

## STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE

Monday, 29th March, 2004, at Hob Green Primary School

### PRESENT:-

Councillor Jones (Chair)  
Councillor Adams (Vice Chair)  
Councillors Bramall, Mrs Collins, Mrs Cowell, Kettle, Mrs Martin, Musk, Ms Partridge, Sheppard and Zarab; Mr G Downing and Ms P Shepherd, together with Mr J Polychronakis (Director of Law and Property and Area Liaison Officer), Mrs S Holmyard, Mr P Van Geersdaele, Ms L Mansell and Mr M Waddams (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Ms M Tebbett (Directorate of Housing), Mr J Croft (Directorate of Finance), Mrs A Mason (Chief Executive's) and Mrs J Rees (Directorate of Law and Property).

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Approximately 60 members of the public were in attendance at the meeting.

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### MINUTES

#### RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th February, 2004, be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the addition of the following words at the end of resolution (2)(a) of Minute number 85:-

"and the installation of repeater lights at the said junction".

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### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bramall declared a Personal Interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in Agenda Item No 7(a) Application to Purchase Land at 99/99A The Broadway, Norton, in view of his son visiting neighbouring properties.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Crumpton, Knowles and Powell and Mr D Coggan.

RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

The following petitions were submitted by the persons indicated and referred to the officers shown for attention:

- (a) From Mr P Rogers on behalf of local residents requesting road signage and road marking improvements at the crossroads of Shenstone Avenue and Westwood Avenue, Norton – referred to the Director of the Urban Environment.
- (b) From Councillor Musk on behalf of local residents, requesting a prohibition of heavy goods vehicles in Vicarage Road, Amblecote (although the wording of the petition requested a 7.5 tonne restriction) – referred to the Director of the Urban Environment.
- (c) From Councillor Ms Partridge on behalf of local residents, requesting that the Chief Executive ensure tenancies are given on condition that properties are occupied and not used as postal addresses or for storing furniture – referred to the Chief Executive with a copy to the Director of Housing.

YOUTH ISSUES

No youth issues were reported to the meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

Before reading questions from the public the Area Liaison Officer stated that any questions which were not addressed at the meeting would receive a written response from the appropriate Officer.

Questions and answers were then given as follows:-

In response to a request by a member of the public for an update on the situation regarding the Regeneration Division's investigations into possible sources of external funding for the restoration of the Stevens Park Gates, the Assistant Director of the Urban Environment advised that she was aware that some funding had been obtained from the Liveability Project. She undertook to further investigate how far this matter had progressed and send a written response to the questioner and submit a progress report to a future meeting of the Committee.

- (2) In response to a request by a member of the public for a progress report on what had been achieved by the introduction of the red tarmac and painted white chevrons on the A4936 Grange Lane, the Area Liaison Officer reminded the Committee that this would be reviewed in a report to the Committee in September 2004 and it was agreed that such report would also deal with options for reducing the speed limit at Grange Lane.
- (3) In response to a comment by a member of the public as to whether the Council was aware of the Government's scheme to provide funding to close eyesore alleys and clean up communities blighted by anti-social behaviour, the Chair advised that the Council were aware of this scheme.
- (4) In response to a query by a member of the public as to whether any funding had been claimed from the Groundwork Project, a representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment advised that no funding had been claimed as yet, but that investigations had been carried out into the viability of making applications in the future.
- (5) In response to a request by a member of the public for improvements to local parks, but especially Wollescote Park, the lack of male toilet facilities and the poor quality of the female toilet facilities in Wollescote Park, the Chair responded that he was scheduled to meet with the Assistant Director of the Urban Environment to discuss all the issues related to Wollescote Park.
- (6) In response to a request by a member of the public for fencing to be erected on the perimeter of the Wollescote Park in order to deter criminal activities, the Chair advised that, as previously stated, he was meeting with the Assistant Director of the Urban Environment and members of the Friends of the Park Group later in the week to discuss all aspects of concerns regarding the Wollescote Park.
- The Chair of the Friends of Mary Stevens Park offered support for the Friends of Wollescote Park Group.
- (7) In response to a member of the public's concerns relating to parking problems and the problems of access for emergency services on Central Avenue, Wollescote, a representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment undertook to speak with the questioner outside of the meeting to arrange a site visit, further investigations and a written response to be sent to the questioner.

- (8) In response to concerns expressed by a member of the public regarding the newly implemented one way system at the Stourbridge Crematorium, and alleged lack of consultation regarding the changes, the Head of Bereavement Services advised that the system had been implemented following complaints and concerns regarding congestion and parking problems at the crematorium, in an attempt to resolve these problems.
- (9) In response to a member of the public's comments regarding the recently reported decriminalisation of parking issues and whether Dudley Council intended to join with Sandwell Council on this issue, the Area Liaison Officer advised that Dudley Council had approved decriminalisation of parking in principle, but further detailed work was required before any decision was taken.
- (10) In response to concerns by members of the public in respect of congestion and parking problems at the junction of Heath Farm Lane and Witton Street, the Assistant Director of the Urban Environment undertook to investigate and send a written response to the questioner.
- (11) In response to concerns expressed by a member of the public relating to the recently introduced increase of fares by Centro, a representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment undertook to bring these concerns to the attention of Centro and arrange for a written response to be sent to the questioner.
- (12) Comments by a member of the public regarding the pollarding of trees were deferred to agenda item no. 11.

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APPLICATIONS IN RESPECT OF LAND AND PROPERTY OWNED BY THE COUNCIL

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

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Lead Member for Housing be advised to approve the sale of the land adjacent to 99/99A The Broadway, Norton, as marked hatched on the plan attached to the report submitted, subject to the existing rights of other occupiers of the block; the fire escape being unhindered, and on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.

- (2) That the Lead Member for Housing be advised to approve the release of the covenant to allow a second property to be built on the land at 56 Lady Grey's Walk, Wollaston, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted, on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
- (3) That the Lead Member for Housing be advised to declare the former garage site at Norfolk Road, Wollaston, as shown hatched on the plan attached to the report submitted, surplus to requirements and added to the Land Disposals Programme to be sold for the best price reasonably obtainable, on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
- (4) That, arising from consideration of the report submitted and comments made relating to the application to lease the land at Shepherds Brook Road, Lye, as marked on the plan attached to the report submitted:-
- (i) The contents of the report be noted.
  - (ii) The Director of the Urban Environment be requested to:
    - (a) hold further discussions with the Celtic Football Club and local residents.
    - (b) Investigate a query by a member of the public as to why the land off Shepherds Brook Road, Lye, was considered to be different from the former refuse site at Junction Road, Stourbridge.
    - (c) Report back to a future meeting of the Committee.
- (5) That the Lead Member for Housing be advised to approve the application to purchase the freehold title of St. Andrew's Scout Headquarters, off Queensway, Wollescote, as marked hatched on the plan attached to the report submitted, on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.

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CHANGE IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 13(c) it was

RESOLVED

That agenda item no. 11 (Tree Management within Park Road, Stourbridge) be dealt with as the next agenda item.

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TREE MANAGEMENT WITHIN PARK ROAD, STOURBRIDGE

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on concerns regarding the management of trees within Park Road, Stourbridge.

RESOLVED

- (1) That, arising from consideration given to this matter, the Lead Member for the Environment be advised of the Committee's support for the pollarding of trees within Park Road, as necessary.
- (2) That the decision of the Select Committee on the Environment to scrutinise the Tree Management Policy of the Council be supported.

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CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on two applications for funding from the Capital Budget.

The Area Liaison Officer also advised of a late joint application by the Director of the Urban Environment and the Friends of Wollescote Park for £6,050 towards the cost of providing low level fencing around the bowling green at Wollescote Park, to prevent vandalism.

Upon consideration of the report and comments made, it was

RESOLVED

- (1) That the application by The What? Centre for £355 for the cost of display boards be approved.

- (2) That the request by St Peter's Pre-School for £1,086 for the cost of a climbing frame be refused on the grounds that:-
- (a) It was a retrospective application.
  - (b) At the time when the application was received it appeared that the school had sufficient funds to cover such a purchase.
  - (c) It was considered that to grant a retrospective application would be setting an undesirable precedent for the future.
- (3) That the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Chair, be authorised to consider and determine the late application received in respect of Wollescote Park.

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ACTION PLAN FOR THE CHILTERN RAILWAYS TRAIN STABLING FACILITY AT STOURBRIDGE JUNCTION

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the current situation regarding the control of noise from the Chiltern Railways Train Stabling Facility used for the overnight parking and cleaning of trains following the remedial action implemented in response to numerous complaints expressed earlier in the year by local residents.

Mrs Holmyard advised that following the remedial work which had been implemented there was no need for further monitoring at the present time.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report submitted be noted.

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THE BROADWAY, NORTON, STOURBRIDGE: PROPOSALS FOR TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted seeking support for the introduction of Traffic Regulation Orders on the Broadway, Norton. Upon consideration of this matter it was:-

RESOLVED

That the Lead Member for Transportation be advised of the Committee's support in principle for the introduction of the Traffic Regulation Orders, near Gigmill School, Norton, subject to the Directorate of the Urban Environment having further discussions with Ward Members before any decision is made.

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101                    PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on the new warding pattern for the Stourbridge Area, and resulting new Polling Stations.

In response to comments made by members of the Committee regarding certain venues used as polling stations being difficult for disabled access, the Area Liaison Officer urged Ward Members to advise the Elections Office of any locations in their Ward which they considered would be suitable as polling stations.

RESOLVED

The contents of the report submitted be noted.

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102                    RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on written responses made to questions asked at previous meetings.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report be noted.

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103                    ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillor Sheppard raised the issue of concerns regarding anti-social behaviour and acts of arson and vandalism by young people in and around Mary Stevens Park and the vandalism of a telephone box in High Park Road.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Sheppard's comments be noted.

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104                    DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was reported that the dates and venues of future meetings of the Committee would be advised when determined in the next municipal year.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm.

CHAIR

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