

## HALESOWEN AREA COMMITTEE

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2007, at 6.30 p.m.  
at Earls High School, Furnace Lane, Halesowen

### PRESENT

Councillor Jackson (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs Faulkner (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Body, Burston, Mrs Dunn, Hill, James, Ms Nicholls, Ms Partridge, Mrs Shakespeare, Taylor, K Turner, Mrs Turner and Woodall.

### Officers

Area Liaison Officer, Assistant Director for Resources, Head of Policy (Executive and Support), Group Engineer (Transportation), Principal Solicitor (Mr M Farooq), Senior Conservation Officer, Mrs M Johal and Mr P Furidze (Directorate of Law and Property)

### Also in Attendance

Mr H Murray – Vale Retail  
Inspector Hobson – West Midlands Police

Approximately 20 members of the public were in attendance.

### 24 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Crumpton.

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### 25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Burston declared a personal interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of Agenda Item No 14 (Halesowen Town Centre Development) regarding reference to the Halesowen Bus Station in view of him being employed by CENTRO.

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### 26 MINUTES

A Member commented that it had been suggested that the Chairman of the Committee should be rotated on a bi-annual basis but that this information had not been recorded in the minutes. In response the Chairman stated that matters that were agreed were recorded but that general comments would not usually be recorded.

### RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2007, be approved as a correct record and signed.

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## YOUTH ISSUES

A representative from Youth 4em, which was a community based group, briefly reported on activities undertaken by young people in recent months. She indicated that a six-week summer scheme had operated at Huntingtree Park and pointed out that it had been very successful and well attended. However, she expressed concern that there were no toilet facilities at the park and queried whether the community centre facilities could be used.

A Member supported the comments made and complimented the youth service for the activities and programme that had been arranged at Huntingtree park during the summer months and indicated that they needed a base to work from such as the community centre. He further reported that the scheme had contributed to significantly fewer complaints being made against the youths. Young people had also been voluntarily active and had raised funds in the region of £9,000 to help fund the activities during the summer period. Young people had attended from all over Halesowen and other Boroughs and it was requested that £5,000 be allocated from the delegated capital budget with a view to them obtaining match funding to enable them to provide the same service next summer.

The Area Liaison Officer indicated that he would investigate the possibility of using the community centre but indicated that issues such as the existing lease would need to be considered and also pointed out that funding could only be allocated for capital type items.

The Deputy Mayor thanked the youths for inviting him to open their fun day and congratulated them on their work.

### RESOLVED

- (1) That the verbal report regarding youth issues be noted.
  - (2) That the Area Liaison Officer be requested to investigate the possibility of young people using the community centre facilities at Huntingtree Park and the possibility of allocating funds from the delegated capital budget for young people to provide activities next summer.
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## POLICE ISSUES

Inspector Hobson was in attendance and also remarked on his support of the work of the Youth Forum and pointed out that partnership working was a key factor that helped in diverting criminal activity. He reported that during the summer months the level of crime in Halesowen had plummeted and indicated that this had also been due to partnership working and commitment. He referred to the Partners and Communities Together (PACT ) meetings and commented that to enable the meetings to continue to be successful a wider range of people needed to be encouraged to attend to portray their views and concerns.

The Cabinet Member for Environment commented that the PACT meetings in her area were very successful. However, she indicated that people were still complaining about the speeding traffic on Mucklow Hill and stated that there had been further accidents in that area and requested that the police be more active in enforcement.

The Vice-Chairman commented that she was pleased with the attention given by the police to anti social behaviour in Halesowen North but expressed concern that there was no regard given to anti social behaviour that occurred after 11 pm and during the early hours of the morning. She further commented that some people were not aware of the PACT meetings and she suggested that they be advertised in the free newspapers and also on the agenda for this meeting.

A Member commended the police and Police Community Support Officers for their work. He thanked officers for installing the speed traps on Dunstall, Rosemary and Lansdowne Roads but indicated that they were also required on Huntingtree Road as it was a single carriageway, had a school on it and that it was a very dangerous road. Another Member asked that Manor Abbey Road also be included for consideration regarding any speed prevention measures.

In responding to the comments made Inspector Hobson stated that PACT meetings frequently discussed speeding and traffic and that the police were active in enforcing measures. However, he indicated that there was an overall resourcing issue and pointed out that resources were directed according to their priorities. In referring to anti social behaviour occurring late at night and during the early hours of the morning he stated that currently the Neighbourhood Team had been specifically allocated to a certain location and upon completion, resources would be allocated elsewhere, such as tackling anti social behaviour issues. He agreed with comments made regarding advertising the PACT meetings.

### RESOLVED

- (1) That the verbal report regarding police issues be noted.

- (2) That the PACT meetings be advertised on future agendas of the Committee.
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PUBLIC FORUM

- (a) The Area Liaison Officer reported that a member of the public had submitted a complaint prior to the meeting about the introduction of loud music in the thoroughfare of Halesowen precinct and consequently she stated that she would no longer be visiting the shops in the centre.

The Area Liaison Officer indicated that the matter had been referred to the Cornbow Centre Manager for consideration.

- (b) A complaint was made about the parking in Whittingham Road and it was commented that the matter was particularly worse at weekends. People parked on both sides of the road and ignored double yellow lines and it was queried whether the college could be approached with a view to opening their car park at weekends.

The Area Liaison Officer indicated that parking on double yellow lines was an issue for enforcement by the Police. He undertook to write to the College with a view to them opening the car park for public use at weekends.

- (c) It was queried when plastics and cardboard recycling would commence in the Borough.

In responding the Cabinet Member for the Environment stated that currently domestic waste was recycled by incinerating into energy and then supplying electricity through the National Grid to thousands of properties. She indicated that there was a lot of work involved in recycling plastics and it would be an inefficient allocation of resources. She explained that only certain plastics could be recycled but then they would need to be segregated and then taken to a plastics recycling site and then transported to the North, as there was not a local plastics recycling centre.

The Vice-Chairman indicated that she had received a complaint that Yellow Pages could not be recycled. A member of the public also stated that the collections service had refused to take Thomson and British Telecom directories and had left them behind.

In responding the Cabinet Member for the Environment confirmed that Yellow Pages could not be recycled as the dye in the book could contaminate the recycling process. Regarding the other directories she indicated that they should be collected and undertook to investigate the matter.

- (d) A member of the public commented that a survey had been undertaken on various roads including Rosemary, Hollybank and Brookwillow Roads to ascertain parking and speeding problems and to seek the views of residents. He reported on the findings of the survey and indicated that residents wanted double yellow lines on the corners of roads, as it would assist the Police Community Support Officers with enforcement. It was also requested that double yellow lines be placed from Rosemary Road to Hagley Road as people were parking on both sides of the road. Concern was also expressed that there was a short distance when turning off the 40 mph road into a 30 mph road and it was suggested that markings be placed to remind people of the limit.

A Member supported the comments made and further requested that high profile markings be placed on the entrance from Hagley Road to Rosemary Road to deter people from "cutting off". It was suggested that a meeting should be arranged on site.

The Area Liaison Officer undertook to refer the matter to the appropriate Officer.

- (e) A member of the public referred to eco-friendly properties that had recently been built and indicated that a footpath from Old Hawne Lane to Francis Court was supposed to have been put in place by Accord Housing as part of the development. However, Accord Housing had stated that the Council had refused the appropriate permission for the footpath and the reason for this was queried. He also complained about the Yeltz Bar on Old Hawne Road and that people were throwing litter over the wall and also that parts of the concrete had been taken off the fence.

The Area Liaison Officer undertook to investigate the matter.

- (a) Councillor K Turner
- (i) Referred to the detrunking of the A456 and the problems with the Grange Roundabout but indicated that detrunking should be endorsed. However, consideration should also be given to improving and clearly identifying crossings and to make people aware that there were small children crossing.

Other Members stated that they were not opposed to the detrunking but indicated that the Highway Agency should not be allowed to pass on the problem with the Grange Roundabout and should offer adequate funding to improve the situation.

The Group Engineer (Transportation) stated that discussions were nearing completion with the Highway Agency and indicated that they were keen to transfer control. He concurred with the comments made about the crossings and assured Members that when the Council took control of the road, a review would be undertaken to improve safety.

(ii) Commented that the area adjacent to the Cradley Town Football Club should be utilised for community purposes.

(b) Councillor Ms Partridge

(i) Referred to the Cradley Speedway and stated that a site had been identified and suggested that a special public meeting should be arranged to discuss the issue.

The Area Liaison Officer indicated that a planning application had not as yet been submitted but assured the meeting that if, and when an application was made, it would be submitted to the Committee for comment.

(ii) Indicated that the permit for Fish 4 Dogs had been issued and stated that there were problems with the abatement notice.

In responding the Cabinet Member for the Environment reported that action was currently being taken and further stated that following a complaint regarding smell, the relevant Officer had taken action straight away. She assured Members that the situation was being closely monitored.

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RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED AT THE MEETING HELD ON  
3<sup>RD</sup> JULY 2007

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted informing the Committee of the written responses made to questions asked at the previous meeting.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report now submitted, be noted.

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DELEGATED CAPITAL BUDGET

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on requests for funding from the Delegated Capital Budget together with a supplementary report that was circulated at the meeting.

Arising from the presentation of the reports a Member suggested that the Eritrean Tigre Welfare Association be invited to a future meeting of the Committee with a view to giving a presentation to increase awareness of their work.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That approval be given to a grant of £1077 to the Lutley Table Tennis Club for the purchase of three replacement table tennis tables, subject to the tables being transferred to the Council for use in other leisure facilities in Halesowen, should the club cease to function.
- (2) That approval be given to a grant of £900 to West Midlands Police/Youth 4em for the provision of sports equipment for use in youth diversion activities.
- (3) That approval be given to a grant of £2000 to the Eritrean Tigre Welfare Association for the provision of three desk top computers subject to assurances they would be safely and securely stored when not in use and that the Association be invited to a future meeting of the Committee with a view to giving a presentation on their work.
- (4) That approval be given to a grant of £5000 to the 1<sup>st</sup> Halesowen Boys Brigade towards the cost of a new mini bus, subject to the Brigade raising the remaining balance.
- (5) That approval be given to £5000 being earmarked as specific funding towards the cost of Heritage Boards in all wards in the Area Committee boundary and that the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Chairman and Councillor Body, be authorised to approve the funding under delegated powers.
- (6) That approval be given to an allocation of £5,000 to the Halesowen Chamber of Trade for the purchase of additional Christmas lights for Halesowen Town Centre.

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## TRANSFORMING SECONDARY EDUCATION

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted on the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) preparation for the next group of local authorities to be included in the national Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

The Assistant Director for Resources presented the report and in doing so indicated that Dudley would be included in Wave 7 which meant that construction could start around the year 2010 and that the first schools would open around 2012. He emphasised that the programme was about transformation and indicated that the first challenge was to get onto the programme and to persuade the DCSF that Dudley were ready, willing and able.

The Assistant Director for Resources informed Members that the DCSF were expected to announce Wave 7 in the Autumn of 2008 and that Dudley had to have a draft strategy setting out intentions to achieve against key policy areas, such as collaboration between schools, 14-19 provision and Information and Community Technology (ICT). He reported that upon Dudley being accepted into the programme the relevant consultation processes would take place including consultation with children and young people, parents and the community.

### RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and appendices to the report, submitted on Transforming Secondary Education be noted and that the emerging strategy for Transforming Secondary Education be endorsed.

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## LYE AND WOLLESCOTE CEMETERY CHAPEL – RESULTS OF THE OPTIONS APPRAISAL AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on what had been agreed to date by Stourbridge Area Committee in respect of the future of Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel.

During the course of the presentation the Senior Conservation Officer informed the meeting that a Heritage open weekend was being held between 10am – 4pm on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September 2007 and also indicated that Stourbridge Area Committee had approved the report at their recent meeting.

### RESOLVED

- (1) That the recommendation of the Stourbridge Area Committee, requesting that the Director of the Urban Environment approaches the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust to request that they apply to the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) for a Project Organiser, Administration, Business Planning and Development Grant for Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel with a view to submitting an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, in due course, be noted.
- (2) That further update reports on the project be submitted to the Committee.

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PROPOSED WAITING AND LOADING RESTRICTION, HAGLEY ROAD AND WASSELL ROAD, HALESOWEN

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the implementation of the waiting and loading restrictions in Hagley Road, Wassell Road, Cookley Close and Ashfield Grove Halesowen.

In presenting the report the Group Engineer (Transportation) reported on an amendment to Appendix B attached to the report and indicated that it should read loading “bay” and not “ban” as stated. A Member also pointed out that an amendment to the report should be made to reflect Wassell Road and not Grove as stated.

Arising from the presentation of the report, the Cabinet Member for the Environment commented that there were a number of smaller shops on the corner of Wassell Road and queried whether they had been consulted and what impact it would have on them as local traders. In responding the Group Engineer (Transportation) indicated that the site was a problematic area and that there was no alternative method. With regard to consultation he pointed out that it had been done via notices being displayed, which had been in the same manner as others.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet Member for Transportation be recommended to introduce the Borough of Dudley (Hagley Road and Wassell Road, Halesowen (Restriction of Waiting and Loading) Order 2006, as amended and shown on plan TMD/CP/453B attached to the report.

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HALESOWEN TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on progress made with regard to physical developments taking place within Halesowen Town Centre.

A Member commented on the favourable feedback that had been received on the temporary one-way system.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report, and presentation on the progress and development in Halesowen Town Centre, be noted.
- (2) That, subject to using the revised route as detailed in paragraph 5 of the report, the Cabinet Member for Transportation be recommended to approve for a trial period the use of a free Shuttle Bus Service and that some of the Section 106 monies be used to contribute to the trial.

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DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the dates and venues of future meetings of the Committee be noted as follows:-

14<sup>th</sup> November, 2007 – Olive Hill Primary School  
24<sup>th</sup> January, 2008 – Colley Lane Primary School  
12<sup>th</sup> March, 2008 – Lutley Community Centre

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SELECT COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

As a way of giving additional publicity to meetings of the Council's Select Committees, details of Select Committee meetings had been included on the agendas of meetings of Area Committees.

The information given in respect of publicity for future meetings of Select Committees was noted.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN