the remaining required funding.
- (2) That the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, be authorised to consider and determine future requests for extensions to time allowed for claiming grants, up to an additional six months.
- (3) That the sums referred to below be allocated to the following organisations for the purpose indicated:-

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Lye Cricket Club	Purchase of a mower, grass seed and fertiliser spreader, a spiker and a loam spreader for the cricket square	£4,787
New Road Stourbridge Methodist Church	Towards cost of a redevelopment project at the Church	£5,000*
Orchard Partnership	Purchase tables and a storage trolley	£914.91
Friends of Wychbury Park	Purchase and installation of children's play equipment	£5,000
Pedmore Fields Residents Association	Purchase of outdoor table tennis equipment	£536

Fantasy Dance
Group

Purchase a micro hi-fi system

£299.99

* Subject to confirmation to the Area Liaison Officer that the additional required funding had been obtained.

86

TO SEEK SUPPORT FOR A BOROUGH WIDE AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA FOR DUDLEY

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on a proposal to declare the whole of Dudley Borough an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The proposals for a whole Borough AQMA had been supported by the Select Committee on the Environment and Corporate Board, who had approved consultation through the Area Committees before the submission of a report to Cabinet in July, 2007.

In response to comments as to whether the proposal was tantamount to instigating road charging, the Chairman advised that it was not the intention of the Council to introduce road charges.

RESOLVED

That the proposals for a whole Borough Air Quality Management Area for Dudley, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report submitted, be supported.

87

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN PUBLIC PLACES – LYE HIGH STREET

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted on a proposed Designated Order to declare Lye High Street and adjoining roads a designated public place where the consumption of alcohol would be prohibited, other than within the curtilage of licensed premises.

Inspector Boardman of West Midlands Police spoke in support of the proposed Order and reported that similar schemes already in existence in Halesowen and Stourbridge Towns had proved successful.

The Area Liaison Officer advised that should the proposal be approved, there would be a need to raise approximately £3,000 to cover the cost of signage. He requested that, should the proposal for a Designated Order be approved, the Committee give consideration to agreeing in principle the allocation of £3,000 from the 2007/08 capital allocations budget, to purchase and install the required signs, in order to allow the Order to be progressed.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the making of a Designated Order for Lye High Street and
- SAC/62

adjoining roads, as shown in Appendix 2 of the report submitted to the Licensing and Safety Committee, be supported.

- (2) That approval be given for £3,000 allocated from the 2007/08 capital allocations budget to cover the cost of signage.
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88 **PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE JOINT CORE STRATEGY FOR THE BLACK COUNTRY**

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the preparation and progress of the Joint Core Strategy for the Black Country including the local consultation events undertaken in the Dudley Borough.

In presenting the report the Principal Planning Officer advised that following consultation at the end of March, 2007, the resultant Options would be further consulted on during July, 2007

RESOLVED

That the content of the report submitted, on public consultation on the Joint Core Strategy for the Black Country, be noted.

89 **DRAFT CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISALS FOR FOUR CANAL BASED CONSERVATION AREAS**

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted, seeking the views of the Committee and the public in attendance on draft Conservation Area Character Appraisals prepared for the following four canal-based Conservation Areas: The Delph Locks, Brierley Hill; Stourbridge Sixteen Locks, Wordsley; Stourbridge Branch Canal, Amblecote; and Stourbridge Branch Canal, Canal Street, Stourbridge.

A presentation on the proposals was given by the Principal Conservation Officer/Borough Archaeologist, in which the proposals for the management of the Conservation Areas were summarised and boundary changes proposed to each respective area, which had emerged from the Character Appraisals as being appropriate, were indicated. He reported that the public consultation had taken place from 1st February to 2nd March, 2007 and that a similar report had been submitted to a recent meeting of Brierley Hill Area Committee.

Concerns were expressed that the proposals did not include the Netherton Tunnel, which was in urgent need of repair. The possibility of extending the boundary to include the ninth lock at Brierley Hill was also commented upon.

RESOLVED

That the four draft Conservation Area Character Appraisals, including

the proposed boundary amendments and management proposals, for the four canal-based Conservation Areas at the Delph Locks, Brierley Hill; Stourbridge Sixteen Locks, Wordsley; Stourbridge Branch Canal, Amblecote; and Stourbridge Branch Canal, Canal Street, be supported, including any extension to the boundaries considered necessary after the consultation period.

90

STOURBRIDGE INFORMATION GATHERING EXERCISE

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the headline findings of the Stourbridge Town Centre information gathering exercise, as set out in the supplementary report circulated at the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the information on the findings of the Stourbridge Town Matters information gathering exercise, as set out in the supplementary report circulated at the meeting, be noted.

91

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on responses to questions asked at previous meetings of this Committee

RESOLVED

That the content of the report submitted be noted.

92

ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

- (a) Councillor Rogers commented that the scheduled Police and Communities Together meeting on 3rd May at Gigmill School, would clash with the Local Elections on that date, as the school was used as a polling station.
- (b) Councillor Donegan commended the small group of people who had recently commenced painting of the railings at Mary Stevens Park. He encouraged more volunteers to take part in the next painting session.
- (c) Councillor Mrs Cowell requested that the bubblegum cleaning machine route be extended to include areas in close proximity to High Park School.

- (d) Councillor Mrs Walker commended the recent work of young people in the Amblecote area in establishing a Youth Forum for that area, with assistance from the local Community Police Support Officers. She encouraged youths in other areas to establish similar youth forums in their area.
- (e) Councillor Jones commented on the recently instigated Closure Order on a section of the path between Gauden Road and Dobbins Oak Road, Wollaston. He was hopeful that a full closure of the right of way in that area would be possible at a future date.
- (f) Councillor Turner:
 - i expressed appreciation for information received at the recent Police and Communities Together (PACT) meeting regarding the use of speed cameras.
 - ii suggested that a representative group of Councillors meet with the police to discuss timetabling of future PACT meetings which often clash with other commitments of local councillors.
- (g) Councillor Knowles commented on the need to encourage more young people to attend Area Committee meetings. The Area Liaison Officer advised that the Co-opted Member representing young people on the Committee was nominated by the Youth Council.

Councillor Mrs Walker agreed with the comments and commented on the need to make Area Committee agendas more interesting to young people.

93

SELECT COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

Information was given regarding the dates for future meetings of all Select Committees, which were held at the Council House, Dudley. Members of the public were welcome to attend such meetings.

RESOLVED

That the information given in respect of publicity for future meetings of Select Committees be noted.

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DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the dates and venues of future meetings of the Committee would be advised when determined in the next municipal year be noted.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN