

## **BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE**

Thursday 2nd July, 2009 at 7.00 p.m.  
at the Kingswinford School, Water Street, Kingswinford

### **PRESENT:-**

Councillors D Blood, Mrs E Blood, Foster, Mrs Greenaway, Mrs D Harley, P Harley, Islam, Mrs Jordan, Miller, Nottingham, Southall and Tyler.

### **Officers**

The Director of the Urban Environment (as Area Liaison Officer), Head of Sport and Physical Activity, Head of Economic Regeneration Delivery, Group Accountant, Principal Engineer, (Traffic and Road Safety), Manager Executive Support Team, Project Manager for Healthy Towns – (all Directorate of the Urban Environment), Assistant Director of Housing (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services), Ms J Garwood, Area Team Leader, (Early Years, Youth and Education Services/Youth and Community Team), (Directorate of Children's Services), Senior Account Manager, Marketing and Communications, (Chief Executive's Directorate), Ms H Kidd, Solicitor and Miss K Fellows (both Directorate of Law, Property and Human Resources).

together with Inspector S Bradbury (West Midlands Police) and nineteen members of the public.

1

### **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

#### **RESOLVED**

That Councillor P Harley be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

(Councillor P Harley there upon took the Chair)

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2

### **COMMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN**

Arising from his election, the Chairman expressed thanks to the former Chairman, Councillor D Blood, for the work he had undertaken in his capacity as Chairman of the Area Committee in the previous year, and congratulated both Councillor D Blood upon his promotion to Cabinet Member for Finance and Councillor Miller upon his appointment as Deputy Mayor.

3

### **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

#### **RESOLVED**

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

4                    APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Ms Boleyn, Ms Harris and Mrs Wilson.

5                    DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (i)        Councillors Mrs E Blood and Southall declared personal interests in Agenda Item No 18 - (Richardson Hall), in so far as the application related to Wordsley and District Community Association, and as both had been nominated to represent the Council on that Community Association.
- (ii)       Councillors Mrs E Blood and Southall declared personal interests in Agenda Item No 19 - (Capital Allocations) in so far as the item related to the application received from Wordsley and District Community Association, as both had been nominated to represent the Council on that Community Association.
- (iii)      Councillor Tyler declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No 19 (Capital Allocations), as an appointment holder in the West Mercia Guide County, and in so far as the item related to applications received from Wordsley and District Community in relation to Richardson Hall and from Barnado's 'Time for Me' Project, The Source Youth Centre, as the Ranger Guides utilised both venues.

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6                    MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2009, be approved as a correct record and signed.

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7                    TERMS AND REFERENCE AND PROTOCOL FOR AREA COMMITTEES

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted setting out the terms of reference and protocol for Area Committees.

The Chairman reminded Members that Ward issue questions should be forwarded to Democratic Services three working days prior to the meeting, in order to provide Officers with an opportunity to formulate responses for members. However if this was not possible he would, within reason, take questions on the night.

## RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted on the terms of reference and protocol for Area Committees, be noted.

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8

### CO-OPTED MEMBERS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the appointment of persons to serve as co-opted members of the Committee for the 2009/10 municipal year.

Arising from the presentation of the report members agreed that unlike last year it may be more appropriate to invite young people to meetings of the appropriate Working Group rather than a young person as a co-opted member.

## RESOLVED

That co-opted members be not appointed to the Committee for the 2009/10 municipal year.

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### APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

A joint report of the Interim Director of Law, Property and Human Resources and Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on the appointment of representatives to serve on various outside bodies for the 2009/10 municipal year.

## RESOLVED

That the following Members be appointed to serve on the following bodies, for the 2009/10 municipal year, or for the term or period of time indicated:-

### Social Inclusion

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|-----|--|--------|
| (a) | Brierley Hill Committee for the Welfare of the Physically Handicapped – Councillors Mrs Wilson and Islam, with Councillor Ms Harris as a deputy. | Annual |
|-----|--|--------|

### Community Associations

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|-----|---|--------|
| (a) | Brockmoor – Councillors Mrs Greenaway and Mrs Jordan. | Annual |
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(b)	Dingle – Councillors Nottingham and Southall	Annual
(c)	Fens Pool – Councillor Foster.	Annual
(d)	Hawbush – Councillors Ms Harris and Islam.	Annual
(e)	Kingswinford – Councillors P Harley and Miller.	Annual
(f)	Nine Locks – Councillors Ms Harris and Mrs Wilson.	Annual
(g)	Pensnett – Councillors Foster and Mrs Greenaway.	Annual
(h)	Wall Heath – Councillors Ms Boleyn and Tyler,	Annual
(i)	Wordsley – Councillors Mrs Blood, and Southall	Annual

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10

#### APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the re-appointment and appointment of working groups for the 2009/10 municipal year.

#### RESOLVED

- (a) That the Capital Allocations Working Group be re-appointed, with its existing terms of reference and comprising the Chairman, Councillor P Harley, and Councillors Foster, Mrs Greenaway, Southall, Mrs Wilson and Tyler.
- (b) That a combined Brierley Hill Area Committee Community Renewal and Young People's Working Group be appointed, with the terms of reference indicated comprising the Chairman, Councillor P Harley and Councillors Mrs E Blood, Mrs Greenaway, Mrs D Harley, Islam, Mrs Jordan and Tyler.
- (c) That the appropriate Lead Officer for individual Working Groups be requested to submit regular written reports to the Committee.

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11

#### PROGRESS OF ELECTED MEMBER VISITS TO ADULT AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ESTABLISHMENTS 2008/09

A joint report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Director of Children's Services was submitted on the progress of visits to Adult and Children's Social Care Establishments, undertaken by Members of the Committee during 2008/9, and on further nominations for participation in the rota of visits for the 2009/10 municipal year.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted on the progress of elected Member visits to Adult and Children's Social Care Establishments during 2008/09, be noted.
- (2) That Councillors Mrs E Blood, Ms Boleyn, Miller and Tyler be appointed as nominees of this Committee to undertake rota visits to Adult and Children's Social Care Establishments in the municipal year 2009/10.

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12

#### YOUTH ISSUES

There were no issues raised under this agenda item.

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13

#### PUBLIC FORUM

Consideration was given to the following written/oral questions raised:-

- (a) A written question was submitted in relation to access to frontages for both businesses and customers in Brierley Hill Town Centre, without breaching traffic regulations. The questioner was requested to provide full details in relation to letters he had written, and action he had taken to the Principal Engineer, (Traffic and Road Safety) who would provide a written response to the questioner.
- (b) A question was raised in relation to two businesses situation near the Fire Station Island, Brierley Hill, relating to yellow lines on the road. The Area Liaison Officer responded stating that Council Officers were in contact with the business owners.
- (c) A question was raised by a member of the public in relation to the regeneration of Brierley Hill Town Centre and when this would take place. The Area Liaison Officer responded stating that a report would be presented covering this issue at a later stage of that evening, when the question would be answered by the Head of Economic Regeneration Delivery.

- (d) A question was raised relating to re-surfacing work being undertaken to pavements in Tunstall Road, Crestwood Park, Kingswinford. The Principal Engineer, (Traffic and Road Safety) would investigate the issue, and a verbal update would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.
- (e) Several members of the public raised questions relating to the felling and pollarding of trees that had been carried out by in Cot Lane/Hainult Close, Kingswinford and concerns were raised that further tree works would be undertaken on a planned return visit by Green Care on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2009. A request was made that the replacement of mature trees be undertaken by the Council. The Area Liaison Officer stated that the further visit planned for the 8<sup>th</sup> July would be delayed pending investigations by Senior Officers. Ward Members would be advised of the outcome of those investigations and any concerns and comments would be reported to the Cabinet Member for Transportation.
- (f) Councillors Miller and Southall advised that they were awaiting responses as to whether trees that had been pollarded on Lawnswood Road, Wordsley were subject to Tree Preservation Orders. The Area Liaison Officer confirmed that he would ensure they received a written response.
- (g) A member of the public raised concerns in relation to the speed of, and vibrations from, vehicles utilising Water Street. The Area Liaison Officer indicated that the speed humps were installed to slow down traffic and advised that the Wartell Bank report would pick up some of the issues raised

#### HIGHWAYS MINOR WORKS CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2009/10.

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted seeking the support of the Committee for the proposed programmes of work for Local Safety Schemes, Safer Routes to School and Pedestrian Crossings within the Brierley Hill Area for the 2009/10 financial year.

Arising from the presentation of the report, Councillor Mrs Jordan referred to a young person who had suffered injuries as a result of a road traffic accident that had occurred whilst crossing the Stourbridge Road. The young person's family were present and spoke in relation to their concerns. It was further noted that children who attended Holly Hall School crossed the road, and in order that viable road safety improvements could be considered, the Area Liaison Officer advised that the views and concerns of the young person's family would be passed to the Cabinet Member for Transportation and that this issue was already under review arising from the incident and concerns raised at Central Dudley Area committee

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet Member for Transportation be informed that the Committee support the Local Safety Schemes, Safer Routes to School and Pedestrian Crossings schemes outlined in Appendices A, B and C to the report now submitted.

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15

#### HEALTHY TOWNS INITIATIVE

The Project Manager for Healthy Towns gave a verbal presentation outlining the Healthy Towns initiative, providing details of the components of the Healthy Hubs locally and confirming that the initiative would focus around change for life, promoting eating well and moving more in order to live longer. It was stated that there would be the provision of a green active Hub at Fens Pool, Brierley Hill, which would include improvements to toilet and changing facilities, provision of outside gym equipment and promoting cycling and walking provision over a two year programme.

Arising from the presentation, members raised several questions in relation to the outdoor gym equipment, and the Project Manager confirmed that this would be free to use, and although not permanently supervised confirmed that it would be difficult to use the equipment in an inappropriate manner. It was also confirmed that some of the initiatives in parks would be supervised.

It was indicated that in order to prevent vandalism, self ownership would be promoted, and from statistical evidence as facilities were utilised by all age groups, this had promoted self ownership, limiting vandalism.

Arising from the presentation, members expressed support and enthusiasm for the initiative, urging everyone to become involved, in order to promote healthier living and in turn improving age expectancy.

#### RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted.

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16

#### BRIERLEY HILL TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted updating the Committee on progress in the setting up of a Brierley Hill Town Centre Partnership.

In presenting the report, and Appendix to the report, the Head of Economic Regeneration Delivery responded to a question raised by a member of the public earlier in the meeting, stating that the Parallel Route had opened up land for development, provided air quality and public transport benefits, and in addition to this, the Health and Social Care Centre which was under construction, both of which demonstrated that real investment continued in Brierley Hill.

The economic downturn was referred to, and it was stated that the Council and the newly formed regeneration company New Heritage Regeneration would be working closely with the private sector, traders, the community and elected members in order to secure significant, yet realistic development in Brierley Hill.

It was further reported that the Appendix to the report outlined the Membership of the Brierley Hill Town Centre Partnership, and it was confirmed that Councillor Ms Harris had been nominated to represent the Brierley Hill Ward.

The Area Liaison Officer also referred to the launch event that would take place on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2009 at 11am at the Dudley College Campus, Brierley Hill.

#### RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted on progress in the delivery of a Brierley Hill Town Centre Partnership, be noted.

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17

#### HIGHWAYS LINK BETWEEN DAWLEY BROOK AND WARTELL BANK, KINGSWINFORD

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted updating the Committee on issues related to the Highway Link between Dawley Brook Road and Wartell Bank, Kingswinford.

Arising from the presentation of the report, the Area Liaison Officer referred to an additional recommendation, to the Cabinet Member for Transportation, following concerns raised by Councillor Mrs D Harley, recommending that traffic engineers consider the provision of temporary or a permanent electronic speed sign to be sited appropriately on Wartell Bank and for an appropriate 20 mile per hour white road rings to be painted on the road to supplement the existing speed humps and 20 mile per hour signs. Officers would continue to monitor the situation over the following twelve months.

Councillor Mrs D Harley thanked Officers for their investigations and work surrounding the issues raised.



## RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report submitted, updating the Committee on issues related to the Highway Link between Dawley Brook Road and Wartell Bank, Kingswinford, be noted.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member for Transportation be informed that the Committee support the following recommendations:-
  - (a) That, the highways link between Dawley Brook Road and Wartell Bank, Kingswinford remain open.
  - (b) That Officers contact the businesses on the Trading Estate and seek their co-operation in minimising, as far as was practically possible, the disturbance to local residents.
  - (c) That traffic engineers consider the siting of a temporary or permanent electronic speed sign to be sited appropriately on Wartell Bank, Kingswinford and for appropriate 20 mile per hour white road rings to be painted on the road, with officers continuing to monitor the situation over the following twelve months.

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18

### RICHARDSON HALL CHARITY APPLICATION FOR GRANT.

A report of the Interim Director of Finance was submitted on the request for an application for funding from the Richardson Hall Charity.

## RESOLVED

That, subject to the remainder of the monies being secured by the Association, the application for funding made by the Wordsley and District Community Association in the sum of £6,000 as detailed in paragraph 3 of the report submitted be approved.

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19

### CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted in respect of four recommendations made at an informal meeting of Members held earlier that day on applications that had been received for a capital allocation.

The Area Liaison Officer, in informing the Committee of the recommendations made also referred to an updated request on a previously approved application and consideration of a deferred application.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the application received from Stourbridge Cricket Club be approved in the sum of £4,881 to purchase a roller, side screens and wicket covers, and that although this did not strictly comply with the criteria set for applications, the members considered that there were exceptional circumstances in that should the application be deferred to the October meeting the Cricket Club would be unable to utilise equipment until the following season.
- (2) That the application received from the Wordsley and District Community Association be approved in the sum of £5,000 to assist with the refurbishment of the Richardson Hall Cottage annex, and that although members noted that the Association had made a previous application within the three year rule limit, this had been in respect of a separate property, and therefore were minded to approve the application.
- (3) That in respect of the application received from Fens Pool Voluntary Association in the sum of £2,468 a maximum allocation of £4,000 be offered subject to the Association reporting back with details on the capital items required.
- (4) That the application received from 1<sup>st</sup> Bromley Pensnett Scout Group be approved in the sum of £4,485 for a new central heating system and to update facilities and, following the members recognition of the small membership, that the Brierley Hill Area Committee Community Renewal and Young People's Working Group be requested to contact the Scout Group in order to provide them with advice and support to promote the group.
- (5) That in respect of a previously approved application received from Barnardo's 'Time for Me' Project, further approval be given to the sum of £1,800 for this project being the sums of £900 to meet the shortfall from Central Dudley Area Committee and the sum of £900 not due to be considered by Stourbridge Area Committee until September 2009 and that should Stourbridge Area Committee be minded to approve their request for £900 in September this would be paid back to Brierley Hill Area Committee accordingly as this approach by Brierley Hill Area Committee would allow Barnados to progress the project now rather than wait until September

- (6) That the sum of £3,188 to purchase various items that would support all the IT tasks relating to a moving library project be approved in respect of a request made by Making People Happy Limited, subject to a representative from Making People Happy providing a verbal report to the meeting of the Capital Allocations Working Group in December, 2009 in relation to the items purchased with the allocated capital.
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20

MATTERS RAISED AT THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 2ND APRIL, 2009

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted updating the Committee on issues raised at its meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2009.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, updating the Committee on a number of issues raised at the meeting of this Committee held on 2nd April 2009, be noted.

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21

WARD ISSUES

Written responses to the Ward issues raised by Councillors Foster, Mrs D Harley, Mrs Jordan and Miller, in advance of the meeting were circulated to Members and the public present at the meeting prior to the start of the meeting. The questions received and responses given were as follows:-

- (a) In relation to Norwood Road junction with High St, Brockmoor - cars parking on double yellow lines near the junction, causing vehicles to swerve onto the pavement to avoid them when turning in. There have been several near-misses of injuries of pedestrians.

Response:

Although on-street parking in Norwood Road was evident, following regular visits by the parking enforcement officers, consisting of currently 57 visits within the previous two months, there had been no evidence to support the contention that parking on double yellow lines had been an ongoing problem in this area, however arrangements had been put in place for this situation to continue to be monitored in order that any necessary enforcement action could be considered accordingly.

- (b) With regard to the lights at the junction of Tennyson St/High St Pensnett opposite the Hospital, timescales for pedestrians to wait for light to turn green was too long, resulting in pedestrians crossing when still on red - some near misses reported.

## RESPONSE

Following a site visit and investigation in relation to the signals equipment on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2009 a fault had been found in the detector system, which had led to an automatic fixed time delay in the pedestrian phase. This matter had been referred to the maintenance engineers for repairs to be activated.

- (c) If the closure of Wartell Bank is not an option that the Council can pursue, please outline the options available for reducing the speed and/or flow of traffic in particular in relation to Heavy Goods Vehicles that utilise Wartell Bank as a rat run, ideally these options should offer access to businesses and also quality of life to local residents.

## RESPONSE

Notwithstanding any matters arising from the separate report on this Area Committee's agenda regarding the proposal to sever the vehicular link between Wartell Bank and Dawley Brook Road, Kingswinford, these particular roads have previously been traffic calmed with the installation of speed cushions/humps so that sufficient physical measures to control vehicular speeds should already be in place.

Therefore, since appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders are also in place and traffic surveys suggest that the volume of Heavy Goods Vehicles has decreased in recent years, any additions or modifications to the existing traffic management measures in Wartell Bank could have an adverse impact on a larger number of residents and businesses in the area.

In order to complement the existing signage and traffic calming measures, consideration could be given to additional signage targeted at raising driver awareness and increasing the visual impact of the prevailing speed limit.

- (d) Please provide an update, in relation to the scheme to install railings and possibly the widening of the Dudley Road, Wall Heath, as currently there is very little protection for pedestrians utilising this stretch of the pavement. It is also on route to the Church of Ascension School, and it had been agreed with Officers that measures should be taken before an accident occurred.

## RESPONSE

Whilst there are currently no proposals to widen Dudley Road, (which would be required to form part of a Highway Improvement Scheme), some minor works comprising of the installation of pedestrian guard railings, drop kerbs, tactile paving and footway resurfacing have recently been completed.

- (e) In relation to a road traffic accident involving a young person, Councillor Mrs Jordan had been contacted by Councillors Mrs Coulter and J Martin from Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews Wards, along with residents who live on the Stourbridge Road and adjoining roads with regard to a request for the siting of two pelican/toucan crossings on the Stourbridge Road, near to the junctions of Avenue Road and Cochrane Road.

As the location of these crossings is a cross ward boundaries issue Councillor Mrs Jordan fully supported their request and would like to be advised how the Council propose to deal with the matter.

## RESPONSE

The request for two new pedestrian crossings at these locations had also been raised by the Central Dudley Area Committee following its meeting on 9th June 2009 and the Cabinet Member for Transportation had agreed to:

- (a) Review the current proposals to introduce a pedestrian refuge along Stourbridge Road near to its junction with Avenue Road and assess the feasibility of introducing a pedestrian crossing. Subject to any technical considerations and the suitability of the site, this proposal would then be subject to a formal advertisement at which time observations and comments would be invited from the respective Ward Councillors, emergency services, bus operators and the general public.
- (b) With budgets for the current financial year already fully committed and lists of reserve schemes pending, should additional resources become available, the request for a pedestrian crossing near to the Cochrane Road junction will be added to the list of potentially suitable sites to be assessed later this year for possible inclusion in a future programme of works. Subject to the outcome of the assessment process, similar advertising and consultation procedures as those outlined above would also be applicable.
- (f) A request that urgent action be taken with regard to Pleasant Close, Kingswinford which was a narrow close with eleven properties, all of which were bungalows and all residents were either very close to or of retirement age, as parents who take their children to Glynne Primary School utilise the road to park, blocking driveways and parking on residents driveways without permission.

Concerns were also raised that it would be impossible for emergency services to reach any properties or even the school during school hours. This was a concern to the residents who feared that in the case of an emergency, which would be more likely at their age, ambulances may not be able to reach them.

The Ward members for Kingswinford South, had carried out a site visit together with a member of the transportation department and were amazed and appalled in relation to the amount of traffic in the small cul-de-sac, created a nuisance to residents and a danger to children and parents who had to walk on the roadway. This situation created an accident waiting to happen.

The Kingswinford South Ward members requested that double yellow lines be painted on this road with restrictions on parking from 8am to 6pm on school days only; indicating that this would be an acceptable and sensible solution to residents as this would stop parking, give peace to residents and safety to pedestrians.

The residents at present could not enter or leave their drives at main school times but had to wait until the main traffic had gone. The school held after school clubs and wrap around care meetings with parents arriving at 8am and collecting children as late as 6pm and there were schools in the borough which utilised this system, which could resolve problems that residents experienced with parking when their properties were situated within the vicinity of a school.

Although the school regularly issued newsletters to parents and did their best it was felt that the time had come to return this beautiful small cul-de-sac to the residents in order that they could live in peace and not have the parking problems outlined above, especially at the stage which they were at in their lives.

## RESPONSE

Officers have attended a number of site meetings with Ward Members and residents to discuss their concerns and appreciate the problems being experienced.

Whilst the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order would not provide an immediate solution due to the length of the current list of pending requests, it should also be noted that the use of double yellow lines could not be time limited as they mean no parking at any time.

The correct marking for limited waiting would be a single yellow line but, in any event, neither double nor single yellow lines would prevent drivers stopping to drop off or pick up passengers.

Officers have therefore, contacted their Police colleagues with a view to making periodic visits in order to address the obstructive parking issue and have also written to the Glynne Primary School requesting its School Governors to consider the nuisance that is being caused to their residential neighbours and consider closing the pedestrian access to the school from Pleasant Close as this could effectively curtail the current level of vehicular movements and associated indiscriminate parking.

- (g) In order to update the Committee in relation to a previous ward issue raised by Councillor Ms Harris, the Area Liaison Officer indicated that work should be completed in relation to the Nine Locks Community Centre by the end of July, 2009 providing a solution for the high level of the pavement outside the Community Centre.
- (h) In responding to Councillor Foster in relation to a question raised in respect of attendance by Police Representatives at the Brierley Hill Area Committee, the Area Liaison Officer confirmed that in addition to a J1 representative J2 representatives were also invited to the Area Committee meetings.
- (i) Following a question raised by a member of the Public relating to Quad Bikes being driven dangerously along Cot Lane, Kingswinford, Inspector S Bradbury confirmed that he would direct the concerns raised to colleagues, and report back to the next meeting of the Committee.

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21

#### SELECT COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

The dates of future meetings of the Council's Select Committees in the current municipal year were received and noted.

22

#### DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE AREA COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Chairman raised the issue of future venues for the Area Committees and it was stated that the members preferred venue was the Brier School and negotiations were continuing in order to try and secure this venue.

The dates of future meetings of the Committee in the current municipal year were received and noted.

The meeting ended at 8.55 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

BHAC/15