AGENDA ITEM NO 6

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 7TH JULY, 2005

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROTOCOL FOR AREA COMMITTEES

REPORT OF THE AREA LIAISON OFFICER

1.0 <u>PURPOSE</u>

1.1 To submit the terms of reference and protocol for Area Committees.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 At the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 19th May, 2005, Area Committees were re-appointed with their terms of reference, a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1. The protocol applicable to Area Committees is also attached at Appendix 2.

3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 That the terms of reference and protocol for Area Committees, as attached hereto, be noted.

4.0 FINANCE

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 <u>LAW</u>

- 5.1 Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 enable the Council to appoint Committees and delegate functions to them.
- 5.2 By virtue of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the rules on proportionality regarding the allocation of seats to political groups do not apply to the Area Committees, provided the membership of the Area Committee comprises ward members from the area.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 The establishment of Area Committees enables the Council's decision making processes to reflect local views. Each of the Area Committees is under a duty to consult the public on Council Services, initiatives and plans, incorporating the need to ensure that minority and disadvantaged groups in the community are included within this process.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

7.1 That the proposal set out in Section 3.1 above be approved.

Fric & Lowson

E LOWSON AREA LIAISON OFFICER

Contact Officer: Eric Lowson - 01384 814400 Extn: 4400

ARTICLE 10 - AREA COMMITTEES

APPENDIX 1

10.01 Area Committees

The Council may appoint Area Committees as it sees fit, if it is satisfied that to do so will ensure improved service delivery in the context of best value and more efficient, transparent and accountable decision making.

10.02 Form, composition and function

(a) The Council will appoint the following Area Committees with the terms of reference indicated:-

<u>Name of</u> Committee	<u>Composition</u>	Terms of Reference
Brierley Hill	Members of the Council representing the Brierley Hill, Brockmoor and Pensnett, Kingswinford North and Wall Heath, Kingswinford South and Wordsley wards.	 To determine proposals for the deployment of the delegated capital budget allocation. If appropriate, to develop and introduce a
Central Dudley	Members of the Council representing the Castle and Priory, St. James's, St. Thomas's, Netherton, Woodside and St. Andrew's and Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood wards.	 local community plan for their Area. To consider issues of local relevance raised by the public, local organisations or members of the Area Committee. To be consulted on
North Dudley	Members of the Council representing the Coseley East, Gornal, Sedgley and Upper Gornal and Woodsetton wards.	relevant local service delivery issues in relation to the following: Social Services Housing Education (ie: schools, pre-school and community and lifelong learning) Environmental Health Highways and Transportation Leisure.

<u>Name of</u> Committee	<u>Composition</u>	Terms of Reference	
Halesowen	Members of the Council representing the Belle Vale, Cradley and Foxcote, Halesowen North, Halesowen South and Hayley Green and Cradley South wards.	5. To be consulted on issues regarding Council-owned land within their area, including disposals, acquisitions, wayleaves, easements and restrictive	
Stourbridge	Members of the Council representing the Amblecote, Lye and Wollescote, Norton, Pedmore and Stourbridge East and Wollaston and Stourbridge Town wards.	covenants on land formerly owned by the Council. (With effect from 19th July, 2004, the consultation will be with Ward Members only in the following	

Approval of applications for -

categories:

- Disposal of • Housing Revenue Account land of less than 200 sq. m.
- Permission to • create a domestic vehicular access.
- **Temporary licence** • to occupy for periods of less than 6 months.
- Drainage easement.
- Gas/electricity • easement.
- Licence for the • former utilities companies which have powers to serve a statutory notice.

Name of Committee

Composition

Refusal of applications to:

- Dispose of corner plots within housing estates.
- Dispose of public open space.
- Dispose of other park land/playing fields and allotments.
- Dispose of land adjacent to the highway or footway where the result would be contrary to Planning and Urban Design guidelines.

However, in appropriate circumstances a proposal may also be referred to the Area Committee).

6. To be consulted on any planning application which would have a significant impact on a substantial part of their area.

7. To be consulted on draft supplementary planning guidance, development briefs, designation of conservation areas and the exercise of compulsory purchase powers. Name of Committee Composition

Terms of Reference

8. The administration of local charities for their area, where the Council has been appointed trustee.

9. To make representations about the naming of streets, numbering of houses, public seats, public monuments and statues.

(b) **Delegations**

The Council and the Cabinet will include details of the delegations to Area Committees in Part 3 of this Constitution.

10.03 <u>Conflicts of Interest - Membership of Area Committees and Select</u> <u>Committees</u>

(a) <u>Conflict of interest</u>

If a Select Committee is scrutinising specific decisions or proposals in relation to the business of the Area Committee of which the councillor concerned is a member, then the councillor may not speak or vote at the Select Committee meeting unless a dispensation to do so is given by the Standards Committee.

(b) <u>General policy reviews</u>

Where the Select Committee is reviewing policy generally the member must declare his/her interest before the relevant agenda item is reached, but need not withdraw.

10.04 Area Committees - Access to Information

Area Committees will comply with the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.

Agendas and notices for Area Committee meetings which deal with both functions of the Cabinet and functions which are not the responsibility of the Cabinet will state clearly which items are which.

10.05 Cabinet Members on Area Committees

A Cabinet Member may serve on an Area Committee if otherwise eligible to do so as a councillor.

10.06 Area Committee Chairmen

The Chairmen of Area Committees will meet on a regular basis to discuss the operation and functions of Area Committees.

10.07 <u>Area Committees – Protocol</u>

The protocol for Area Committees in Part 6 of this Constitution shall apply to meetings of Area Committees.

PROTOCOL FOR AREA COMMITTEES

APPENDIX 2

(Consolidates previous protocols and codes and sets out revised arrangements for agenda planning and management for area committee business).

1. Chairman and Vice Chairman

Each area committee will elect its own Chairman and Vice-Chairman at its first meeting in each Municipal Year.

2. <u>Co-option</u>

At the inaugural meeting of an area committee, or at any time thereafter, an area committee may co-opt on to the committee, for a fixed term of one municipal year (or the remainder thereof), up to five persons, without voting rights, having due regard to the extent to which those persons represent interests of importance within the communities served by that area committee. Such co-optees shall not represent the views of any political party on the area committee.

3. Other attendees

The Police, Health Services and the Dudley Council for Voluntary Service will be expressly invited to have a representative in attendance at each area committee meeting.

4. Lead Officers

The nominated Liaison Officers for area committees are:-

Brierley Hill – Eric Lowson Central Dudley – Linda Sanders North Dudley – John Freeman Halesowen – Mike Williams Stourbridge – John Polychronakis

5. The Council's Constitution

Area committees are formal committees of the Council and they must therefore comply with the requirements of the Council's Constitution. This Code should therefore be read in conjunction with all other relevant parts of the Constitution.

6. Public Consultation

Each area committee must follow the Council's principles on consultation and should be innovative in involving the public in their meetings, particularly where this is being done as part of the Council's consultation processes. For example, breaking up audiences into smaller groups to consider specific issues may be appropriate.

7. <u>Public participation</u>

- (a) Each area committee will dedicate a part of each meeting to a public forum at which it will be open to any member of the public to address the committee. The length of time allocated and the rules governing the exercise of the public right to speak will be within the discretion of each area committee.
- (b) A report summarising responses sent in writing to members of the public in respect of questions asked by them at area committee meetings will be submitted to the following meeting of the relevant committee.

8. <u>Confidential or exempt business</u>

If any area committee has to conduct any confidential or exempt business this should normally be done before the public part of the meeting and preferably in a separate room.

9. Agenda Planning and Management

(a) Notification of items for the agenda

Notice of items for area committee agendas must be given to the Democratic Services Section no later than 5 working days prior to the agenda meeting.

(b) Youth Issues

Where arrangements are in place for a meeting of youth representatives to take place immediately prior to the Area Committee meeting to consider matters on the agenda for the Area Committee, an item entitled "Matters arising from youth representatives' meeting" will be included early in the agenda for the Area Committee.

(c) Agenda Meeting

The agenda for each area committee will be set by its Chairman in consultation with its Liaison Officer and will include any items referred to it by the Council, the Cabinet, any Council committee or any Director in the exercise of any delegated decision-making responsibility.

Draft reports will be considered at an agenda meeting held not less than 20 working days before the meeting. This meeting will be arranged by the Democratic Services Section, who will consult with the appropriate Liaison Officer as to the date, time and venue of it. Agenda meetings will be arranged as soon as the dates for area committee meetings are known.

(d) <u>Submission, Circulation and Consideration of draft reports.</u>

Draft reports should be submitted to the Democratic Services Section (preferably at least three working days) prior to the agenda meeting and they will then be circulated by the Democratic Services Officer. Where draft reports are not available prior to the agenda meeting they must be available at it. If a draft report is not available for consideration at the agenda meeting the item and report will not normally be included on the agenda for that particular meeting. Democratic Services Officers will satisfy themselves that the content of the draft report accords with the relevant guidelines and advice in this Code. Where any draft report appears to be in contravention of the guidance it shall be the duty of the Democratic Services Officer to draw this to the attention of the report author, with a view to the report being brought into line with such guidance.

Directorates submitting items and/or reports must be represented at the agenda meeting to explain the background to and content of their report. Where a Directorate fails to be so represented, the Lead Officer will have the authority to withdraw that item or report from the agenda.

(e) Chairman's Briefing

Before the finalised agenda is despatched the Democratic Services Officer will arrange a briefing for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the area committee. This will be attended by the Liaison Officer and those officers who have prepared reports for the meeting.

(f) Form of Reports

A standard form of report is to be adopted by all officers, with the following section headings:-

Purpose
Background
Proposals
Finance
Law
Equal Opportunities
Recommendations
Background papers

After provision for the report to be signed, the name and telephone number of the report author must be added as a contact point.

(g) Background Papers

The law requires that every report sets out a list of those documents (called background papers) which disclose facts or matters on which the report is based and which have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report. Published works or documents containing exempt or confidential information do not need to be included in the list. The list should be set out at the end of the report under the heading "Background Papers".

(h) <u>Guidance on the content of reports</u>

Reports must be written in plain English and jargon should not be used, nor initials when reference is first made in the report to an item or an organisation.

If the recommendations in a report are subject to the approval of another Committee, the Cabinet or the Council that must be made clear. If the functions are not delegated to the Area Committee the recommendations in the report must be phrased as subject to the approval of the Cabinet or the Council . Recommendations shall include every point to be determined. Recommendations shall identify the officer or Member who will be responsible for carrying the decision into effect.

Reports will normally be specific to one area committee. Where a report needs to be considered by more than one area committee the approval of the Chairmen of area committees must be obtained. This will be done by the Democratic Services Section either through the regular meeting of area committee Chairmen or separately.

Reports must be relevant to the area committee to which they are being submitted. Where the same report is being submitted to more than one area committee, or indeed to all area committees, it must be "tailored" so as to be clearly relevant to each area committee to which it is being submitted. In other words it must identify service issues within the area of that particular Area Committee.

If the report is considered to be confidential or exempt, every page of it must be marked "NOT FOR PUBLICATION BY VIRTUE OF PARAGRAPH(S) OF PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972". The report author will liaise with the appropriate solicitor to agree the relevant paragraph number.

(i) Finalising and circulating the agenda and reports

The agenda will contain only those items and reports which have met the requirements of this Protocol.

Any comments on draft reports must be submitted to the report author before the deadline referred to in the next paragraph. By this deadline the Director of Law and Property must have satisfied himself that the matter falls within the functions of the committee and that the requirements of the Council's Constitution have been met. Similarly the Director of Finance will have satisfied himself that the finance section of the report properly reflects the financial position and that the requirements of the Financial Management Regime and Financial Regulations have been met. All other officers will have made comments relating to their areas of responsibility and the Liaison Officer for the Committee will have indicated his approval to the report proceeding in the form in which it is drafted.

The report in its final form must be submitted electronically to the Democratic Services Section not less than 13 working days before the meeting. The report author will retain the background documents listed in the report. These are required by law to remain open for public inspection for four years after the date of the meeting.

The Democratic Services Section will finalise the agenda, produce the necessary copies of the agenda and reports and circulate them not less than 10 working days before the meeting.

Reports to be considered when the public have been excluded will be printed on a separate colour.

(j) Urgent Items

If a matter is so urgent that it cannot meet the procedures and deadlines referred to above and cannot await the next ordinary meeting of the area committee, the Director of Law and Property, in consultation with the Chairman and Liaison Officer, will consider convening a special meeting of the committee. The procedure for producing reports for the special meeting will follow that for an ordinary meeting.

(k) Post-Meeting Work

Minutes of the meetings of each area committee will be taken by a Democratic Services Officer for inclusion in the "White Book" of minutes to be considered by the full Council.

The Democratic Services Officer will circulate the draft minutes and any requisite summaries of exempt items to appropriate Liaison Officers and other relevant officers before finalising them. A decision summary will be circulated by e-mail the next working day following the meeting.

Within 5 working days after the meeting there will be a debriefing meeting of relevant officers, convened by the Democratic Services Officer, in order to determine which officers will be responsible for implementing the decisions of the area committee. This will be confirmed in a note circulated by the Democratic Services Officer.

Where a matter needs to be referred on to the Cabinet the Democratic Services Officer will prepare the requisite draft report and circulate this for comment as necessary. Only one report on a matter will be submitted to the Cabinet even if the matter has been considered by more than one area committee.

10. Documents to be Available to Members

Any document which is available for public inspection will be made available for inspection by any member on request.

11. Directorate Representation at Meetings

Each Directorate shall make arrangements to be represented at area committee meetings by an officer(s) with an appropriate understanding of the service issues likely to emerge at the meeting, both in terms of presenting reports from their Directorate and answering questions from the public. With the prior consent of the Liaison Officer a Directorate may be permitted not to send a

representative if it is unlikely that there would be any questions relating to the functions of that Directorate raised at the meeting.

12. Presentations at Meetings

All presentations made at area committees shall be delivered so as to be both audible and visible to the committee and to members of the public present. Presentations shall be concise and relevant to the report/recommendations before the committee. Officers planning to make presentations are encouraged to consult the Council's Marketing Section for advice as to the effective delivery of their presentation.

13. Role Of Area Chairmen

Area Chairmen collectively have the following specific responsibilities:-

- To be consulted in advance on matters proposed for inclusion on the agenda for area committees as public consultation issues.
- To be consulted in advance on matters proposed for inclusion on the agenda for more than area committee in the same cycle of meetings.
- To consider any matters relating to this Protocol arising from area committee meetings.
- To consider any issues arising from the previous cycle of area committees.
- To consider any issues included on the agendas for the next cycle of area committee meetings.
- To consider any issues arising from the terms of reference of area committees which have implications for more than one area committee.
- Periodically to consider feedback received from members of the public following their attendance at area committee meetings.

14. Role Of Liaison Officers

Liaison Officers have the following specific responsibilities:-

- To ensure that their Chairman is adequately consulted and briefed on all matters coming before the area committee.
- In consultation with their Area Committee Chairman to be the final arbiter on all matters relating to agenda planning and management for their area committee. This includes their right, after consultation with their Chairman, to omit items/reports from the agenda for an area committee meeting if the requirements of this Protocol as to the notification of any item or the compilation of a report have not been met.
- In consultation with the relevant Lead Officers from the Directorates concerned, to be responsible for ensuring that all decisions taken by their area committee are implemented.

15. <u>Timetabling of Meetings</u>

The timetable of meetings for area committees shall be that set out in the calendar of meetings approved annually by the Council.

16. Venues For Meetings/Health And Safety Considerations

The venues for meetings of area committees shall be determined by each area committee, but in determining venues all relevant health and safety issues shall be taken into consideration.

Democratic Services, January, 2004

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE - 7TH JULY, 2005

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

REPORT OF THE AREA LIAISON OFFICER

1.0 <u>PURPOSE</u>

1.1 To consider the co-option of persons to serve as co-opted members of the Committee for the 2005/06 municipal year.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The protocols for Area Committees permit Area Committees to co-opt up to five persons onto the Committee for the period expiring with the conclusion of a municipal year. Co-opted members are entitled to speak at meetings but not to vote.
- 2.2 The protocol requires that the Committee, in appointing co-opted members, has due regard to the extent to which persons to be co-opted represent interests of importance within the communities served by the Area Committee. There is a further requirement that co-optees shall not represent the views of any political party on the Area Committee.
- 2.3 The Committee is now requested to consider the co-option of members for the 2005/06 municipal year.

3.0 PROPOSALS

3.1 That the Committee determines the co-opted members to serve for the 2005/06 municipal year.

4.0 <u>FINANCE</u>

- 4.1 Co-opted members are entitled to receive travelling and subsistence allowances in accordance with Section 174 of the Local Government Act, 1972 and a Financial Loss Allowance in accordance with Section 173 (4) of that Act.
- 5.0 <u>LAW</u>
- 5.1 Section 102 (3) of the Local Government Act, 1972, provides for a Committee of the Council to include persons who are not members of the Council.

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6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 This report enables the Area Committee to consider the appointment of local co-opted members in order to assist in making meetings more representative of the local community.

7.0 <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>

7.1 That the proposal set out in Section 3.1 above be considered.

fric & Lawson

E LOWSON AREA LIAISON OFFICER

CONTACT OFFICER: Eric Lowson - 01384 814400 Ext: 4400

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1 The Council's Constitution

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE - 7TH JULY, 2005

APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

REPORT OF THE AREA LIAISON OFFICER

1.0 <u>PURPOSE</u>

1.1 To consider the appointment of Working Groups of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to determine the member numbers to serve on Working Groups in the 2005/06 municipal year. In this regard the Committee is asked to consider the following:
- 2.1.1 Brierley Hill Area Committee Community Plan
- 2.1.2 Capital Allocations
- 2.1.3 Brierley Hill Area Committee Borough Festival Working Group
- 2.1.4 Brierley Hill Young People's Group

3.0 **PROPOSALS**

3.1 That the Committee determine the Working Groups to be appointed for the 2005/06 municipal year and the names of members to serve, with particular reference to the issues referred to in section 2. above.

4.0 FINANCE

4.1 The proposals contained in item 3.1 above (the setting up of the working parties) will not incur a cost to the budget.

5.0 <u>LAW</u>

5.1 Since Working Groups do not have the status of formal Committees, the rules of proportionality which relate to seats on Committees under Section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations, 1990 are not applicable.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 The proposals take into account the Council's equal opportunities policies.

7.0 <u>RECOMMENDATION</u>

7.1 That the proposals contained in paragraph 3.0 above be approved.

Fic & Lowson

E LOWSON AREA LIAISON OFFICER

Contact Officer: Eric Lowson 01384 814400 Ext: 4400

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The Council's Constitution.

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 7TH JULY 2005.

APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

REPORT OF THE AREA LIAISON OFFICER

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider the appointment of representatives to various outside organisations for the 2005/2006 municipal year.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Further to the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 19th May 2005, this Area Committee is requested to determine the names of representatives to serve on certain outside organisations.
- 2.2 Details of the organisations and of the representatives appointed in the 2003/2004 municipal year are set out in Appendix 1 to this report together with the terms of appointment. These details may be subject to amendments due to ward boundary changes
- 2.3 In accordance with a resolution of the Council on 26th November, 1998, the appointment or removal of a person representing the Council on an outside body is subject to any decision of the Standards Committee relating to that person.

3.0 PROPOSALS

3.1 That the Committee determine the representatives to be appointed to the outside organisations indicated in the appendix to this report.

4.0 <u>FINANCE</u>

- 4.1 Budgetary provision is made within the overall Council's budget to cover the costs of appointing Council representatives to outside organisations.
- 5.0 <u>LAW</u>
- 5.1 The statutory provisions relating to the above matter are contained in Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972, which enables the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its various statutory functions.
- 5.2 The rules of "proportionality" to reflect the political balance of the Committee do not apply to the appointments referred to in this report.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 6.1 The proposals in this report accord with the policy of the Council in relation to equal opportunities.
- 7.0 <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>
- 7.1 That the proposal set out in paragraph 3.1 above be determined.
- 8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS
- 8.1 The Council's Constitution.

fric & Lowson

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E LOWSON AREA LIAISON OFFICER

Contact Officer: E Lowson – 01384 - 814400 Ext. 4400

APPENDIX 1

Brierley Hill

Social Inclusion

- Brierley Hill Committee for the Welfare of the Annual Physically Handicapped – Councillors Mrs Wilson and Islam
- Community Associations:

(a)	Brockmoor – Councillor Ms Foster	Annual
(b)	Dingle – Councillors Debney and Southall	Annual
(c)	Fens Pool – Councillors Mrs Jordan and Tomkinson	Annual
(d)	Hawbush – Councillors Ms Harris and Islam	Annual
(e)	Kingswinford – Councillors Harley and Miller	Annual
(f)	Nine Locks – Councillor Islam	Annual
(g)	Pensnett – Councillors Ms Foster and Mrs Jordan	Annual
(h)	Wall Heath – Councillors R Burt and Tyler	Annual
(i)	Wordsley – the Members of the Council for the Wordsley Ward	Annual

WARDS: Brierley Hill, Brockmoor & Pensnett, Kingswinford North & Wall Heath, Kingswinford South Wordsley

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12

DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 7 JULY 2005

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

SKATE/WHEELED SPORTS FACILITY FOR BRIERLEY HILL AREA

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To apprise Members of developments with regards to the proposed skate park for the Brierley Hill Area.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In March2004 Members of the Brierley Hill Area Committee received a report outlining a series of site investigations into ten locations suitable for possible skate park provision within the geographic area covered by the Area Committee. Members considered the report and selected a location to the rear of Kingswinford Youth Centre and Kingswinford Community Centre, adjacent to a children's play area, a youth shelter and two football pitches, as the Area Committees preferred option for a facility. An area of tarmacadam was available and although it had basketball hoops, these could be relocated. The Committee supported the provision of a skate park at the Kingswinford Youth Centre location and requested that the planning application process be progressed.
- 2.2 A series of site investigations was undertaken and a planning application (PO4/2667) was submitted late in 2004. In December 2004 letters of notification were issued to residents of High Street, Water Street, Greenfields Road, Standhills Road, Wasdale Drive, Windermere Drive and Greystoke Drive advising that a planning application was under consideration and site notices were posted in High Street, Kingswinford.
- 2.3 There has been a considerable number of objections received opposing the development of a skate park facility at Kingswinford Youth Centre. With initial responses citing probable anti-social behaviour, noise, disturbance, insufficient consultation and a lack of public conveniences as the reson for objecting.
- 2.5 A public meeting was held in January 2005 and elicited similar objections and also identified that the proposed location was used by the Air Cadets for drill and exercise purposes. Car parking issues were highlighted at this meeting and representatives from the Community Centre stated that they had a clause in their lease that made them consultees to any proposed use of neighbouring land. This has been verified through an examination of the lease document. Furthermore the Community Association representatives indicated that they perceived the

proposed facility to be an impediment to the workings of their facility and to the activities of their users.

- 2.6 Further written submissions were received by the Planning Section and due to the level of public opposition the planning application has been withdrawn to allow the Area Committee to consider this issue further.
- 2.7 A petition was raised with 98% of signatories opposed to the development of a skate park in this location, and further representations were made to the meeting of Brierley Hill Area Committee in March 2005 and the scale of local objection to the proposal has been further reinforced in meetings/discussions held with the local community.
- 2.8 Clearly the Area Committee need to take a view on this matter in order to move the project forward and provide a Skate/Wheeled Sports facility for young people in the Brierley Hill Area Committee Area.
- 2.9 In principal there are two options available:-

Option 1

To proceed as per the Area Committees previous resolution and re-affirm that the site at Kingswinford Youth Centre is the preferred location for this facility, in the knowledge that there is significant local opposition to provision on that site.

Option 2

To over-rule the Area Committees previous decision and reject Kingswinford Youth Centre as the preferred site for a skate/wheeled sports facility.

- 2.10 Should the Area Committee resolve to choose Option 2 above, Officers will then have to review the sites previously considered in the report to the Area Committee on 16 March 2004 alongside any additional sites that Members may wish to suggest for a further report to the Area Committee in due course.
- 2.11 If this option is chosen it will inevitably lead to a delay in the provision of facilities being made but may be more advantageous in the long-term given the scale of local opposition to the Area Committees current proposal and it would be the intention that a report be presented to the Area Committee in September detailing the other potential sites for the facility, the planning and technical issues associated with each in order that an alternative preferred site be identified for further consultation as in the case of the Kingswinford Youth Centre Site.

3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 That the Area Committee notes the content of this report, considers the options contained therein and resolves accordingly.

4.0 FINANCE

4.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.

5.0 LAW

- 5.1 Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972, enables the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its statutory function.
- 5.2 Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976, empowers the Council to provide recreational facilities in its area.
- 5.3 There is a duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to account for the implications of the impact on community safety of actions and decisions relating to service areas.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 This report contains proposals which accord with the equal opportunities policies of the Council.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That the proposals set out in Section 3 of this report be approved.

J. Millen

Director of the Urban Environment:.....

Contact Officer: Andy Webb, Head of Sport and Recreation, Ext: 5579

Background Papers Used in the Compilation of this Report

- Brierley Hill Area Committee reports
- Lease Kingswinford Community Centre
- Representations to Planning with regards to Planning Application PO4/2667
- Papers submitted in support of Planning Application PO4/2667

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 7 JULY 2005 REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW AND PROPERTY SALE OF CARS ON HIGHWAY AND PRIVATE LAND

1.0 <u>Purpose</u>

1.1 In response to a question raised at a previous Brierley Hill Area Committee, to advise the Committee of the legal position with regard to the sale of cars on highway and private land and to advise of any way in which the Council can take action to prevent this, if necessary.

2.0 <u>Background</u>

- 2.1 Concerns have been raised in respect of the number of vehicles which are seen on grass verges or land at the side of the road with signs offering them for sale. The Directorate of Law and Property has been asked to advise as to whether anything can be done to have these vehicles removed and the owners of the vehicles prosecuted.
- 2.2 Where vehicles are parked on privately owned land, the landowner needs to be contacted to ascertain whether the vehicle owner has his permission to park the vehicles on his land. If permission has not been given, the landowner may well be considering action himself for trespassing.
- 2.3 Land which forms part of the Highway is covered by Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. This gives the Council the power to regulate street trading by, for example, categorising streets where street trading is prohibited or where trading may only take place with a licence or consent. The definition of "street" includes "any road, footway, or other area to which the public have access without payment". This definition could arguably include

grass verges. Any person breaching the conditions of the street (i.e. trading without a licence in a licence street, or at all in a prohibited street) may be prosecuted and will be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000. This may only be used in areas where the step of categorising a street has already been taken. In streets which are not already subject to these restrictions, the time and expense involved in making an order so that prosecution can take place may be such that, when taking into account the outcome of the prosecution, this may not be an efficient way of dealing with the matter.

- 2.4 In respect of vehicles which are parked on grass verges, it may be possible to use the provision of section 7 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 which deals with control of roadside sales. This legislation regulates the sale of, or offering for sale of, anything which is displayed within 15m of the highway. Prosecution, however, is dependent on a "control order" existing in respect of the relevant stretch of the highway. The making of a control order involves consultation with the chief officer of police of any police area in which any road or other place to which the order is to relate is situated. As respects orders of a local authority, the Secretary of State may make regulations for providing the procedure to be followed in connection with the making of such orders and shall make such provision as he considers appropriate with respect to the publication of any proposal for the making of such an order, the making and consideration of objections to any such proposal and the publication of notice of the making of the order and of its effect. If a control order is in place and a person contravenes that order, a notice may be served on that person requiring him not to contravene the order after a specific date.
- 2.5 If a person contravenes the order he may be prosecuted and, if found guilty, will be liable for a fine not exceeding £1,000. If the offence continues, a person would then be guilty of a further offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £10 per day for every

day that the contravention continues after the first conviction. This would appear to be quite an effective way of dealing with the issue, as long as a control order is already in place. In the majority of cases, delay will be caused by the need to put a control order into place before any prosecution can occur.

- 2.6 Sandwell MBC has recently agreed to adopt a new bye-law to help curb the sale of vehicles on the highway. The bye-law will give the council the power to prosecute people who sell, expose or offer for sale vehicles on the highway in the course of a business. It remains to be seen, however, whether the bye-law will provide sufficient flexibility to enable effective prosecutions. In particular, the wording "in the course of a business" may be problematical because a seller may argue that the sale is a private deal and not part of a business.
- 2.7 The penalty for breach of a bye-law will normally be a fine recoverable upon conviction by magistrates. In the case of a breach of a bye-law made under the procedure set out under section 236 of the Local Government Act 1972, the bye-law may provide for fines not exceeding such sum as may be fixed by the enabling statute or, if no such sum is fixed level 2 on the standard scale (up to £500).
- 2.8 The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 should be of some assistance. Section 3 of the Act makes it an offence for a person to offer for sale two or more motor vehicles parked on a road. "Road" has the same meaning as in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 where it is defined as "any length of highway or of any other road to which the public has access, and includes bridges over which a road passes". This is not aimed at an individual selling a car privately, rather someone acting as part of a business. Further, there is no reference to vehicles parked on waste ground or land adjacent to the highway. The penalty for this offence is a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale (up to £2,500). This provision became law on 7 June 2005.

- 2.9 The Directorate of the Urban Environment is arranging for someone to visit Brierley Hill Road to take the registration numbers of any vehicles parked and marked 'for sale' and to check these numbers with the DVLA to see if the registered keepers can be ascertained. This can then be followed up accordingly. It should be noted however that there can be difficulties with enforcement in as far as the full name and address of an offender is required in order to proceed with a prosecution. There is also the issue as to who will identify the locations where vehicles are being parked for sale.
- 2.10 It is suggested that in the first instance, the Directorate of the Urban Environment tackle known car dealers/garage owners who are placing vehicles for sale off their garage forecourts (i.e. onto grass verges and highways). However, with regard to the wider issue, the Area Committee may wish to consider requesting the Select Committee for the Environment to examine the most appropriate and effective statutory means of regulating, and enforcing against, the sale of cars on highway land, and to make a recommendation to the Cabinet Member for the Environment.

3.0 Proposal

3.1 That the Committee note the action being taken and refer this matter to the Select Committee for the Environment in accordance with paragraph 2.10.

4.0 Finance

4.1 There are no direct financial consequences arising from this report.

5.0 <u>Law</u>

- 5.1 The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 makes it an offence for a person to offer for sale two or motor vehicles parked on a road.
- 5.2 Schedule 4 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act1982 gives the Council the power to regulate street trading.
- 5.3 Section 7 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 regulates the sale of, or offering for sale of, anything which is displayed within 15m of the highway.

6.0 Equal Opportunities

6.1 This report takes account of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

7.0 <u>Recommendation</u>

7.1 That the Committee note the action being taken and refer this matter to the Select Committee for the Environment in accordance with paragraph 2.10.

8.0 Background Papers

8.1 None.

John Prycelis

DIRECTOR OF LAW AND PROPERTY Contact Officer: Carol Bacon, Solicitor ext. 5315

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 7 JULY 2005

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW AND PROPERTY

WHEEL CLAMPING ON PRIVATE LAND AND RIGHTS OF PRIVATE LANDOWNERS TO CHARGE FOR CAR PARKING

1.0 <u>Purpose</u>

1.1 To respond to a question raised at a previous Brierley Hill Area Committee in respect of the legal position with regard to wheel clamping on private land and the rights of private landowners to charge for car parking and to advise of any way in which the Council can monitor the situation.

2.0 <u>Background</u>

- 2.1 A member of the public raised concerns over the parking charges of private companies, in particular in Kingswinford where shoppers are allowed to park for up to 1 hour free of charge but if they overstay this time period they are then issued with a £60 parking charge. The Council's Directorate of Law and Property was asked to look into ways of monitoring the situation.
- 2.2 Dudley MBC does not have control over the operation of private car parks. It is up to the operator of the private car park to set their own parking charges.
- 2.3 Clamping on private land without a licence is now a criminal offence. Anyone immobilising, removing or restricting vehicles for a fee will need a licence. Anyone found clamping without a Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence could incur a fine of up to £5000 and up to 5 years in prison under the Private Security Industry Act 2001, which came into force on 3 May 2005.

- 2.4 Owners of private land must also display a clear and prominent notice advising that they operate clamping and removal. The notice should also display a telephone number to ring to have the clamp removed, which will usually incur a fee.
- 2.5 Under the Act, one of the functions of the SIA is to set or approve standards of conduct, training and levels of supervision by those who carry on businesses providing security industry services or other services involving the activities of security operatives and those who are employed for the purposes of such businesses. All SIA licensed clampers will therefore have to be properly trained to know when to clamp and when not to clamp; understand the legislation concerning vehicle immobilisation and behave in a responsible manner.
- 2.6 The conditions of the SIA licence state that any vehicle immobiliser must not immobilise, remove or restrict a vehicle if the vehicle is an invalid carriage or if a valid disability badge is displayed on the vehicle or if the vehicle is an emergency vehicle which is in use.
- 2.7 When a release fee is collected, the vehicle immobiliser must provide a receipt, which should include details of the location where the vehicle was immobilised, removed or restricted, their name and signature, their licence number and the date.
- 2.8 If motorists are clamped on private land, they should ask to see the clamper's SIA licence. If they do not have one, they should be reported to the SIA. If the clamper refuses to release their car, they should contact the police.

3.0 <u>Proposal</u>

3.1 That the Committee note the advice contained in this report.

4.0 Finance

4.1 There are no direct financial consequences arising from this report.

5.0 <u>Law</u>

5.1 The Private Security Industry Act 2001 and Regulations made thereunder make provision for the regulation of the private security industry.

6.0 Equal Opportunities

6.1 This report takes account of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

7.0 <u>Recommendation</u>

7.1 That the Committee note the advice contained in this report.

8.0 Background Papers

8.1 None.

John Prycelis

DIRECTOR OF LAW AND PROPERTY

Contact Officer: Carol Bacon, Solicitor ext. 5315

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 7TH JULY 2005. DUDLEY BOROUGH CHALLENGE – CONSULTATION PHASE III REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose

1.1 To update Members on the progress of Dudley Borough Challenge and proposals for consultation of the draft strategy document. "Dudley Borough Challenge" is the name given to the process of review of the Community Strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1 The first Dudley Borough Community Plan, prepared through the former Dudley Partnership Board, was published in 2000. It covered the five-year period to 2005. The plan was produced in advance of any statutory duty to publish a community strategy, but this is now a legal requirement arising from the Local Government Act 2000.
- 2.2 The Dudley Community Partnership Executive agreed a process for the production of a new community strategy, the Dudley Borough Challenge, to cover the period 2005 2020. Phase I (June December 2004) was a preconsultation stage in which members from a wide range of communities, together with service providers, articulated their visions of the kind of borough they would like to see developed by the end of this plan period. Over 700 individuals took part in that process. Phase II took those vision statements and coalesced them into a number of "areas of focus" in order to construct debates with expert service providers. The outcome of this is the draft strategy which now needs to be tested through consultation.
- 2.3 Consultation will involve the following groups:
 - Customers/citizens
 - Local businesses
 - Partners in voluntary, public and private sectors
 - Service providers
 - Elected members
 - Key regional and subregional bodies
 - Neighbouring authorities
 - Government Office West Midlands

3 Content of the New Draft Strategy

- 3.1 At the core of the new strategy is the vision of "**Stronger Communities**" and the strategy sets out a number of aspects of life in a strong community. This is the aspiration. Leading on from this are **five themes**:
 - 1 Making Dudley Borough a safe and peaceful place to live
 - 2 Promoting good health and well-being for all
 - 3 Creating a prosperous and attractive borough
 - 4 A learning community
 - 5 Safeguarding and improving our environment
- 3.2 Each theme contains (a) information on what has been achieved over the last 4 years; what more needs to be done; what more is already planned to do; and (b) suggestions on what the vision for that theme should include arising largely from the outcome of the earlier engagement phase.
- 3.3 These are then taken forward into a **set of challenges** the attainment of which is seen as essential if we are to realise the overall vision of Stronger Communities. These are:
 - Make Dudley Borough one of the best places in Britain for children & young people
 - To have a strong and positive community spirit across our neighbourhoods
 - Delivering excellent public services for everyone
 - Safeguarding and improving the environment for future generations
 - Celebrating our heritage and the diversity of local culture

The challenges each contain a set of proposed targets which will contribute to the success in attaining the challenges.

- 3.4 There are three versions of the strategy proposals that one can respond to.:
 - The full consultation document containing all listed in paragraphs 3.1-.33;
 - The "Challenge" document a shorter version focussing on the five challenges;
 - A quick response leaflet, listing 15 key vision choices. This is aimed at residents who are asked to submit their top five priorities from that list (or suggest alternatives).

All three documents are available on a website known as <u>www.dudleyboroughchallenge.org</u> to which there is a link from the Council's website. In addition, the leaflet has been distributed to every household in the borough as well as to 350 public venues.

- 3.5 The key phases that lie ahead now are:
 - April end of July 2005: consultation on the draft strategy document
 - August September 2005: production of the final draft in the light of consultation evidence
 - October 2005: Cabinet endorsement of the new 15-year strategy and launch of the strategy by the Dudley Community Partnership
 - November 2005: approval and adoption by Council
 - November March 2005/6: Implementation planning

4. Proposals

4.1 The report aims to make members aware of the overall process being adopted to develop the new Borough Strategy. In addition, Members of the Committee may wish to comment on the content of the key themes proposed by the consultation document either through the Committee, or individually.

5. Finance

5.1 There are no financial implications for the Council at this stage.

6. Law

- 6.1 Under Section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000, every local authority must prepare a strategy for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.
- 6.2 Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

7. Equal Opportunities

7.1 The programme of public engagement is intended to be as open and inclusive as possible and a wide range of groups from diverse communities will have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the strategy.

.Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Andy Wright - ext. 4147

WARDS: WORDSLEY AND KINGSWINFORD NORTH & WALL HEATH

AGENDA ITEM NO. 18

DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE - 7 JULY 2005

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

COUNCIL POLICIES WITH REGARD TO DEVELOPMENT ON GREEN BELT AND OPEN SPACE LAND AND RELEVANT MATTERS RELATING TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON SITES DESIGNATED AS SUCH AT KINVER STREET, WORDSLEY AND ST MARY'S CHURCH, KINGSWINFORD.

1.0 <u>PURPOSE</u>

1.1 To confirm the Council's policies with regard to Green Belt and open space land and to consider the implications for the proposed provision of car parks on land south of Kinver Street, Wordsley and land adjacent to St Mary's Church Kingswinford.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Kinver Street, Wordsley

- 2.1 A report was submitted to Brierley Hill Area Committee on 3rd February 2005 to establish the feasibility of introducing a car park facility on the open space area south of Kinver Street, Wordsley following the regular occurrence of congestion in the vicinity of Ashwood Primary School. The congestion is caused by parked vehicles during periods when parents drop off or pick up their children from school or when visitors are using the public open space off Kinver Street.
- 2.2 The Brierley Hill Area committee resolved at the meeting 'that officers look into ways of providing adequate and environmentally friendly car parking on land included in the Unitary Development Plan as "green belt", taking into account all legal and financial restraints and report back to Members on their findings'. (Brierley Hill Area Committee Minute 62).
- 2.3 The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) sets out the Council's policies on land use and planning. The current UDP was adopted in 1993 and is about to be superseded by a revised version due to be adopted later in 2005. The revised UDP has been the subject of widespread consultation across the Borough and has been through a Public Inquiry by a Government Inspector. Final modifications were then made in line with the Inspector's recommendations in preparation for its

adoption following a final round of public consultation which was completed in December 2004.

- 2.4 The UDP is put together in line with National Planning law and policies and has legal status. The Authority must have regard to the UDP and its policies in making decisions on land use and planning applications.
- 2.5 The open space at Kinver Street, Wordsley falls within designated Green Belt and a designated Local Park in both the adopted and revised Unitary Development Plans. Council policy on Green Belts, as contained within the UDP, is in line with National Planning Policy in protecting designated Green Belt areas from any kind of development except where it can be demonstrated that very special circumstances exist. For example, agricultural / forestry use, essential facilities for sport and recreation or limited extensions / alterations to existing buildings. However, in this instance, the construction of a car park within a designated Green Belt does not constitute exceptional circumstances as set out in the Plan.
- 2.6 If the Council were to go against such a policy within the UDP as well as national policy, then this would set a precedent which would seriously weaken the effect of all green belt policies within the Borough. This would enable builders and developers to challenge and appeal against future planning decisions with regard to green belt land in the Borough.
- 2.7 The Council's Planning Policy on green belts can be periodically reviewed under the new planning regime recently introduced. Under the new planning system, the UDP will be replaced by a series of documents updated on a rolling basis which will be known as the Local Development Framework. A timetable for producing these documents has been produced within Dudley and incorporated into a Local Development Scheme. Dudley MBC produced its first draft timetable in March 2005 which was subsequently approved by the Cabinet of the Council on 16th March 2005. The Local Development Scheme will be updated on a regular basis enabling Members to have an opportunity to highlight any areas or planning issues which require reviewing as part of the Local Development Framework. The Local Development Scheme timetable proposes that the current policies on Green Belts will remain for a minimum of 5 years before they are revised under the new system. During any review of policy, full consultation and public participation must be carried out at the appropriate time.
- 2.8 The park itself is subject to a regular regime of maintenance including regular grass cutting and a weekly litter collection as well as being inspected three times a week for signs of fly tipping or anti-social behaviour.
- 2.9 In the meantime the Council will need to continue to pursue alternative solutions to the parking and congestion problems which exist at Kinver Street and will still maintain contact with the Ashwood Park Primary School to further investigate the Safer Routes to Schools initiative.

St Mary's Church, Kingswinford

2.10 A request has been received by the District Church Council of St. Mary's, Kingswinford for the purchase of Council owned land for proposed use as a permanent car park to the rear of the Church. The land is also required in the short term for a site compound for two years while repairs to the Church are being made.

- 2.11 Within the Revised Unitary Development Plan, the proposal site falls within the King George VI Town Park and within a designated Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC). It forms part of a sensitive area of wooded public open space and is very important in enhancing the visual quality of the wider heavily urbanised surroundings. This woodland provides a breeding habitat for kingfishers which are highly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- 2.12 Given the high level of sensitivity of this site in open space and nature conservation terms, the proposal would contravene and conflict with a range of Unitary Development Plan Policies as well as key areas of national policy in a similar way to the site at Kinver Street, Wordsley.
- 2.13 This area of the Park is not subject to an active maintenance regime although it is regularly monitored for fly tipping. The Friends of King George VI Park have been actively involved in devising a management plan for the Park including this area. The Friends Group is keen to preserve the site as a relatively undisturbed nature conservation area and is currently working on a public access management plan which will ensure that it maintains its natural appearance and nature conservation value.
- 2.14 The District Church Council of St Mary's has also made a request to use some of the land temporarily as a storage yard whilst repairs are made to the Church and to construct a temporary vehicle access to deliver soil for graveyard burial plots. The temporary use of the land as a storage yard can be supported in principle given that the proposal is made in order to assist the restoration of the Church Building. However, before consent is given to this request and the temporary vehicle access, far more information is required in order to properly asses its impact on this sensitive area and provide the appropriate mitigation.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 That this Area Committee notes the statutory and legal status of the Unitary Development Plan and the Council's Policy within the Plan on Green Belts and other sites designated as sensitive areas of nature conservation value and its implications for sites at Kinver Street Wordsley and St. Mary's Church, Kingswinford.
- 3.2 That this Area Committee notes the process by which such policies and the areas to which they apply can be periodically reviewed.
- 3.3 That alternative solutions to the car parking problems at Kinver Street, Dudley continue to be pursued with representatives of the Police and also with representatives of Ashwood Park Primary School through the Safer Routes to School Initiative.

4.0 <u>FINANCE</u>

4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 <u>LAW</u>

5.1 Unitary Development Plans set out the Council's planning policies and guidance and are also material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Local planning authorities must take national Planning Policy and Planning Policy Statements (set out in the Government's policies on different aspects of the planning process) into account in preparing their Unitary Development Plans and supplementary guidance.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 The proposals contained within this report comply with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

7.0 <u>RECOMMENDATION</u>

7.1 That the proposals set out in section 3.0 of this report be agreed.

J. Millen

J. B. MILLAR – DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Contact Officer: Martin Dando. Ext: 7214

Background documents used in the preparation of this report:-

Dudley MBC Unitary Development Plan - Adopted Plan (1993) Dudley MBC Unitary Development Plan – Revised Deposit Plan (2002) Brierley Hill Area Committee 3rd February, 2005. *Report of the Director of the Urban Environment on the Proposed Provision of Car Park Area on Land South of Kinver Street, Wordsley*

Dudley MBC Draft Local Development Scheme (March 2005)