

## **STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE**

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2006 at 7 pm  
at Hob Green Primary School, Stourbridge

### **PRESENT:-**

Councillor Adams (Chairman)  
Councillors Attwood, Banks, Mrs Collins, Donegan, Jones, Kettle, Knowles,  
Lowe, Mrs Martin, Rogers, A Turner, Mrs Walker and C Wilson and Mr G  
Downing

### **OFFICERS:-**

Director of Law and Property (as Area Liaison Officer), Assistant Director,  
Development and Environmental Protection, Section Engineer, Town Centre  
Manager, Regeneration Project Manager, Project Development Officer,  
Engineer, (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Assistant Director - Early  
Years (Children's Services) Group Accountant (Directorate of Finance, ICT  
and Procurement) and Mrs J Rees (Directorate of Law and Property)

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:-**

Councillor Cotterill, Inspector P Boardman and Police Constable K  
Humphreys, representing West Midlands Police, together with approximately  
45 members of the public.

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### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Cowell  
and Miss R Hill.

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### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Lowe declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item 7a  
(Request to declare land at Clinic Drive, Lye surplus to requirements), in  
view of his being a Unison Regional Officer with some members of the union  
being employed by Dudley Primary Care Trust.

Mr Polychronakis declared a prejudicial interest in respect of a question  
raised within Agenda Item 6 (Public Forum – question relating to Atlantic  
House) in view of his membership of The Warehouse (Dudley Drugs  
Project). He withdrew from the meeting whilst this issue was considered.

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### **MINUTES**

## RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2006, and the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2006 be approved as correct records and signed.

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### 47 RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

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

- (1) Councillor Lowe, on behalf of residents of Talbot Street, Lye, requesting car parking facilities on land between their houses. The petition was referred to the Director of the Urban Environment for consideration and attention.
  - (2) A member of the public, on behalf of local residents of Quarry Bank, requesting a public consultation meeting or closed meeting with relevant officers of the Council, Ward Councillors and local residents regarding the objections raised to proposals for a drug rehabilitation centre in Lye. The petition was referred to the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Director of the Urban Environment for consideration and attention.
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### 48 YOUTH ISSUES

There were no youth issues to be discussed at this meeting.

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### 49 PUBLIC FORUM SESSION

Before reading questions 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) A member of the public, unable to attend the meeting, wrote expressing appreciation for the dropped kerbs that had been installed in the Stourbridge area, together with appreciation for the requested church ramp. He requested that further dropped kerbs be installed throughout the Stourbridge and Norton area, particularly in the vicinity of Nuthatch Close, Charles Road and Wollaston High Street. He also requested that pavements in the Stourbridge area be made smooth.

The member of the public also expressed concern at the number of cars parked illegally half on and half off the pavements in the Worcester Street area and on the Broadway.

The Senior Engineer Traffic advised that he and other staff from the Traffic and Road Safety Team had met with the questioner on a number of occasions and had undertaken site visits. When new funding could be found relating to dropped kerbs, it may then be possible to give further consideration to the requests for further dropped kerbs within the annual programme.

- (2) A trader of Stourbridge had requested that a question, which he had previously raised and to which he had received a written response, be raised in the public forum of the meeting, because reference to his question had been omitted from two previous meetings, due to an oversight. The question was whether three traders in Court Street, Stourbridge should have been shown plans relating to the new crossing on the Ring Road before work on the Ring Road had commenced.

The Senior Engineer Traffic advised that as well as sending a written response to the questioner in March 2006, both he and the Stourbridge Town Centre Manager had met and discussed the issues with the Trader in question. In an effort to resolve the Traders' concerns, new signage would be installed when work on the crossing was complete, to assist shoppers to find Court Street and the ramp design in that area had been amended to allow easier access to the shops in Court Street.

- (3) A member of the public asked whether the Council would refurbish the other underpasses in the Stourbridge town, and if so when. He also asked who was responsible for cleaning and maintaining the Ryemarket toilets.

In response, the Senior Engineer Traffic advised that, subject to available funding, consideration could be given to the refurbishment of the other underpasses in Stourbridge town in future years. He undertook to investigate who was responsible for the maintaining and cleaning of the Ryemarket toilets and send a written response to the questioner.

A member of the Committee commented that he understood the developers of the Canalside development had given an undertaking when their planning application had been approved, to improve the nearby underpass.

- (4) A member of the public questioned whether Stourbridge Councillors would be supporting the proposed 2008 Dudley Community Olympics and whether they were aware of the need for a replacement track at the Dell Stadium which was used by the Dudley and Stourbridge Harriers, at roughly the same time as the proposed event. She also commented on the need for adequate security measures on the site.

The member of the public also commented on the fact that she considered the track to be falling apart and on the need for the removal of dangerous tree roots from the track. She believed the certificate awarded to the Stadium was a restrictive certificate which would prevent children taking part in the events of the 2008 Community Olympics.

In replying, the Assistant Director Environmental Protection advised that the track had been independently inspected and had received a new certificate in May 2006, following the inspection, and the inspection had indicated that the surface was in good condition. The condition of the track was kept under regular review and should a new track be required in the future, this would be considered. She undertook to refer the comments made to the Head of Leisure Services, who would send a written response to the questioner.

- (5) A member of the public requested that action be taken to prevent commuters parking outside their homes in Brook Road, Oldswinford, or failing this, for residential parking permits to be issued to residents. In response, the Senior Engineer Traffic advised that it was not possible for the Council to take action against motorists parking on the road. For health and safety reasons the existing zig zag lines were required and maybe even needed extending and that there were no plans to make any changes to parking restrictions at the present time.
- (6) Comments from a member of the public relating to Agenda Item No. 12 (Osmaston Road, Wittington Road, Stanley Road, Norton, Stourbridge - Proposed Introductions of Waiting Order) were deferred for consideration under that agenda item.
- (7) The Assistant Director Environmental Protection introduced a question from a member of the public on the need to consult with the people of Quarry Bank regarding a proposed drug rehabilitation centre.

A further member of the public commented, in support of the petition referred to earlier in the meeting, in respect of Atlantic House, and requested that a meeting be held with Officers of the Council and local residents of Quarry Bank, to discuss the proposal for a drug rehabilitation centre at Atlantic House, Dudley Road, Lye.

Councillor Cotterill, a Ward Councillor for Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood, commented on the strong feelings of concern that had been expressed at a public meeting on the previous Friday in his Ward. Some local residents were fearful of the proposal, whilst others were willing to discuss the issue with officers responsible for the project. He supported the suggestion of members of the public for a closed meeting to include appropriate Officers of the Council, the six Ward Councillors of Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood and Lye and Wollescote and a representative group of local residents. Councillor Cotterill advised that the Quarry Bank Community Centre would be available to hold such a meeting.

In response to the comments made, the Assistant Director of Environmental Protection undertook to liaise with her colleague in the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services regarding the possibility of convening a closed meeting as indicated above.

- (8) A member of the public questioned the reasons for the re-routing of lorries along Kirkstone Way when delivering to a supermarket on the Withymoor Estate. Other residents queried the need for lower weight restrictions on the roads and complained that delivery lorries arrived in the early hours of the morning and parked close to the residential area. The Senior Engineer Traffic advised that the route had been approved following consultation with local residents. A suggestion was made that a one way route for delivery lorries could be introduced, entering via Kirkstone Way and leaving by Sandringham Road. The Senior Engineer Traffic undertook to investigate this suggestion.
- (9) A member of the public requested information on action to be taken to alleviate parking problems in close proximity to Ham Dingle School. The Senior Engineer Traffic advised that ongoing work was taking place to try to alleviate the parking, which was a problem at many schools throughout the Borough. There was a need to look at alternative ways of getting children to school, including the walking bus schemes.

The Chairman advised that at present parking enforcement was the responsibility of the Police, but that the Council planned to take over this function. He and other Members of the Committee reported on initiatives such as the walking bus to enable parents to get their children to school safely.

Some Members of the Committee commented on the need to ensure adequate parking for shoppers in Lye town, following the disposal of the land indicated within the appendices of the report submitted.

Some members of the Committee requested that the trees, as indicated in Appendix C of the report submitted, be retained.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the Cabinet Member for Transportation be advised to declare the land at Clinic Drive, Lye, as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, surplus to requirements for disposal on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member for Personnel, Legal and Property and the Cabinet Member for Transportation be advise to declare the land at The Dock, Lye, as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, surplus to requirements for disposal on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
- (3) That the Cabinet Member for Transportation be advised to declare the land between Dudley Road, Lye By-pass and Clinic Drive, Lye, as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, surplus to requirements for disposal on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.

#### LYE DISTRICT CENTRE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the progress of Lye District Centre Action Plan. The Project Development Officer highlighted some of the regeneration work being carried out in the Lye District at the present time, details of which were set out in the Appendix attached to the report submitted.

Copies of the Lye Action Plan were circulated for information during the meeting

Councillor Donegan expressed gratitude to the officers who had undertaken considerable work in the Lye area.

Councillor Lowe commented on the possible need for future updates on the Lye District Action Plan to be submitted to Halesowen Area Committee, since parts of Lye came under Halesowen Area Committee, following the changes in Ward Boundaries.

In response to a query from a member of the public as to whether there had been a need for CCTV cameras at Lye Railway station, the Regeneration Project Manager advised that the cameras had been installed by CENTRO and not the Council.

#### RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and the Appendix to the report on the progress of the Lye District Action Plan, be noted.

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#### 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 that he had received a request from the Friends of Norton Covert for an extension to the time allowed to claim the grant awarded to the group in June 2006, as they had been unable to claim the grant due to a delay in completion of the project.

In respect to the application by the Wollescote St Andrew's Scout Group he advised that they had also applied to the Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation Trusts for funding towards the project.

Some Members of the Committee commented on the fact that whilst the application by Black Country Boating Festivals Limited for the purchase of containers for storage and provision of concrete bases for the containers, an alarm system for the containers, replacement tables and chairs, was considered a worthwhile cause on account of the amount of charity work carried out by the Company, the activities of the group also took place in areas covered by Brierley Hill and Central Dudley. It was therefore felt that the Area Committees for these areas should also be asked to consider making a contribution to the work of the Company.

In support of their application, a representative of the Black Country and Crystal Bowls Club advised that although the Club was willing to contribute towards the water system, the park belonged to the Council and he believed that the water should be provided by the Council.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the Friends of Norton Covert Group be granted an extension to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007 for claiming their grant.
- (2) That the Black Country Boating Festivals Limited be allocated one third of the amount requested, that is £1667, and that the Company be advised to apply to the Brierley Hill and Central Dudley Area Committees for a contribution towards the project.

- (3) That the sums referred to below be allocated to the following organisations for the purposes indicated, subject to any necessary confirmation by the applicants to the Area Liaison Officer that the balance of the required funding had been secured:-

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Oldswinford St Mary's Cricket Club	Cost of realigning the net practice areas with new bases, new side and overhead netting, new matting surfaces, a new motor mower and security rear doors for the pavilion	£5000
Black Country Bowls Club	Purchase and installation of an automatic water irrigation system for the bowling green in Stevens Park	£5000
Wollescote St Andrew's Scout Group	Refurbishment of the Scout Hut to include reequipping the kitchen and providing a disabled toilet	£5000

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GRANT APPLICATIONS: STEVENS PARK AND RECREATION GROUND FOUNDATION TRUST

A report of the Director of Finance was submitted on an application for funding from the Ernest Stevens Memorial Trust.

RESOLVED

That the sum of £5000 be awarded to the Wollescote St Andrew's Scout Group towards the cost of refurbishing the kitchen, providing toilets with disabled facilities and a storeroom.

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REQUEST TO STOP UP THE PUBLIC FOOTPATH FROM SANDHURST AVENUE TO BUCKBURY CLOSE, PEDMORE

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on a request from the Compton Road Residents Association for the stopping up of a definitive public footpath from Sandhurst Avenue to Buckbury Close, Pedmore on the grounds of crime and anti social behaviour.

During consideration of this matter it was reported that Compton Road Residents Association had recently disbanded.

Members of the Committee also commented that there was a lack of evidence from the police to support a request for closure of the footpath.

A member of the public expressed concern regarding an empty property at the corner of Buckbury Close and Compton Road, which could attract undesirable activities, due to its unkempt state of the garden and lack of occupancy. The Assistant Director Environmental Protection undertook to discuss this issue outside of the meeting so as to obtain further information which if appropriate could lead to statutory action.

#### RESOLVED

That the report be noted and the Cabinet Member for Transportation be advised that no further action should be taken for stopping up of the public footpath from Sandhurst Avenue to Buckbury Close.

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#### OSMASTON ROAD, WHITTINGTON ROAD, STANLEY ROAD NORTON STOURBRIDGE PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF WAITING ORDER

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the proposed introduction of a Prohibition of Waiting Order in Osmaston Road, Whittington Road, Norton Road, Stanley Road and short lengths of adjoining streets.

A question raised under the Public Forum agenda item requested clarification on whether the restrictions referred to in the report would be for 24 hours per day or for restricted hours. The Questioner also queried the exact location of the proposed double yellow. The Senior Engineer Traffic advised that the restriction would be for 24 hours per day and that, if introduced, the scheme would be for double yellow lines on both sides of the road near the junction with Norton Road. Double yellow lines would then continue on one side only as far as Alison Drive.

#### RESOLVED

That the Cabinet Member for Transportation be:

- 1) advised that the Committee support the introduction of the reduced Traffic Regulation Order as shown on drawing nos. TM 2411 and TM 2412A, attached to the report submitted, and
- 2) be recommended to overrule all objections and introduce the scheme as shown on the drawings referred to in resolution 1 above.

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#### RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted in response to a question asked at the meeting of this Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2006.

#### RESOLVED

That the content of the report submitted be noted.

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#### DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates and venues of future meetings of the Committee were noted as follows:-

22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2007 at 7.00 pm at Red Hill School, Junction Road, Stourbridge.

12<sup>th</sup> March, 2007 at 7.00 pm at Hob Green Primary School, Hob Green Road, Stourbridge.

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#### ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

- (a) Councillor Mrs Collins referred to a concern that had been expressed by two residents, that tickets for events at Stourbridge Town Hall could not be purchased in Stourbridge and that credit card details had to be divulged over the telephone.
  - (b) Councillor Knowles acknowledged this problem which would be addressed in the future.
  - (c) Councillors Donegan and Lowe advised of the Lye Winter Fayre from 4.00 pm on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2007.
  - (d) Councillor Lowe queried whether licensed premises had now agreed to fund the employment of taxi marshals in Lower High Street, as discussed at the Special Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2006 and the validity of the Partnerships and Community Together meetings in their present format and frequency.
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#### 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 the dates of future meetings of Select Committees be noted.

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The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN