

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7th July, 2004, at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillors Blood, Debney, Ms Foster, Ms Harris, Harley, Islam, Ms Jordan, Miller, Ms Pearce, Southall, Mrs Tomkinson, Tyler and Mrs Wilson, together with Mr E Lawson (Area Liaison Officer), Mr J Woodall, Mr I Withey and Mr A Webb (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Mrs Jackson (Directorate of Social Services), Mrs Porter (Directorate of Education and Lifelong Learning), Mr Flack (Town Centre Manager) Mrs Bacon and Ms K Smith (Directorate of Law and Property).

There were approximately 21 members of the public in attendance

1 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED

That Councillor Mrs Wilson be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

2 **VOTE OF THANKS**

Councillors Mrs Tomkinson and Millar thanked the previous chairman, Councillor Waino, for his services to the Committee during the previous municipal year.

3 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16th March, 2004 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the substitution of the words "Groundwork Black Country" for the words "Community Forum" in the first line of the preamble to minute 85 and to the substitution of the word "Festival" for the word "Carnival" in resolution (8) to minute 84.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Burt and Mrs Patrick.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Blood, Debney and Southall declared personal interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in agenda item 17 (Liveability Fund Award) in view of their being members of the Friends of Wordsley Park.

6 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED

That Councillor Tyler be appointed Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

7 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROTOCOL FOR AREA COMMITTEES

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted setting out the terms of reference and protocol for Area Committees as agreed at the Annual Council held on 24th June 2004. A supplementary paper was circulated indicating the composition of Area Committees, as approved at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED

That the terms of reference and protocol for the Brierley Hill Committee as set out in the report and supplementary paper submitted be noted.

8 CO-OPTED MEMBERS

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted requesting consideration of the co-option of persons to serve as members of the Committee for the 2004/05 municipal year.

The Area Liaison Officer advised that a nomination had been received for Mrs J Lewis to represent the Dudley Association of Governing Bodies on the Area Committee. Members of the committee reiterated the view held by them previously that all members of the public were welcome to speak on all agenda items at all meetings of the Committee and that the co-option of Members was not necessary.

RESOLVED

That no person be co-opted to the Committee at the present time.

APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted on the Appointment of Working Groups of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

RESOLVED

That the following Working Groups be appointed for the 2004/05 municipal year with the existing terms of reference and composition and membership indicated.

(1) Community Plan Working Group

To comprise the Chairman, one member of each ward in the area of the Area Committee, namely: Councillors Mrs Wilson, Blood, Mrs Patrick, Southall and Mrs Tomkinson.

(2) Capital Allocations Working Group

To comprise the Chairman plus one member of each ward in the area of the Area Committee, namely: Councillors Mrs Wilson, Blood, Mrs Patrick, Southall and Mrs Tomkinson.

(3) Brerley Hill Area Committee Borough Festival Working Group

To comprise the Chairman plus one member of each ward in the area of the Area Committee, namely: Councillors Mrs Wilson, Blood, Mrs Patrick, Southall and Mrs Tomkinson.

(4) Young People's Group

The composition to be determined at the first meeting of the Groups indicated above but to include Councillor Mrs R Harris.

APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted on the appointment of representatives to serve on various outside bodies for the 2004/05 municipal year.

RESOLVED

That appointments to the Organisations indicated below be made as follows:

<u>Name of Organisation</u>	<u>Representatives</u>	<u>Period of Office</u>
Brierley Hill Committee for the Welfare of the Physically Handicapped	Councillors Mrs Wilson and Islam	Annual
Men Of Wordsley	Councillor Southall, Cody and Walker	Four years from 1/1/04
Peter Harris Almshouse	Councillors Mrs Harris and Islam	Four years
Community Associations		
(a) Brockmoor	Councillor Ms Foster	Annual
(b) Dingle	Councillors Debney and Southall	Annual
(c) Fens Pool	Councillors Mrs Jordan and Mrs Tomkinson	Annual
(d) Hawbush	Councillors Mrs Harris and Islam	Annual
(e) Kingswinford	Councillors Mrs Patrick and Miller	Annual
(f) Kingslocks	Councillor Islam	Annual
(g) Pensnett	Councillors Ms Foster and Jordan	Annual
(h) Wall Heath	Councillors Burt and Tyler	Annual
(i) Wordsley	The members of the Council representing the Wordsley Ward	Annual

RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

It was reported that the following petition had been received and would be referred to the officers indicated for attention:-

From Councillor Debney on behalf of residents of High Acres, requesting the sale of derelict land used previously as a children's play area – referred to the Director of the Urban Environment and the Director of Law and Property for a report to the next Area Committee.

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APPLICATIONS IN RESPECT OF LAND AND PROPERTY OWNED BY THE COUNCIL

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted regarding land and property within the Committee's area.

On consideration of the report it was

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to defer the application to purchase land adjacent to 2 Ash Crescent, Kingswinford, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, pending a site visit.
- (2) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to refuse the application to purchase land adjacent to 97 Queen Street, Pensnett as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, for the reasons set out in the report.
- (3) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to refuse the application to purchase an area of land adjacent to 34A Bromley, Brierley Hill, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, for the reasons set out in the report.
- (4) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to defer the application to purchase an area of land opposite 15 Waldron Avenue, Brierley Hill, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, to allow the views of the Housing Panel to be obtained on other proposed improvements in that area.
- (5) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to refuse the application to purchase land to the rear of 88 Swan Street, Pensnett, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, for the reasons set out in the report; but that the situation be regularised by offering the applicant a standard Housing Access Agreement to cross the land.

- (6) That the Lead Member for Leisure be recommended to approve the application for an access agreement to land to the rear of 10 Hope Street, Wordsley, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, subject to a commuted sum for maintenance, and on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
- (7) That the Lead Member for Transport be recommended to defer the application to purchase land to the front of 111 Cot Lane, Kingswinford, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, pending a site visit.
- (8) That the Lead Member for Law and Property and the Lead Member for Leisure be recommended to approve the application for a rear access agreement to land to the rear of 14 Springfield Road, Brierley Hill, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, subject to formal consent being given by the Lions Boxing Club, a commuted sum for maintenance of the track, and on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
- (9) That the Lead Member for Transport be recommended to defer the granting of an access agreement over the council car park to the rear of 53 Lawnswood Road, Wordsley, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, pending clarification of ownership of the car park.

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PUBLIC FORUM

The following questions were raised and responded to:

- 1 Ms J Hartnell, a detached youth worker, raised concerns over an area of land known as "The Square" adjacent to the Next Generation fitness facility. An audio tape and transcript was submitted to the Committee voicing the views and opinions of local young people in relation to their perceptions of "The Square", and expressing their thoughts about the nature of the youth provision they would like to see in the area.

It was confirmed that the representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment would look into the issues raised and respond in writing to Ms J Hartnell.

2. Councillor Mrs Wilson stated that parents had raised concerns over dog fouling at Saltwells Nature Reserve and requested that urgent action be taken to resolve the problem, by means of installing dog toilets on the site and frequent patrolling of the site by Dog Wardens.

It was confirmed that the representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment would look into the issues raised and respond in writing to Councillor Mrs Wilson.

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CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on applications for funding from this year's capital Allocation budget and to update Members on progress to date.

Upon consideration of the recommendations of the Capital allocations Working Group it was

RESOLVED

- (1) That the criteria for allocation of the budget as outlined in paragraph 2.1 of the report submitted be approved.
- (2) That the United Reform Church application for funding of £2,500 towards the cost of improvements totalling £9,158 be approved, subject to the grant being match funded by the group Pastorate.
- (3) That the Springfield Neighbourhood Tenants and Residents Association application for funding of £20,000 towards the park improvements at the rear of the properties in Springfield Road be approved, subject to confirmation that maintenance arrangements and funding are in place and that the rest of the project has indicative funding.
- (4) That the Wall Heath Cyber Centre application for funding to remove asbestos from the Centre be deferred, to allow further information and a copy of the lease regarding the removal of asbestos from the Centre to be obtained.

STATUES AND MONUMENTS

Further to the consideration given by the Committee to the request by the Hickinbottom family for the erection of a monument to their son, the report of the Area Liaison Officer to the Select Committee on Culture and Recreation, advocating that the Council determine a policy regarding the erection of monuments, was submitted for information.

RESOLVED

That the report and the action proposed to be taken on the implementation of a Council policy on the erection of monuments and statues, either on Council owned land or on other privately owned land, be welcomed.

16 PROGRESS OF ELECTED MEMBER VISITS TO SOCIAL SERVICES ESTABLISHMENTS

A report of the Director of Social Services was submitted summarising issues raised at members' visits to Social Services residential establishments in 2003/04, and seeking further nominations for 2004/05.

RESOLVED

- (1) The information contained in the report submitted be noted and the protocol referred to therein endorsed.
- (2) That the following members be appointed to participate in the Social Services Rota Visits for the year 2004/05.
Councillors Debney and Tyler, Blood and Southall, Ms Pearce and Harley.

17 HIGHWAYS MINOR WORKS PROGRAMME 2004/05

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the proposed programmes of work for Local Safety Schemes, Pedestrian Crossings and Safer Routes to School within the Brierley Hill Area for the 2004/2005 financial year.

Concerns were raised over the length of time taken over the implementation of these schemes, with specific regard to a request for a crossing in Rangeways Road, made three years previously. It was confirmed that implementation of schemes could be a lengthy process where public consultation had to take place.

The inclusion of crossing facilities for School Crossing Patrol at Saint Mary's Primary School in the Safer Routes to School Programme was welcomed.

RESOLVED

That the Committee support the propose Local Safety Schemes, Pedestrian Crossings and Safer Routes to School initiatives outlined in Appendices A, B, and C respectively as shown on the plans submitted.

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LIVEABILITY FUND AWARD

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the Council's two year Liveability Project to improve parks and open spaces within the Borough.

It was reported that Dudley MBC had been awarded £3.4m by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister with the overall objective within Dudley to improve, protect and enhance strategic parks and open spaces. The sites within the area of the Brierley Hill Area Committee that were included in the project comprised the Fens Pool LNR, King George V Park Wordsley, King George VI Kingswinford and Wall Heath Parks.

Concerns were raised that Marsh Park had not been included and on the future of staff recruited to create the Local Involvement Team. It was confirmed that the sites listed had a constituted Friends Group and only parks and green spaces with such groups would be considered in the project. Staff involved with the Local Involvement Team would only be employed on fixed term contracts, which would be terminated at the completion of the project.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report be noted and the award of the funding welcomed.

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ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

- (1) Councillor Mrs Wilson raised the issue of the inaccurate timing of the clock in the Moor Centre, Brierley Hill. Several complaints had been received from local residents about the clock not working and requests to have it restored to full working order had been received. Councillor Mrs Wilson also commented on the fact that the Civic Hall clock, under the jurisdiction of the Police, also was not working consistently and asked that this also be looked into.

The Town Centre Manager indicated that the clock was in private ownership and confirmed that he would pass on the concerns raised to the owners. He also agreed to request the Police to look at adjusting the clock on the Civic Hall. He confirmed that he would respond in writing to Councillor Mrs Wilson with regard to action taken on these issues.

- (2) Councillor Mrs Harris raised concerns over the current situation with regard to Hawbush Urban Farm and its impending closure. It was requested that urgent measures be taken to keep the farm open.

It was agreed that the matter be raised as a matter of urgency with the Lead Member for Culture and Recreation in consultation with the Director of the Urban Environment with a view to the situation being reviewed and possible solutions considered, with the continuance of Hawbush Urban Farm, with a report back being made to the next meeting of the committee

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

That the remaining schedule and dates of meetings for the ensuing municipal year be noted, and that it also be noted that venues for some meetings have yet to be determined.

Tuesday, 14th September, 2004, at Brierley Hill Civic Hall
Tuesday, 9th November, 2004 at Brockmoor Primary School
Thursday, 3rd February, 2005 *
Tuesday, 5th April, 2005 *

* At venues to be advised

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN