# STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE

# MONDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2012

AT 7.00PM AT HOB GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL HOB GREEN ROAD PEDMORE FIELDS STOURBRIDGE DY9 9EX

> If you (or anyone you know) is attending the meeting and requires assistance to access the venue and/or its facilities, could you please contact Democratic Services in advance and we will do our best to help you

JOSEF JABLONSKI ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OFFICER (DEMOCRATIC SERVICES) Internal Ext – 5243 External – 01384 815243 E-MAIL – josef.jablonski@dudley.gov.uk

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# **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

# **MEETINGS AT HOB GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

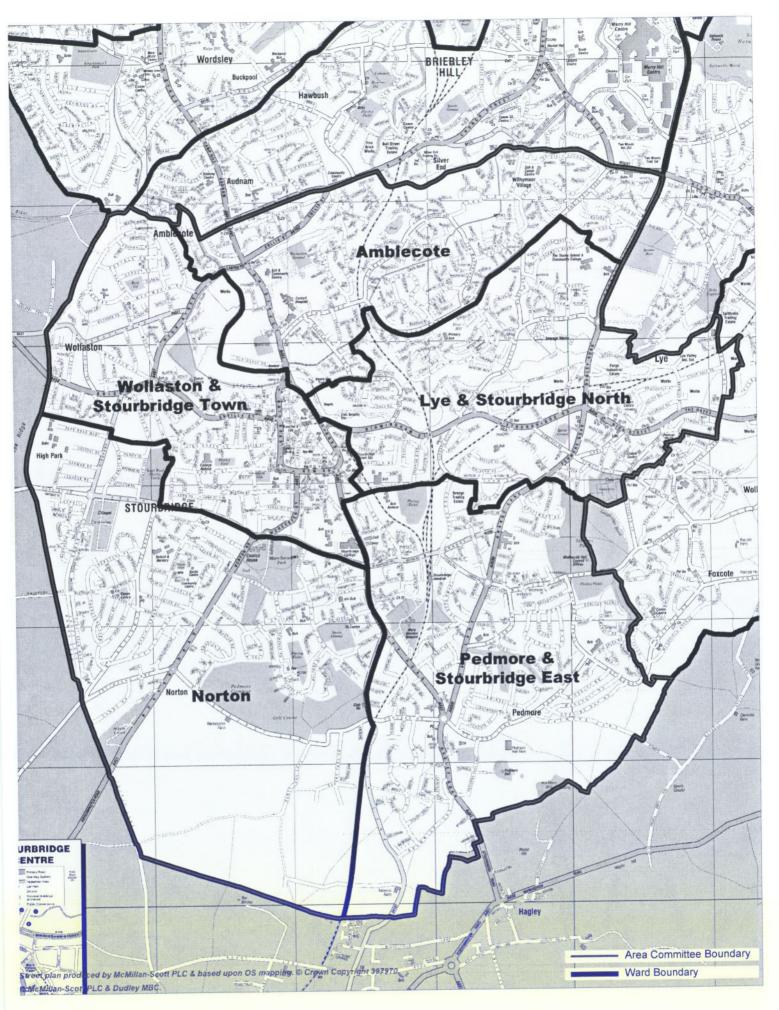
Welcome to the Hob Green Primary School

In the event of the alarm sounding, please leave the building by the nearest exit. There are Officers who will assist you in the event of this happening, please follow their instructions.

There is to be no smoking on the premises in line with national legislation. It is an offence to smoke in or on these premises.

Please turn off your mobile phones and mobile communication devices during the meeting.

Thank you for your co-operation.





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# **STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE**

### **Directorate of Corporate Resources**

Law and Governance, Council House, Priory Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 1HF Tel: (0800 555 2345) www.dudley.gov.uk



Your ref:

Our ref: JJ/jj

Please ask for: Mr J.Jablonski Telephone No. 01384 815243

1<sup>st</sup> October, 2012

**Dear Member** 

# Stourbridge Area Committee – Monday 15th October, 2012

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Stourbridge Area Committee on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2012 at 7.00 pm at Hob Green Primary School,Hob Green Road, Pedmore Fields, Stourbridge DY9 9EX**, to consider the business set out in the agenda below.

The agenda and reports for this meeting can be viewed on the Council's website <u>www.dudley.gov.uk</u> (Follow the links to Council Decisions and Committee Information).

#### Yours sincerely

PHILIP TART DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

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# <u>A G E N D A</u>

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

#### 3 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2012 (copy attached).

#### 4 RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

To acknowledge receipt of any petitions.

5 YOUTH MATTERS

To consider any youth matters raised.

6 POLICE MATTERS

To consider any matters raised by the West Midlands Police

7 FIRE SERVICE MATTERS

To consider any matters raised by the West Midlands Fire Service

8 PUBLIC FORUM (Thirty Minutes)

To respond to questions from the public of which prior notice has been given.

- 9 UPDATE ON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX SERVICES PRESENTATION BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF DUDLEY DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX
- 10 CONSULTATION ON THE REVIEW OF AREA COMMITTEES (PAGES 1-7)

To consider a report of Scrutiny Chairs

11 MARY STEVENS CENTRE,221 HAGLEY ROAD,OLDSWINFORD – LEASE TO DUDLEY MIND (PAGES 8 -10 )

To consider a report of the Director of Corporate Resources

12 GRANT ALLOCATIONS (PAGES 11 - 15)

To consider a report of the Area Liaison Officer.

13. ERNEST STEVENS TRUSTS – FINAL ACCOUNTS (PAGES 16- 28 )

To consider the report of the Treasurer

14. STEVENS PARK AND RECREATIONAL GROUND FOUNDATION TRUST (PAGES 29- 31)

To consider a report of the Treasurer

15 RESPONSES TO ISSUES (PAGES 32 -35)

To consider the report of the Area Liaison Officer.

16 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (IF ANY)

To consider any issues Members may wish to raise

17 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE 11.8 (IF ANY)

#### 18 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

All these meetings start at 6.00pm and are held in the Council House, Dudley.

Scrutiny Committee	<u>Dates</u>
Children's Services	14 <sup>th</sup> November,2012
	23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2013 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2013
Community Safety and Community Services	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2012 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2013 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2013
Environment	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2012 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2013 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2013
Health and Adult Social Care	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2012 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2013 26 <sup>th</sup> February, 2013 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2013
Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2012 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2013 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2013

Also, the Agendas for meetings of Scrutiny Committees include a public participation item at which point members of the public can speak to raise an item relating to the activities of the particular Scrutiny Committee. Please see below as to how this is dealt with.

More information about Scrutiny Committees can be found on the Council's Committee Management Information System (CMIS), which can be accessed via the Counci's website: http://cmis.dudley.gov.uk/cmiswebpublic, or the person whose details appear on the cover of this agenda.

Details about speaking at a Scrutiny Committee meeting or about Scrutiny Committees can be obtained by speaking to Joe Jablonski on (01384) 815243; e-mail josef.jablonski@dudley.gov.uk

#### 19 SCHEDULED DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The scheduled date and venue of the next meeting of the Committee is:-

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 at 7pm at Redhill School, Junction Road, Stourbridge DY8 1JX, although this meeting is unlikely to go ahead in light of the review of area committees referred to earlier in the meeting.

To:

# All Members of the Stourbridge Area Committee:

Amblecote Ward: Councillors Mrs Martin, Perks, Mrs Walker Lye & Stourbridge North Ward: Councillors Hanif, Herbert, Lowe Norton Ward: Councillors Attwood, Elcock, Mrs Rogers Pedmore & Stourbridge East Ward: Councillors Jones, Kettle, C Wilson Wollaston & Stourbridge Town: Councillors Hale, Knowles, Marrey Cradley and Wollescote: Councillors Body, Crumpton, Partridge

# STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE

#### <u>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2012 at 7.00 p.m.</u> <u>at Wollaston Community Village Hall,</u> <u>Bridgnorth Road, Wollaston, Stourbridge</u>

#### PRESENT-

Councillors Attwood, Elcock, Hale, Hanif, Herbert, L. Jones, Kettle, Knowles, Lowe, Marrey, Mrs. Martin, Perks, Mrs. Rogers, Mrs. Walker and C. Wilson and, following his co-option to the Committee, Mr. Downing.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NOT MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, WHOM HAVE EXERCISED THEIR ENTITLEMENT TO VOTE AT MEETINGS OF THE STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE

Councillors Body, Crumpton and Partridge.

#### OFFICERS:-

Acting Director of Children's Services (as Lead Officer to the Committee), Assistant Director Planning and Environmental Health and Group Engineer – Traffic and Road Safety (both Directorate of the Urban Environment), Youth and Community Worker, Early Years Youth and Education Services (Mr. Nasser), Principal Tax Accountant (Mrs. Robbins), Mr. T. Holder -Solicitor and Assistant Principal Officer - Democratic Services (Mr. Sanders) - all Directorate of Corporate Resources

#### ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Inspector Lambert (West Midlands Police), Mr Wood and Ms. Winpenny (both West Midlands Fire Service), Councillors Tyler and Mrs. Shakespeare (the latter, on behalf of Margot James, MP) and 25 members of the public.

#### 1. <u>ELECTION OF CHAIR</u>

#### RESOLVED

That Councillor Attwood be elected Chair of the Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

#### 2. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY CHAIR

In welcoming new Members, further to the local elections in May, 2012, Chair paid tribute to the service given by former members of the Committee, with particular reference to the late Councillor Adams.

In his address, the Chair asked members of the public who wished to ask questions under Agenda Item No. 12 (Public Forum), to do so by way of completion and submission of the question slips circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chair also indicated his intention that, where a question had been submitted in relation to an issue for which there was a substantive item on the Agenda, the question would be referred for consideration under the substantive item.

#### 3. <u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u>

Declarations of a Personal Interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made at this juncture by the Members below in relation to the issues indicated:-

Councillors L. Jones and Kettle in Agenda Item No. 13 (Ernest Stevens Trust - Mary Stevens Hospice: Consent for Alterations and to Sub-Let to Lymphcare Ltd.) in view of their Directorships of Mary Stevens Hospice.

Councillors Mrs. Martin and C. Wilson in Agenda Item No. 13 in view of their Trusteeships of Mary Stevens Hospice.

#### 4. <u>MINUTES</u>

#### RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to an amendment to the final paragraph of Minute 48(5) to reflect the specific decision of the Committee that a meeting between the member of the Bowls Club who raised the issue, Councillor Mrs. Martin and relevant officers in the Directorate of the Urban Environment, be arranged.

#### 5. <u>APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR</u>

#### RESOLVED

That Councillor C. Wilson be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

#### 6. <u>CO-OPTED MEMBERS</u>

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the co-option of Members to serve on the Committee for the 2012/13 Municipal Year. The Area Liaison Officer advised that Mr. G. Downing, Miss Hathway and Mr. Owen had indicated their willingness to stand for re-appointment but that the intentions of Mrs. P. Shepherd were currently unknown.

#### RESOLVED

(1) That the following persons be re-appointed as co-opted Members to the Committee for 2012/13 Municipal Year, representing the groups or organisations indicated:-

> Mr. G. Downing - Local Businesses Mr. Ryan Owen and Miss Nadia Hathway - Young People

- (2) That further enquiries be made to establish the wishes of Mrs Shepherd regarding the continuation of her service as a co-opted member and that the outcome be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.
- (3) That consideration be given to the appointment of further co-opted Members in accordance with the Protocol for Area Committees.

#### 7. <u>APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES</u>

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the appointment of representatives to various outside organisations for the 2012/13 Municipal Year.

#### RESOLVED

That appointments to the organisations indicated be made as follows:

(1) <u>Social Inclusion</u>

<u>Organisation</u>	Representative(s)	Period of Office
Mary Stevens Hospice	The 3 members of the Council for the Pedmore and Stourbridge East Ward	Annual

#### **Community Associations**

Lye Body Building Gym	Councillors Hanif and Herbert	Annual
Lye	The 3 members of the Council for the Lye and Stourbridge North Ward	Annual
Norton	Councillor Elcock	Annual
Withymoor	Councillors Mrs. Martin and Perks	Annual

(2) That the appointment of both Mrs. Martin and Perks to the Withymoor Community Association be subject to its being ascertained from the Association that they will accept the appointment of two Council representatives, rather than one.

#### 8. <u>RECEIPT OF PETITIONS</u>

The receipt of the following petitions since the previous meeting of the Committee and the action being taken was reported, as follows:-

- (a) a petition from local residents requesting the resurfacing of roads and pavements in Pedmore Court Road, in respect of which it had been indicated that the work would be undertaken early in 2013.
- (b) a petition from local residents, complaining of noise and traffic nuisance emanating from a public house in Stourbridge, both issues in respect of which were under consideration by the Directorate of the Urban Environment.
- (c) a petition opposing proposed tree felling at Stevens Road, Pedmore, which was under consideration by the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

#### 9. <u>YOUTH ISSUES</u>

The Youth and Community Worker, Mr. Nasser, reported orally on activities carried out by the Stourbridge Area Team over the Whitsun holiday, with particular reference to a project which addressed participation in, and promotion of, the Youth Council.

Mr Nasser also reported on activities proposed for four weeks over the school summer holidays, which included a week to be devoted to young people with disabilities. Other activities would involve open sessions, to which young people could register in July. Further details were to be distributed to local schools and through partner agencies. Mr Nasser also indicated that, through 2012, the Area Team would be engaging in a number of Borough-wide activities for young people, and which were aimed at building positive relationships and community cohesion.

In the discussion, Councillor Mrs. Walker referred to activities provided by voluntary organisations in the provision of youth activities, particularly for young people with disabilities, and which she considered extremely useful in the promotion of opportunities for socialisation, rather than being targeted for academic purposes.

#### RESOLVED

That the report now made by the Area Youth Worker and the comments made in the discussion, as indicated above, be noted.

#### 10. <u>POLICE ISSUES</u>

The new Community Police Inspector for Stourbridge, Inspector Dez Lambert, introduced himself to the Committee and was welcomed by the Chair.

Inspector Lambert then reported orally on issues pertinent to the Stourbridge Area, providing statistical information on crime by category in terms of the numbers and percentages of crimes recorded in comparison with the same 3 month period in the preceding year. For all types of crime, except vehicle crime, which had increased by 10%, the figures had shown a significant decrease, with overall victims of crime having reduced by 26% over the period. In relation to anti-social behaviour, Inspector Lambert invited the Committee and the public to contact the Police should they witness any incidents.

In relation to the issue of vehicular parking at Junction Road, as referred to in Minute No. 45 of the meeting of the Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, Inspector Lambert confirmed that the position was being monitored and that a visit had been made as recently as 24<sup>th</sup> June. The Inspector confirmed that no recent problems of vehicular obstruction had been noted or reported but acknowledged that this might be to be expected since the football season was not in progress. He confirmed that Junction Road would continue to be monitored.

In relation to the suggested opening of a small area of the Junction Road playing fields for vehicular parking, as referred to in minute number 45 of the meeting of the Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, a member of the public indicated that a lesser scheme than that referred to in paragraph 6 of the report at Agenda Item No. 20 for this meeting might be feasible and advocated the arrangement of a meeting between residents, the Police and the Council on the issue. The matter was referred to the Group Engineer - Traffic and Road Safety for a written response.

In response to a question, Inspector Lambert reported on the deployment of the local Police during the Olympic Games.

A member of the Halesowen Area Committee, who had transferred her voting rights to the Stourbridge Area Committee, asked for the crime figures for the Cradley and Wollescote Ward to be provided, in response to which Inspector Lambert provided overall figures for Cradley and Foxcote. He indicated that detailed figures could be provided to the Member following the meeting.

In relation to another question by a different Member, Inspector Lambert indicated that the highest numbers of recorded vehicle crime in the area of the Committee had been perpetrated in the Lye and Wollescote Ward. The Inspector also emphasised the role the public could play in reducing vehicle crime if they were to contact the Police if they viewed a situation where they suspected that a crime was to be committed.

In welcoming the installation of CCTV in a particular area, a Member advocated that Ward Councillors should be apprised of when and where these were to be installed. He also suggested that Ward Councillors be contacted by the Police when PACT meetings were to be held in their Wards.

#### RESOLVED

That the information above be noted and that the Group Engineer - Traffic and Transportation be asked to respond in writing to the person who raised the issue of the opening of the section of the Junction Road Playing fields referred to for parking provision.

#### 11. FIRE SERVICE MATTERS

Mr. Wood gave an oral report on fire matters, giving statistical information in relation to different types of incidents handled by the Fire Service, numbers having remained virtually unchanged since the previous meeting. The figures for accidental fires, both in the home and elsewhere, had reduced. False alarm call-outs had also reduced. Mr Wood indicated that, owing to a more challenging approach from the telephone operators to the caller in determining more exactly the nature of the incident the subject of the call, it had been possible to reduce the level of attendance to incidents. Mr. Wood reported on current on-going projects involving interface with young people, indicating that Key Stage 2 pupils had been visited in ten schools to provide advice in the areas of fire and road safety and healthy eating. Mr. Wood referred particularly to the work undertaken by the Fire Service in communicating with children on obesity and healthy living issues.

A question was asked by a member of the Committee on the areas most affected by arson, in response to which Mr. Wood agreed to respond direct to the Member. Mr. Wood also responded to a different member on a question regarding a particular incident.

#### RESOLVED

That the information given by Mr. Wood on behalf of the Fire Service be noted.

# 12. <u>PUBLIC FORUM</u>

(a) A resident of Studley Gate referred to a donation of £2,000 that had been made to the Friends of Swan Pool Park and enquired about what had happened to the monies. The same resident also asked about the provision of benches at Swan Pool Park.

#### RESOLVED

That these matters be referred to the Assistant Director Planning and Environmental Health for investigation and for a response to be sent to the questioner.

(b) Two local residents raised concerns about safety arising from the excessive speed of some vehicles using Studley Gate. One of the residents lived close to the brow of the hill and he spoke on the particular dangers caused by speeding vehicles at this section of the road. They were also concerned regarding noise nuisance emanating from speeding vehicles. Other resident living in the locality referred to anti-social behaviour perpetrated by young people at Swan Pool Park, with particular reference to the car park.

#### RESOLVED

(1) That the Assistant Director Planning and Environmental Health investigate the complaints about the speeding vehicles at Studley Gate with the Police and arrange for the Directorate of the Urban Environment to re-assess the need for a road safety scheme in the area.

- (2) That the Assistant Director Planning and Environmental Health confer with the Police on the issues of anti-social behaviour now reported.
- (3) That the issue of the gap by the barrier, as referred to in the discussion, be referred to the Directorate of the Urban Environment for consideration and report back.
- (c) A local resident referred to the poor condition of grass verges in Norton and Wollaston in response to which it was

# RESOLVED

That the Assistant Director Planning and Environmental Health look into this matter with Green Care and that she arrange for a detailed response to be sent to the questioner.

(d) The same resident drew attention to pot holes in the driveway to Wollaston Community Village Centre.

# RESOLVED

That this issue be referred to the Directorate of the Urban Environment for a response.

- (e) A member of the public complained of a lack of publicity given to the attendance of Councillors Body, Crumpton and Partridge at this meeting of the Committee and another member of the public questioned their eligibility regarding attendance. The Assistant Principal Officer (Democratic Services) reported on the terms of the resolution of the Annual Council Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2012, which permitted Members of other Area Committees to transfer their voting entitlement to a different Area Committee. A revised agenda, in which the names of Councillors Body, Crumpton and Partridge had been added had been circulated to Members and published on the Committee Management Information System in advance of the meeting.
- (f) Councillor Mrs. Martin presented a letter on behalf of the member of the public who had raised the issue of the bowls clubs at Wollescote Hall at the previous meeting of the Committee, as referred to in Minute 48(5), in which he had complained that no action had yet been taken regarding the meeting on the issue the Committee had resolved to be arranged.

In apologising for the delay in the response, the Assistant Director Planning and Environmental Health referred to the complexity of some issues that had had to be resolved before a round table meeting could be arranged, but confirmed that the Council was now in a position to proceed with the meeting.

#### RESOLVED

That the Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure arrange for the meeting to be held without delay.

(f) A question by member of the public asking how the figure of £193,000 for the construction of a footpath at Racecourse Lane had been arrived at was referred for consideration with the report on the matter at agenda Item No. 17.

#### 13. <u>ERNEST STEVENS TRUST - MARY STEVENS HOSPICE: CONSENT</u> FOR ALTERATIONS AND TO SUB-LET TO LYMPHCARE UK

A report of the Director of Corporate Resources was submitted seeking confirmation of the consent granted for alterations to Mary Stevens Hospice and the sub-let of office space at the Lodge at the Hospice to Lymphcare UK. Consent had been granted further to correspondence with the members of the Stourbridge Area Committee for 2011/12, as the then Trustees of the Hospice, in response to which no objections had been received.

#### RESOLVED

That the consent of the Committee, as Trustees to Mary Stevens Hospice, in permitting alterations and an extension to the Lodge at the Hospice, subject to planning consent, and to its sub-letting to Lymphcare UK, be confirmed.

#### 14. <u>CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS</u>

(During consideration of this item, Councillor Mrs. Walker declared a personal interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of paragraph 12 of the report, in view of her membership of the Amblecote Parochial Church Council).

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on applications received for funding from the Capital and Revenue budget of the Committee.

#### RESOLVED

(1) That grants be made to the organisations below for the purposes indicated:-

#### SAC/9

<u>Organisation</u>	Purpose of Grant	<u>Amount of</u> <u>Grant</u>	
Amblecote Church Hall Committee	Contribution towards the refurbishing and improvement of the stage area, including a new ceiling, stage curtains and installation of a staircase	£2,195.48	
Stourbridge Quakers	Contribution towards the cost of rectifying structural defects identified at the premises of the organisation in Scotts Road, Stourbridge	£5,000	
Youth 4em	Replacement of a pool table	£750	
Saturday Special - Amblecote Christian Centre	Contribution towards the purchase of flags, hats, prizes, medals, t-shirts and picnic lunches in relation to a Saturday Special Olympics Event to be organised by the body	£200	
Gigmill Methodist Church	Replacement of old chairs with new chairs, tables and storage trolleys and vertical blinds in connection with the refurbishment of the hall	£5,000	
That the action taken by the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the then Chair and Vice-Chair, Ward Members and other Members of the Committee in approving grants as set out below under the approved urgency provisions, for the reasons indicated in the report now submitted, be confirmed:-			
<u>Organisation</u>	Purpose of Grant	<u>Amount of</u> <u>Grant</u>	
4 <sup>th</sup> Stourbridge Wollaston Scouts Group	Contribution towards a project for the replacement and repair of tents and the provision of a marquee for joint activities and briefings	£1,740	

(2)

Wollescote Replacement of gas boiler £1,440 and St. Andrew's Scout Group

- (3) That the application now submitted on behalf of the Ruskin Mill Trust for a grant towards the purchase of four gazebos for the Glasshouse College be deferred in order that alternative options for the supply of the gazebos may be explored and that the matter be referred to the Assistant Director Planning and Environmental Health for the appropriate action to be arranged; and that, should it not be possible to obtain four gazebos from other sources, the matter be referred to the Capital and Revenue Allocations Working Group referred to in Minute (5) below for further consideration.
- (4) That the application by DIYYA for funding towards the provision of toys and laptops be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee to enable investigations to be made into whether or not it might be feasible for assets from the liquidated Humara Project, to which the Committee made a financial contribution, to be transferred to DIYYA.
  - (5) That a Capital and Revenue Allocations Working Group of the Committee, comprising the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee and one member of each ward, be appointed for the 2012/13 municipal year with the membership indicated below and that, should any ward representative be unable to attend, the Member be permitted to nominate a substitute from the ward to attend:-

Amblecote Ward - Councillor Mrs. Martin

Cradley and Wollescote Ward - Councillor Crumpton

Lye and Stourbridge North Ward - Councillor Lowe

Norton Ward - Councillor Mrs. Rogers

Pedmore and Stourbridge East Ward - Councillor Kettle

Wollaston and Stourbridge Town Ward - Councillor Marrey

# STEVENS PARK AND RECREATION GROUND FOUNDATION TRUST

15.

A report of the Treasurer was submitted seeking consideration for a request to change the purpose of a grant from the Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation Trust approved previously.

#### RESOLVED

That the change in the use of the grant previously awarded to Lye Cricket Club from the purpose of provision of a mobile training cage to the purpose of a slip-catch cricket cradle or other cricket equipment to the same value, be approved.

#### 16. HIGHWAYS MINOR WORKS CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2012/13

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted seeking support for the proposed programmes of work for local safety schemes, safer routes to school and pedestrian crossings within the area of the Stourbridge Area Committee for the 2012/13 financial year. The schemes proposed for the area were set out in the appendix to the report.

In the discussion, Councillor Mrs. Walker expressed the hope that the Penfields Road and Stamford Road Local Safety Scheme would address road safety issues for children arising from parking around Amblecote Primary School. She also expressed reservations about the impact the schemes proposed might have on traffic in Stourbridge generally and asked to be advised of the length of time envisaged the schemes would take to complete.

In response, the Group Engineer - Traffic and Road Safety indicated that detailed schemes had not yet been drafted but confirmed that consultation with Members would be accommodated at the appropriate time.

Councillor Crumpton indicated his view that there were areas in Stourbridge other than those specified in the report where road safety issues were in equal need of addressing, referring in particular to the area around Pedmore School of Technology. In response, the Group Engineer - Traffic and Transportation indicated that the proposals for all Area Committees had been drawn up in cognisance of the priorities which had emerged from the Council's accident reduction data. Councillor L. Jones and other members had doubts about the impact the proposal to reduce the speed limit in Grange Lane from 40 mph to 30 mph would have, since the proposed reduced speed limit was to apply from the uphill section and drivers tended to accelerate downhill. They did not, therefore, support this proposal.

#### RESOLVED

That the proposals be noted and the comments above referred to the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

#### 17. RACECOURSE LANE, STOURBRIDGE - TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted seeking consideration of traffic movements in Racecourse Lane, Stourbridge, further to Minute 48(4) of the meeting of the Committee held on the 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2012.

A local resident, Dr. Kumar, drew attention to a number of issues in the report which he considered to be erroneous. Consideration was also given at this juncture to the question submitted by Dr. Kumar which asked how the cost of £93,000 referred to in paragraph 8 of the report now submitted for the construction of a standard new 2-metre wide footway and ancillary work had been arrived at. He contended that a reduced scheme could be provided at a cost of some £30 to £35,000 and indicated the manner in which this could be achieved.

On consideration of this item, Councillor Mrs. Rogers suggested an alternative route from Racecourse Lane to Worcester Lane that might be feasible with lesser work necessary to the infrastructure than that referred to in the report.

While accepting the need for road safety along Racecourse Lane to be improved, the Chair also considered that, in the current financial circumstances, a business case for the Council to provide a footpath could not be made at the current time.

#### RESOLVED

That the Group Engineer - Traffic and Transportation be asked to refer this matter to the Cabinet Member for Transportation with a view to referring the issue of the safety of Racecourse Lane to the Department of Transport with a request for the introduction of a safety scheme, e.g. the widening of the road.

18. <u>LYE AND WOLLESCOTE CEMETERY CHAPEL - UPDATE ON</u> <u>PROGRESS ON FINDING A SUITABLE NEW USE AND SECURING</u> <u>EXTERNAL FUNDING FROM THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND</u>

> A report of the Director of the Urban Environment updating the Committee on the work of the West Midlands Historic Building Preservation Trust undertaken in partnership with the Council to find a new use for Lye and Wollescote Cemetery Chapel which was financially viable and sympathetic to its setting. The report also gave an update on the progress made in securing external funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the building, in order to facilitate the necessary repairs and to enable conversion to a new use.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the on-going work undertaken to date by the West Midlands Historic Building Preservation Trust (WMHBPT) in partnership with the Council in order to progress the project further be noted.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture be recommended that the existing "Heads of Terms" agreement between the WMHBPT and the Council be renewed and that a grant of £25,000 from the Council be made as partnership funding, if the HLF application is successful.
- (3) That an application be submitted to the HLF in June, 2012 by the WMHBPT (in partnership with the Council) for a Stage 1 bid and that the outcome of the application to the HLF be reported back to the Committee at a later date.

### 19. <u>DESIGNATION OF PLAYING-FIELDS IN COMMEMORATION OF QUEEN</u> ELIZABETH'S II FOR THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

This item was withdrawn.

### 20. <u>RESPONSES TO ISSUES</u>

A report of the Area Liaison Officer advising the Committee of written responses made to questions asked at the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2012 was submitted.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

#### 21. <u>ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE</u>

(During consideration of these issues, in respect of items (b) and (c) below, Councillor Crumpton declared a Personal Interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in view of the fact that he had taken his mother to a meeting of residents in relation to trees at Stevens Road).

(a) At the request of Councillor Mrs. Walker, it was agreed that the Group Engineer - Traffic and Transportation would look at the issue of speeding vehicles in the vicinity of Cobden Street, particularly at its junctions with other roads. The Group Engineer was also asked to consider road safety issues in the general area of Studley Gate.

- (b) With reference to the petition referred to earlier in the meeting, Councillor Kettle expressed his support for the retention of the trees proposed for felling in Stevens Road. He also asked for a protocol to be drawn up and put in place which would include a provision for local residents and Ward Members to be notified where it was proposed that large trees would be removed. The matter of the protocol was referred to the Assistant Director Planning and Environmental Health for consideration.
- (c) Councillor Crumpton referred to a meeting that would be taking place with residents, Council Officers and the Cabinet Member for Transportation and Community Safety on the issue of the trees at Stevens Road.

# 22. <u>SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PUBLICITY</u>

Forthcoming meetings of Scrutiny Committees were received and noted.

#### 23. FUTURE AREA COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The dates and venues of future meetings of this Committee were received and noted.

The meeting ended at 9.30 p.m.

CHAIR



# Stourbridge Area Committee – 15th October,2012

# Consultation on the Review of Area Committees

# **Report of Scrutiny Chairs**

# <u>Purpose</u>

 To outline proposals for a review of Area Committees. These proposals are subject to a consultation period from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 9<sup>th</sup> November 2012. Recommendations will then be submitted to the Cabinet and Council in November, 2012.

# **Background**

- 2. Scrutiny Committee Chairs met on 18th July and 19th September 2012 to discuss the existing Area Committee arrangements and options for change. They were concerned to address three key questions:-
  - What should area/neighbourhood meetings achieve?
  - How should they operate?
  - How do we move forward to change Area Committees?

This report draws from Members' discussion on these questions and sets out a proposal for a preferred option.

# 3. The need to change Area Committee arrangements

There is a general consensus that while Area Committees were useful following their establishment in 2000, subsequently they have become less relevant and appropriate. Some of the concerns around Area Committees are set out below:-

- They are too bureaucratic and formal, which is off-putting for local people to become interested and involved in;
- There is insufficient time devoted to local issues, and for the public to have an opportunity to comment on, or raise items;
- Meetings are an unsatisfactory mix of community engagement and council decision making;
- As there are only three meetings a year, this makes the Area Committees insufficiently responsive to local issues. There needs to be more regular opportunities for local people to discuss issues and engage with Elected Members;
- The Area Committee boundaries are in general, too large, and smaller

neighbourhood groupings would be preferable;

- They involve too much officer resource to attend each meeting;
- There is inconsistency in the links with other local events such as the PACT meetings, the Citizen First Panels etc.

#### 4. Purpose and Format

It is proposed that in future, Community Forums should be centred around the democratic representational role of local ward Councillors, therefore all Directorates should ensure that ward Councillors are briefed about key issues affecting their wards. The principal focus of Community Forums should be the opportunity for local people to engage with Councillors to discuss local issues.

- 5. There are clear links to the Government's Localism agenda and the principles of the Localism Act 2011 in terms of effective community engagement. Therefore, while members would take a lead role in a meeting, there should be a clear focus on community engagement and members should encourage community participation.
- 6. To assist in developing that role, the Council will consider advice from Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (DCVS), drawing on their experience of managing community events and make use of a series of development sessions for Members before the launch of the new Community Forums.
- 7. In addition, information is available about recent work nationally and locally which considers the democratic role of elected members in the context of the Localism Act. This advice could be used in future Member development sessions.

#### 8. Geography

The geographic coverage of the Community Forums ideally should be less than those of the Area Committees.

- 9. Various options have been considered, all based on existing ward geography and all returning a greater number of forum areas focussing on smaller, more local areas. The options put forward were based on 8, 9, 10 and 12 forum areas. Inevitably, some groupings are more naturally aligned than others and are easier to describe. However, any change to one boundary cannot fail to have knock-on consequences across the rest of the Borough.
- 10. The preferred option of Scrutiny Chairs is the 9 forum model in recognition of the need to keep to a manageable minimum the support resource required. This is shown as Appendix 1.

- 11. This proposal creates areas that vary between 25,044 and 47,899 in terms of whole population (2010 estimates). See Appendix 2 for details. In particular, the Scrutiny Chairs recognised that the largest Forum would be in Halesowen and noted that this represented the current Halesowen Area Committee with the exception of the Cradley and Wollescote ward. In putting forward this preferred option, Scrutiny Chairs acknowleged that consultation would be necessary with all ward Councillors and the public before a final decision is taken by the Council.
- 12. It is important to note that flexibility can be retained so that, for example, members and the public should be able to attend adjoining forums on matters that transcend boundaries, if they wish.

# 13. Management and Resourcing

Firstly, the new structure is to be funded from existing resources.

- 14. Meetings will be less bureaucratic and move away from stereotype "Council Committee" format:-
  - Forums to meet in locally accessible venues (5 meetings per year);
  - Focus on public forum/ward issues and area funding;
  - Standard times of all meetings to be 6.30pm 8.30pm (making it easier to publicise across the Borough);
  - Removal of microphone/sound system;
  - No special meetings to be called in view of increased frequency;
  - Rooms to be set out informally;
  - Officer attendance to be <u>only</u> one Senior Officer and a Democratic Services Officer to take a note of issues requiring action/response (bullet point informal minutes);
  - No written committee reports;
  - No separate working groups/pre-meetings (except for discussing funding applications if necessary). However, local ward meetings can take place on specific issues should ward councillors wish to arrange these.
- 15. However, it is important to ensure that there is an audit trail of the business of meetings and what happens to issues raised at them, otherwise there is scope for community issues to be lost with no apparent action outcome. For example, an issue might have a number of "destinations" depending on its nature, including:-
  - Straightforward service response from the appropriate Directorate;
  - Report to a Scrutiny Committee; a Regulatory Committee; a Cabinet Member or the Cabinet and Full Council;
  - Referred to local partners such as police, fire, health;
  - Bullet point Forum minutes to be reported in White Book to full Council.

# 16. Communication and Media

Community Forums will be publicised through all available channels such as Council website, Twitter, Facebook, media releases. Other publicity to be more targeted depending on local issues identified by ward Councillors rather than a 'blanket' approach.

- 17. Dates to be programmed in the Council Calendar with all Community Forums meeting in the same week (i.e. from Monday Thursday), but ensuring that neighbouring Forums are not on the same night. This makes it easier to publicise meetings during identified 'democracy weeks' and councillors to attend neighbouring Forums as necessary.
- 18. Agendas to be focussed on local issues, with input from partners when necessary to avoid duplication with other meetings.

#### 19. Venue

The proposal is to use existing community centres or venues provided by local groups, although these may need to be augmented by other premises where appropriate. However, this is a matter that can be left to local discretion.

#### 20. The Way Forward

The Scrutiny Chairs have considered how to take this forward as follows:-

- Approve a process of consultation with Members of the Council, partner organisations and the general public during October/early November 2012 (based on the preferred option);
- Special meeting of the Cabinet to be held 13th November 2012 with a view to making recommendations to full Council on 26th November 2012.
- 21. A development programme for both members and supporting officers to be arranged between December 2012 and February 2013.
- 22. New Forums to be launched in February 2013 (the Area Committees previously programmed in 2013 will no longer take place).
- 23. Build in a process of ongoing review to ensure the new arrangements remain flexible. Community Forum Chairs, Vice Chairs and Lead Officers to meet regularly (i.e. after each cycle initially) with a full review after 12 months.
- 24. The Scrutiny Committee Chairs, at their meeting on 19th September 2012, recommended that the proposals in this report be accepted as the preferred option for consultation.

# <u>Finance</u>

- 25. Costs will be met within existing budgetary allocations.
- 26. Area Grant allocations will remain as £10,000 per ward. Funding to be allocated by the Director of Corporate Resources on the recommendation of each Community Forum.
- 27. Members' allowances payments to be retained for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the new Community Forums but these will be contained within the existing budget allocation (pending a review of the Members Allowances Scheme in 2013).

# Law

28. Area Committees are currently established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.

# Equality Impact

29. The report takes into account the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

# **Recommendations**

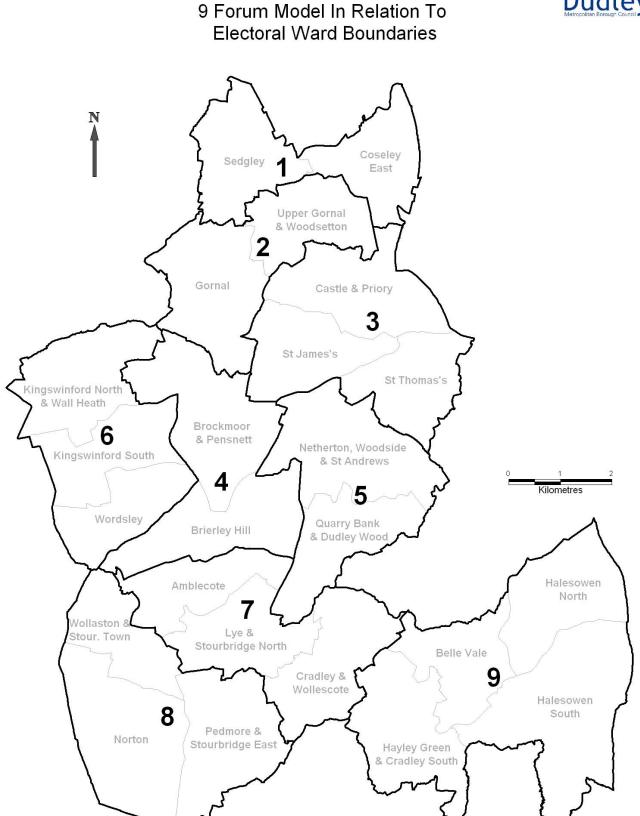
- 30. That comments on developing the proposals in this report be submitted to the Director of Corporate Resources by the deadline of 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2012.
- 31. That comments and views received during the consultation period be collated and considered by the Cabinet and Council during November, 2012.

Please submit comments to:

Philip Tart Director of Corporate Resources The Council House, Priory Road, Dudley West Midlands DY1 1HF

Telephone: 01384 815300 Email: <u>philip.tart@dudley.gov.uk</u>





Source: Corporate Policy & Research, Dudley M.B.C. Produced by: NL, 20/09/2012, Corporate Policy & Research Team, Dudley M.B.C. © Crown Copyright and database right 2012. Ordnance Survey 100019566.

#### 6

Area No.	No. of Wards	Electoral Wards Covered	Population	Variance From Average Population
1	2	Coseley East / Sedgley	25,044	- 9,107
2	2	Gornal / Upper Gornal and Woodsetton	26,133	- 8,018
3	3	Castle and Priory / St. James's / St. Thomas's	41,848	+ 7,697
4	2	Brierley Hill / Brockmoor and Pensnett	26,483	- 7,668
5	2	Netherton, Woodside and St. Andrews / Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	27,462	- 6,689
6	3	Kingswinford North and Wall Heath / Kingswinford South / Wordsley	37,597	+ 3,446
7	3	Amblecote / Lye and Stourbridge North / Cradley and Wollescote	38,568	+ 4,417
8	3	Norton / Pedmore and Stourbridge East / Wollaston and Stourbridge Town	36,328	+ 2,177
9	4	Belle Vale / Halesowen North / Halesowen South / Hayley Green and Cradley South	47,899	+ 13,748
		Average Population	34,151	

#### **APPENDIX 2 : Indicative Population Figures For Community Areas: 9 Forum Model**

Source: 2010 Mid-Year Population Estimates, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Notes:

1. The population figures are based on aggregations of Electoral Wards.

2. 2010 is the latest year for which Mid-Year Population Estimates are available. The scope of these Mid-Year estimates is limited to population figures by age and sex; other demographic and socio-economic data at the ward level is available but must be sourced from the 2001 Census.

3. Data from the 2011 Census at the Ward level is due to be published in the second phase of 2011 Census outputs scheduled for November 2012 - February 2013.

This will enable the data presented here to be updated to give a more accurate picture of the population.

4. The summed variance from average population may not equal the average population due to rounding.



# Stourbridge Area Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2012

# Report of the Director of Corporate Resources

### Mary Stevens Centre, Hagley Road, Oldswinford - Request to Grant Lease to Dudley MIND of part of 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

#### Purpose of Report

1. To obtain consent from the Stourbridge Area Committee as Trustees of the Ernest Stevens Trust to formalise the occupation of Dudley MIND by way of a lease.

#### **Background**

- 2. Dudley MIND has been in occupation of part of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Mary Stevens Centre, Hagley Road, Oldswinford for a number of years, as shown marked on the plan attached.
- **3.** Dudley MIND is a mental health charity that aims to improve the mental health of people in the Borough of Dudley and assist the recovery of those who have mental health problems, but there is no formal agreement for their occupation.
- 4. Dudley MIND therefore needs to regularise their occupation and require the Council to consider granting them a lease of part of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Mary Stevens Centre. It is therefore proposed to grant a lease at a peppercorn, provided Dudley MIND meets the requirements of the Charity Commission Scheme under which the Council owns and manages the property.
- 5. Mary Stevens Centre forms part of the Ernest Stevens Trust where Stourbridge Area Committee are the Trustees. Consent of the Stourbridge Area Committee is therefore required for a lease to be granted to Dudley MIND.

#### **Finance**

6. There are no financial implications to the Trustees.

#### <u>Law</u>

- 7. The Council is the registered Trustee of the charity and in accordance with the Councils Constitution has delegated the administration of the charity to the Stourbridge Area Committee.
- 8. Section 139 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to accept, hold and administer gifts of property, where it enables them to discharge any of their functions and where the gifts are for the purposes of benefiting the inhabitants of their area.

**9.** The Law relating to Trusts which are charitable is contained in various legislations. The key legislations being the Charities Acts 1960, 1992, 1993 and the Trustees Investment Act 1961.

# **Equality Impact**

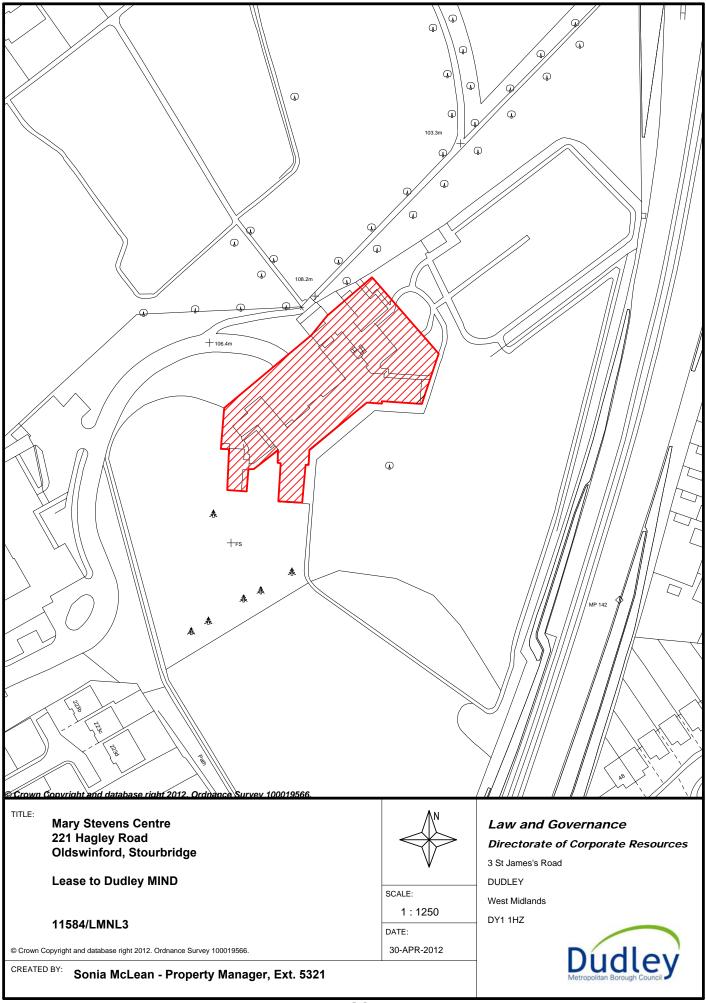
**10.** The proposal takes into account the Council's equal opportunities policies.

#### **Recommendation**

**11.** It is recommended that the consent of Stourbridge Area Committee as Trustees be granted to approve the lease to Dudley MIND.

Philip Tart Director of Corporate Resources

Contact Officer: Sonia McLean – Property Manager Telephone: 01384 815321 Email: sonia.mclean@dudley.gov.uk





# Stourbridge Area Committee – Grant allocations

### <u>15<sup>th</sup> October 2012</u>

#### **Report of the Area Liaison Officer**

#### Purpose of Report

1. To consider the applications for Area Committee capital allocations.

#### **Background**

- 2. The Area Committee has an unallocated revenue budget of £69,845.14 for 2012/13. This is after those grants that have been approved by the Area Liaison Officer in consultation with members as detailed below.
- The unallocated budget is also after £10,000 has been set aside in 2012/13 towards the cost of the repair of the gates at Mary Stevens Park. This was agreed at this meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and currently the total amount set aside is £50,000.
- 4. The Area Committee has previously agreed that contributions from the budget will be limited to £5,000 unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. Spending proposals are invited from members of the Area Committee, the public, representative organisations and Council directorates, and each proposal is assessed against the following criteria:-
  - a. The allocation can be spent on revenue or capital schemes. Capital is defined by legislation, i.e. "one-off" type expenditure on acquisition, construction, enhancement of land, roads, buildings, equipment or vehicles, which may also include the making of grants or loans for capital expenditure by others;
  - b. For projects with a value of over £1,500 applications will only be approved if the applicant can demonstrate that they will secure at least 50% of the cost of the project either from their own resources of from some other funding.
  - c. The applicant has not been awarded an allocation by the Committee or a grant from the Stevens Trust within the preceding two years.

Except, in either point (b) or (c), in the opinion of the Area Committee, there are special circumstances which would warrant the approval of the application in the public interest.

- d. Schemes should contribute to the Community Plan and should not conflict with existing Council policy;
- e. Schemes should be for the general benefit of the wider community, i.e. not just for the benefit of individuals or specific groups, and should make a

difference in the local area;

- f. Schemes should not result in any ongoing revenue cost to the Council;
- g. Consideration should be given to schemes which might generate external funding (i.e. using the allocation as match-funding);
- h. Spending must be in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and demonstrate Best Value; and
- i. Approved allocations must normally be claimed within six months.
- j. Application forms and supporting documents can be viewed by Members on request to the Area Liaison Officer

#### **Applications**

#### 5. The United Church, Lye.

The applicant is a Methodist Church based in Upper High Street, Lye and currently has 55 members.

The premises are used as a place of worship and also by the community for many activities including, 2 luncheon clubs, dance school, arts classes, Girls and Boys Brigades.

A request is made for a grant of £5,000 towards a total project cost of £15,298 to replace an existing lift.

This lift is over 30 years old and repairs are becoming frequent and costly because parts have to be specially made due to its age. It is necessary for the elderly and disabled to reach the first floor to have access to the activities. It does not comply with current legislation regarding disability access and cannot be used by wheelchair users.

The accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011 show a surplus £1,296.88 and balances held as cash or at the bank of £67,393.79. However it should noted that this money is being held to undertake some necessary property repairs in the Autumn.

Due to the urgency of this request the Area Liaison Officer in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Ward members authorised the request.

#### 6. Smartfest

The group requested a grant of £3,991 towards a total project cost of £6,943 to allow free to access events during the Stourbridge Music Arts Rhythm and Theatre Festival. Due to the timing of the request the Area Liaison Officer in consultation with the members of the Committee agreed to use the urgency powers and awarded the grant.

#### 7. Pedmore Senior Citizens Club

The applicant is a group based at St Peter's Centre, Pedmore Lane, Pedmore and

currently has 60 members. The objective of the group is to provide a social meeting for the elderly and lonely, where they can enjoy meals, entertainment and outings.

A grant of £445 is requested towards the running costs of the group which include monthly rent of the facilities and speaker/entertainers costs.

The group is funded by an entrance fee of £1.50 and other fund raising events.

The Council have contributed £475 in 2011 towards the cost of outings.

The accounts for the year to  $31^{st}$  December 2011 show cash and bank balances of £1,537.76.

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved.

# 8. Age UK Dudley

The applicant provides support for people in the Borough of Dudley to make more of later life by providing high quality, innovative and responsive services that meet diverse needs. This enables older people to have greater choices and expands the involvement and participation of local older people in community life. Currently it supports 20,000 people within the borough each year.

An application for a grant was submitted to Central Dudley Area Committee Grants Working Group for £3,694.68 being the total cost of replacing and updating IT equipment at the Netherton Head Office to support the administration of the Age UK service within the Borough of Dudley. Members of this group felt that because it benefited the whole borough, each Area Committee should consider granting £740 from its resources.

The accounts submitted for the year ended  $31^{st}$  March 2011 show fixed assets (including investments) £233,559 and net current assets (mainly cash at bank) £86,301. Some of these funds are held for designated or restricted purposes, with £96,223 available for general use.

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved.

#### 9. Chawn Hill Church

The applicant is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee and requests a grant of £4,260 towards a total project cost of £8,520 to improve the centre building and install sports flooring.

The building is used for a number of activities including youth clubs, mums and tots groups and is also used by Dudley Rethink (A support group for carers), University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age (U3A), Zumba classes and parties.

The Church has supplied unaudited financial statements from 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011 for the limited company which show no assets and no reserves during which period the company was dormant.

It has also supplied the unaudited financial statements for the charity which show  $\pounds 65,411$  surplus of resources for the year ended  $31^{st}$  December 2010 and net current assets of £14,496. During the financial year the church was also able to repay the church mortgage which was £100,000.

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved.

# 10. Pedmore Neighbourhood Watch

The Association aims to promote good citizenship and greater public participation in the prevention and solution of crime, and to provide an effective liaison between the police and public and meets at the St Peter's Centre, Pedmore.

A request is made for a grant of £325.18 to purchase a new printer along with replacement cartridges which will be used to produce quarterly newsletters, notices, agendas and minutes and accounts.

The applicant has supplied its constitution and accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 which show a small deficit with a bank balance of £512

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved.

## 11. Caledonia Residents Association

The Association aims to improve the quality of life for residents of the area and to protect and improve the character, amenities and resources of the area.

A request is made for £5830 towards a total project cost of £6530 to excavate car park in Grosvenor Way and to replace with hardcore and tarmac.

The applicant has supplied its constitution, estimates for the work, accounts for the year to  $30^{th}$  June 2012, and a copy bank statement which shows a balance of £1686.07 on  $17^{th}$  July 2012.

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved on the basis of exceptional circumstances justifying a grant over £5,000.

## **Finance**

12. The Area Committee's delegated budget allocation is funded by the Council's revenue resources. The current position with regard to available resources is set out in paragraph 2 of this report.

# Law

13. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, enables the Council to do any thing which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of the Borough or any part of it.

# **Equality Impact**

14. This report complies fully with the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

# **Recommendation**

15. It is recommended that the Committee :

- a. note the grants awarded in paragraph 5 and 6 and
- b. consider the applications as detailed in paragraph 7-11 of the report.

**Area Liaison Officer** 

Contact Officer: Jane Porter

Telephone: 01384 814201

Email: jane.porter@dudley.gov.uk



# Stourbridge Area Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2012

# Report of the Treasurer

# The Ernest Stevens Trusts – Final Accounts

# Purpose of Report

1. To consider, approve and sign the accounts of the individual Trusts comprising the Ernest Stevens Bequests

# **Background**

- 2. Ernest Stevens made various donations of property to the Council, which were to be used for specific purposes. These have been identified as individual Trusts and detailed below:
- a.) Mary Stevens Maternity Home and Public Park Charity
- b.) Mary Stevens Park, recreation Ground and Park, Norton
- c.) Stevens Park, Quarry Bank
- d.) Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation, Wollescote
- 3. Only the Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation has investments, which generate income for disbursement.
- 4. Members will be aware that the four Ernest Stevens Trusts are now combined under the control of this Committee.
- 5. The annual income of the Stevens Park & Recreation Ground Foundation Trust may be applied under the terms of the Trust Deed in one or more of the under-mentioned ways:-
- a) the maintenance and improvement of the property for the time being belonging to the Foundation;
- b) the acquisition and layout of additional land to be held in Trust;
- c) the maintenance and the improvement of property held under the terms of the original Trusts dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 1929 and 13<sup>th</sup> February 1931.
- d) the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life of residents in the area of the former Borough of Stourbridge.
- 6. In so far, in the opinion of the Council, that the net income of the Trust cannot be usefully and beneficially applied in accordance with the

provisions in the foregoing paragraph, it may be applied for such other charitable purposes for the benefit of persons resident within the former Borough of Stourbridge as the Council may determine.

- 7. In the application of the income of the Foundation, the Council should give preference to the area of the former Urban District of Lye and Wollescote and to meeting the needs of the people resident therein.
- 8. The Charity Commission have confirmed in view of the fact that the Council uses funds from its mainstream budget to maintain and improve Mary Stevens Park, the Area Committee, as Trustees is able to allocate any surplus income available to the Trust, to award grants under clause 7(2) of the 1966 Scheme as outlined in Paragraph 6.
- 9. The Charity Commission has also advised that any funds from the Council's mainstream budget to further the objects of the Charity should be shown as income and expenditure in the Charity's accounts
- 10. The Statement of Accounts for each of the Trusts are shown in Appendix 1.

## **Finance**

- 11. The accounts of the Trust have been independently examined by the Head of Audit Services. The accounts and the signed Independent Examiner's certificate will be sent to the Charity Commissioners, after approval by the Trustees.
- 12. The investment of resources is regulated by the Trustee Investment Act 1961. This Act puts limits on the power of Trustees in investing the funds in stocks, shares and bonds

## <u>Law</u>

- 13. The Council is the successor of the former Stourbridge Council by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972
- 14. Section 139 of the Local Government Act, 1972 empowers the Council to accept, hold and administer gifts of property, where it enables them to discharge any of their functions, and where the gifts are for the purposes of benefiting the inhabitants of their area
- 15. The conditions under which a gift is to be administered, are contained in the Deed creating the Trust, and any subsequent schemes made by the Charity Commission.
- 16. The law relating to Trusts, which are charitable, is contained in various Acts, the main ones being the Charities Act, 1960, the Charities Act 1992 and 1993 and the Trustee Investment Act, 1961

# Equality Impact

17. The Trusts have been set up to benefit the public of the Borough of certain geographical areas of the Borough as outlined in the Deeds of Gift

## **Recommendation**

- 18. It is recommended that:-
- a) The Committee approve the accounts of the Trusts, on behalf of the Council in their capacity as Trustees
- b) The Chair be authorised to sign the accounts

Mermon

Treasurer

Contact Officer: Diane Robbins, Principal Accountant Telephone: 01384 811394 Email: diane.robbins@dudley.gov.uk

# STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS OF ERNEST STEVENS TRUST BALANCE SHEETS AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2012

# 1. <u>MARY STEVENS MATERNITY HOME & PUBLIC PARK CHARITY</u> (REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 203087)

	2012 <u>£</u>	2011 £
ASSETS Land and Buildings	358,500	358,500
TOTAL ASSETS	358,500	358,500
RESERVES Revaluation Reserve	358,500	358,500
TOTAL RESERVES	358,500	358,500

#### 2. <u>MARY STEVENS RECREATION GROUND AND PARK</u> (REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 523195)

A 00570	<u>2012</u> <u>£</u>	2011 <u>£</u>
ASSETS Land and Buildings	1,600,000	1,600,000
TOTAL ASSETS	1,600,000	1,600,000
RESERVES Revaluation Reserve	1,600,000	1,600,000
TOTAL RESERVES	1,600,000	1,600,000

# 3. <u>STEVENS PARK, QUARRY BANK</u> (REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 219690)

ACCETC	2012 <u>£</u>	2011 <u>£</u>
ASSETS Land and Buildings	64,000	64,000
TOTAL ASSETS	64,000	64,000
RESERVES Revaluation Reserve	64,000	64,000
TOTAL RESERVES	64,000	64,000

#### Notes to the Balance Sheets

(i) The Land & Buildings assets have been revalued as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 in accordance with the RICS Appraisal & Valuation Manual. The valuation was undertaken by Dudley MBC, Corporate Resources Directorate and reflects the various lease and licence arrangements in operation.

# STEVENS PARK AND RECREATION GROUND FOUNDATION TRUST STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR TO 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2012

	<u>Note</u>	Unrestricted Endowment		Total Funds	
		<u>Funds</u>	<u>Funds</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
		£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources	(2)	219,222	-	219,222	191,252
Resources Expended	(3)	203,107	-	203,107	184,118
(Net Resources Expended)/Net Incoming Resources		16,115	-	16,115	7,134
<u>Other Recognised Gains</u> and Losses.					
Gain (Loss) on revaluation of investments.	(5)	2,610	1,932	4,542	4,246
Gain (Loss) on revaluation of property	(4)	-	-	-	-
Net Movement in Funds		18,725	1,932	20,657	11,380
Reconciliation of Funds:					<u> </u>
Total Funds Brought Forward		268,235	605,380	873,615	862,235
Total Funds Carried Forward		286,960	607,312	894,272	873,615

# STEVENS PARK AND RECREATION GROUND FOUNDATION TRUST BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2012

	Note	<u>201</u>	<u>2012</u>		<u>2011</u>	
		£	£	£	£	
Fixed Assets						
Land & Buildings	(4)		461,850		461,850	
Investments	(5)		321,622		317,080	
		_	783,472	_	778,930	
Current Assets						
Sundry Debtors	(6)	3,747		3,747		
Dudley MBC		112,477		95,932		
COIF Deposit Account		6		6		
		116,230		99,685		
Less Current Liabilities						
Creditors						
Grants approved (not paid)	(7)	5,430		5,000		
Net Current Assets			110,800		94,685	
Net Assets		_	894,272	-	873,615	
Represented by:						
Permanent Endowment			607,312		605,380	
Unrestricted Funds		_	286,960	_	268,235	
		_	894,272	_	873,615	
		_		-		

Chairman ...... Date .....

For and on behalf of the Trustees.

# **STEVENS PARK AND RECREATION GROUND FOUNDATION TRUST**

# NOTES ON FINAL ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2012

# 1 Accounting Policies

In preparing the accounts the following accounting policies have been complied with:

- These accounts have been prepared under the historic cost convention with the exception that the investments are valued at market value. The accounts are in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP 2005 (Accounting and Reporting by Charities) and comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2005 issued under the Charities Act 1993.
- Investment Income is recorded when receivable
- Expenditure on grants is recorded once the Trust has made a commitment to pay the grant and this is communicated to the beneficiary or the grant paid, whichever is the earlier. The Trust requests that all grants are paid within 6 months of being awarded.
- Other expenditure is included in the accounts on an accruals basis.
- Quoted investments have been valued at market value at the balance sheet date.
- Unrealised and realised investment gains and losses are shown net in the statement of financial activities.
- Depreciation is not provided for in the accounts. This is in line with current Council policy that depreciation is not accounted for on land and buildings which are properly maintained.
- The Charity Commission has advised that maintenance funded from the budget of the Council should be included in the Charity accounts.

## 2 Income

Income received was as follows:

	2012 £	2011 £
Interest Income Rental Income	16,149 1,116	15,965 1,116
Maintenance Funded by Dudley MBC	201,957	174,171
	219,222	191,252

#### 3 Expenditure

The expenditure for the year comprised:

	2012	2011
	£	£
Grants	1,150	9,947
Maintenance	201,957	174,171
	203,107	184,118

#### <u>Grants</u>

The expenditure included grants committed in the year of £1,150 (£9,947 in 2011).

Other expenditure incurred was maintenance of £201,957 (£174,171 in 2011) funded by Dudley MBC.

#### 4 Land and Buildings

The revaluation was undertaken by Dudley MBC, Corporate Resources Directorate, as indicated in a report dated 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008. Property occupied by Dudley MBC has been classified as Operational and valued on the basis of Existing Use Value with the remainder classified as Non-operational and valued on the basis of Open Market Value (definitions of the bases are contained in RICS Appraisal and Valuation Manual). All valuations reflect the stipulations, restrictions and covenants contained in the relevant Deed of trust.

	2012	2011
	£	£
Land and Buildings	461,850	461,850

#### 5 Investments

Investments are stated at the market value to comply with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice 2005. The market value of investments as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 was £321,622

	Original Value	Market Value 31/03/12	Market value 31/03/11	Unrealised (Loss) Gain
	£	£	£	£
COIF Fixed Interest	118,000	127,554	121,275	6,279
COIF Equity Based	118,000	194,068	195,805	(1,737)
	236,000	321,622	317,080	4,542

# 6 Analysis of Debtors

The debtors figure is investment income due (2011 investment income due)

# 7 Analysis of Grants Not Yet Claimed

The following grants were outstanding at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2012	
Lye Cricket Club	£430
15 <sup>th</sup> Stourbridge (Norton & St Michael's) Scout Group	<u>£5000</u>
	£5430

# TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR TO 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2012

# History, Objectives and Activities of the Trust

The Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation Trust was constructed by a Deed of Gift dated 29<sup>th</sup> September 1930 and varied by a scheme dated 24<sup>th</sup> May 1966. The Trust is registered charity, number 523196.

The Charity is established for the following purposes:

- (a) to maintain and improve property belonging to the Foundation
- (b) to acquire land to be held in trust for the Foundation
- (c) to maintain and improve property held by the following registered charities:

		<u>Registered</u> Charity No.
1.	Mary Stevens Maternity Home and Public Park	203087
2.	Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge	523195

(d) to provide recreation facilities to improve the conditions of life for persons resident in the Borough of Stourbridge, with preference given to Lye and Wollescote.

# **Management and Governance Arrangements**

The Trustee of the charity is Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council which has delegated its power to the Stourbridge Area Committee.

# **Procedures and Policy for Grant making**

Grant applications are reported to the Stourbridge Area Committee which meets three times per year. Any urgent applications can be considered for approval by the Area Liaison Officer and the Chairman of the Committee. Organisations normally submit a formal application explaining how the funds will be used, what would be achieved if the grant was awarded and their financial position.

The Trustees have a policy that the grant should be for capital items and a maximum of 50% of the cost of the project.

Application forms, the criteria of the Trust & a map of the area in which the Trust operates are available from the charity.

The charity's address is:

The Council House Priory Road Dudley West Midlands DY1 1HF

# Achievements and Performance of the Trust

During the year the Trust awarded 2 grants.

# **Financial Review, Investment Policy and Reserves**

The Trust has a permanent endowment and general funds. The former is not available for distribution and the latter could be expended with the Trustees' approval.

At a previous meeting of the former Finance (Stevens Bequests) Sub. Committee, the Trustees agreed a policy setting out the level of reserves needed to meet the objectives of the Charity. This policy was to maintain the "Real" spending power of the bequest i.e. the permanent funds, as a fundamental part of the investment strategy. Therefore before any grants are awarded, it is confirmed that the value of the permanent funds adjusted for inflation has been maintained.

The charity continued to receive rental income and interest for the year of £17,265; there were 2 grant allocations this year. The surplus will be added to reserves brought forward from past years. Please see the note within Future Plans for further information regarding future grant allocations.

The Trustee, Dudley MBC undertakes to maintain the property from its own funds. On the advice of the Charity Commission, maintenance on property referred to in the objectives of the Charity has been included in these accounts as both income & expenditure.

The investments were revalued at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 to be shown at the market value to comply with the Charities SORP 2005. This resulted in an unrealised gain of £4542, with £2,610 being added to the value of the unrestricted funds and £1932 being added to the value of the permanent endowment funds.

At the end of the financial year reserves available for distribution subject to the reserves policy was £286,960

# **Future Plans**

The Trustees intend to continue providing grants in a similar way to past years within the constraints of the available funds and the reserves policy. However, at the meeting of the Committee of 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008 a resolution was passed such that:

"for the next five years interest earned on the capital of the Ernest Stevens Trust fund be set aside for the repair of the gates at Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge. That subject to [this] resolution, any application for funding from the Stevens Trust, of exceptional merit, be considered on an individual basis over the next five years".

# **Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities**

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which show a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity and its financial activities for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operational existence.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

# **Independent Examiner**

The Trustees intend to ask Dudley Audit Services to undertake the independent examination of the Trust in the following year.

Chairman .....

Date

Signed on behalf of the Trustees.



# Stourbridge Area Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2012

#### <u>Report of the Treasurer</u> <u>Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation Trust</u>

## Purpose of Report

1. To consider the request for a grant from Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation Trust.

# **Background**

- 2. Ernest Stevens made various donations of property which were to be used for specified purposes. These have been identified as individual Trusts and detailed below:
  - i. Mary Stevens Maternity Home and Public Park Charity.
  - ii. Mary Stevens Park, Recreation Ground and Park, Norton.
  - iii. Stevens Park, Quarry Bank.
  - iv. Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation, Wollescote
- **3.** Only the Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation has investments, which generate income for disbursement.
- **4.** Members will be aware that the four Ernest Stevens Trusts are now combined under the control of this Committee as Trustees.
- **5.** In the application of the income of the Foundation, the Trustees have discretion to give preference to the area of the former Urban District of Lye and Wollescote and to meeting the needs of the people resident therein.
- 6. There is no set maximum amount stipulated in the Trust deed for a grant.
- 7. However, in the past, the Trustees have tended to apply the criteria that the grant should be a maximum of £5000 or 50% of the total cost of a capital project and at the Area Committee in November 2008 it was agreed that income from the trust would be ring fenced to contribute to the future repair of the gates and that grants would only be awarded in exceptional circumstances.

# **Applications**

# Stourbridge Glassboys Under 9's Football Club

**8.** The applicant is a voluntary organisation run by Football Association qualified coaches. They share a love of football with the children and also try to educate the children about wider issues such as healthy eating, obesity and the need to be activate.

The team train at Swinford Common, Stanley Rd, Stourbridge each Saturday and Sunday for football matches in the Stourbridge Youth League.

- **9.** The applicant has submitted a request for a grant from the trust for £495 being the total cost of 13 rain jackets and a substitution bench.
- **10.** Within the past two years the applicant has received a total of £1465 towards clothing and equipment from the Stourbridge Area Committee.

## **Finance**

- **11.** During the current financial year no grants have been awarded.
- **12.** The income of the trust in 2011/12 was £17,265 and it is expected that this will not significantly change in 2012/13.
- 13. At a previous meeting of the former Finance (Stevens' Bequests), Sub-Committee, Members agreed to maintain the "real" spending power of the bequest as a fundamental part of the investment strategy. The total sum shown in Paragraph 9 above could be spent without jeopardising the strategy. However, should the value of the investment fall, any income then generated would need to be reinvested and would not be available for disbursement.
- 14. At the Stourbridge Area Committee Meeting in November 2008 it was agreed that for the next five years interest earned on the capital of the Ernest Stevens Trust fund be set aside for the repair of the gates at Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge. However any application for funding from the Stevens Trust, of exceptional merit, should be considered on an individual basis over the next five years.

#### <u>Law</u>

- **15.** The Council is successor to the former Stourbridge Council by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 16. Section 139 of the Local Government Act, 1972 empowers the Council to accept, hold and administer gifts of property, where it enables them to discharge any of their functions, and where the gifts are for the purposes of benefiting the inhabitants of their area

- **17.** The conditions under which a gift is to be administered, are contained in the Deed creating the Trust, and any subsequent schemes made by the Charity Commission.
- 18. The law relating to Trusts, which are charitable, is contained in various acts, the main ones being the Charities Act, 1960, the Charities Act 1992 and 1993, and the Trustee Investment Act, 1961

## **Equality Impact**

**19.** The Trusts have been set up to benefit the public of the Borough of certain geographical areas of the Borough as outlined in the Deeds of Gift.

# **Recommendation**

**20.** It is recommended that the Area Committee consider the request for a grant as detailed in the report.

Mennon

Treasurer

Contact Officer: Diane Robbins

Telephone: 01384 811394

Email: <u>diane.robbins@dudley.gov.uk</u>

# List of Background Papers

Application form and quote from Stourbridge Glassboys Football Club

Agenda Item No. 15



# Stourbridge Area Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2012

# Report of the Area Liaison Officer

#### Responses to Issues

## Purpose of Report

1. To inform the Committee of the position regarding issues raised at the last meeting of the Committee.

## **Background**

2. At the meeting of the Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2012, the issues below were raised. Responses to those issues are as follows:-

Regarding the decision of the Committee that a meeting between the member of the bowls club who raised the particular issue, Councillor Mrs Martin and relevant officers in the Directorate of the Urban Environment be arranged, a meeting was held on 4<sup>th</sup> September at Wollescote Hall.

Arising from that meeting a number of actions were agreed between the parties to hopefully conclude these matters satisfactorily. In respect of those actions a) a report will be presented to the Area Committee at the earliest opportunity on the issue of the restrictive covenant which restricts the playing of games on Sundays which if resolved would enable the bowling teams to play fixtures on Sundays from the 2013 season onwards b) several operational matters were raised which are being pursued in an attempt to get them actioned. The disabled ramp is in order and should be in place shortly and representations have been made to get the toilets/handwash facilities repaired and c) the role that the bowling club has played in both developing facilities on the site and its contribution towards their maintenance was acknowledged. Without the club's efforts the facility would be less impressive and of a lower standard than it is today and this is to be taken into account in the financial arrangements between the Council and the club.

3. Regarding the position of Mrs P Shepherd, a former co-opted member, it has now been established that Mrs Shepherd does wish to continue as a co-opted member. It is accordingly

#### RECOMMENDED

That Mrs P Shepherd be reappointed as a co-opted member of the Committee for the 2012/13 municipal year representing Local Tenants and Residents.

- 4. Regarding the appointment of both Councillors Mrs Martin and Perks to the Withymoor Community Association it has now been ascertained that two Councillor representatives will be acceptable. The Association have been notified of the details of the two members.
- 5. A petition from local residents was submitted complaining of noise and traffic nuisance emanating from a public house in Stourbridge. The Executive Support Team Manager, Directorate of the Urban Environment, has responded to the issues raised and in relation to car parking has informed the petition organisers of the intention to install bollards where appropriate and feasible within the six week period from 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2012, to deter irresponsible parking. The subject of the bollards is still under investigation because of the needs of residents to be able to have access to their own properties. In addition a Traffic Regulation Order for the area immediately around the public house was being considered although this will take a while, as due process has to be observed.

With regard to the condition of the flats car park the Housing Manager has arranged for an inspection of the car park surface to be carried out with the Repairs Management Centre. In addition an investigation into the costings and feasibility of installing a barrier at the car park is being pursued.

In relation to noise/nuisance Environment Health Officers are dealing with the noise issues from customers in the smoking centre and in relation to the playing of music from within the public house. The relevant process in relation to dealing with noise complaints has been initiated and the petition organisers have been advised of the position. An initial letter was sent to the Licensee on 5<sup>th</sup> July and on 12<sup>th</sup> July a joint visit to the public house was made by an Environmental Health Officer and a Licensing Enforcement Officer. Measures to monitor the level of noise from musical entertainment were recommended to the Licensee who indicated that they would be implemented. The Licensing Enforcement Officer would also write to the taxi firm mainly used by pub customers to warn them against sounding their horns on arrival.

Regarding other allegations of anti-social behaviour the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Development Manager has forwarded the concerns made to the Police at Brierley Hill Police Station who have responded by stating that the matter would be investigated.

- 6. In respect of a petition opposing proposed tree felling at Stevens Road, Pedmore, the Arboricultural Officer Environment Management has written to the first named on the petition stating that it was brought to the attention of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the service area concerned and that a meeting was held at the Council House in Dudley on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2012, attended by resident representatives, ward members, the Cabinet Member for Transportation and managers from the Street and Green Care Division of the Directorate of the Urban Environment. At this meeting, in accordance with the concerns raised within the petition, a review of the Council's position regarding the trees was promised prior to any further action being taken. It was also agreed that details regarding the planting of replacement trees be forwarded to the nominated representative and that such details include tree planting criteria and species choice used in the choosing of trees for the urban environment.
- 7. Arising from consideration of Police issues the Group Engineer Traffic and

Transportation was asked to respond to the person who raised the issue of the opening of the section of the Junction Road playing fields referred to for parking provision and in response the Group Engineer has indicated that grant resourses were not currently available for the substantial cost of providing safe parking facilities at Junction Road playing fields.

- 8. Regarding a question raised by a resident of Studley Gate in respect of a donation of £2,000 that had been made to the Friends of Swan Pool Park the Assistant Director, Planning and Environmental Health has responded to the effect that the Friends of Swan Pool Park still have the £2,000 in their account and were looking to match fund for a grant application once the master plan was complete.
- 9. In relation to reported road safety issues in the Studley Gate area in particular the issue of the gap by the barrier the Group Engineer, Traffic and Road Safety has indicated that parking on the grass in Whitmore Road near to Studley Gate will be referred to Street Care Highways Maintenance for consideration.
- 10. In relation to comments made regarding the poor condition of grass verges in Norton and Wollaston the Assistant Director, Planning and Environmental Health has arranged for the matter to be investigated and the Green Care Manager wrote to the member of the public who raised this issue stating 'that due to the wet weather conditions experienced this summer we have experienced exceptional weed/grass growing conditions and restricted weed spraying conditions. The Green Care Team are presenting targeting and working through this increased demand and will bring standards back to an acceptable level'.
- 11. Regarding a comment from the same member of the public regarding pot holes in the driveway to Wollaston Community Village Centre, the Group Engineer, Traffic and Road Safety has indicated that the driveway to Wollaston Community Village Centre is private and therefore does not form part of the public highway. All action that could be taken in terms of the use of public highway funds has been carried out and arrangements were made fairly recently for pot holes to be filled in the private road. No further arrangements could be made in terms of public highway budgets.
- 12. Further to the report submitted in respect of Racecourse Lane, Stourbridge Traffic Movements, the Group Engineer, Traffic and Transportation has indicated that a number of local safety schemes have been introduced in Racecourse Lane in the last few years. The major resource commitment required for either the widening of the road or the introduction of new footways in this lane have not been available in the past and are unlikely to become available in the foreseeable future. The most recent local safety scheme, introduced in 2011-12,has had a positive effect on vehicle speeds. A three year monitoring programme of Racecourse Lane's traffic is currently taking place.
- 13. Regarding the issue of speeding vehicles in the vicinity of Cobden Street and road safety issues in Studley Gate raised by a member of the Committee. The Group Engineer, Traffic and Road Safety has responded to the member concerned reporting that both locations will be assessed during 2013/14 for possible inclusion in future years annual Local Safety Scheme Programmes, in comparison with all other requests for this service.
- 14. With reference to member comments regarding the trees proposed for felling in

Stevens Road and the issue of a protocol the Assistant Director, Planning and Environmental Health has reported that Councillors Kettle, Jones and Wilson attended a meeting with Council Officers, residents of Stevens Road and the Cabinet Member for Transportation on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2012, to discuss tree work at Stevens Road and future measures regarding management of trees in the road. It was noted that a protocol now exists.

# **Finance**

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

# Law

16. Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972, enables the Council to do anything that its calculated to facilitate or is contusive or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

# Equality Impact

17. This report takes into account the Council's policy on equality.

# **Recommendation**

18. That the content of the report be noted and that approval be given to the reappointment of Mrs Shepherd as a co-opted member of the Committee for the 2012/13 municipal year representing Local Tenants and Residents.

Jane Porter Area Liaison Officer

Contact Officer: Joe Jablonski – Democratic Services Directorate of Corporate Resources Telephone: 01384 815243 Email: josef.jablonski@dudley.gov.uk

# List of Background Papers

Minutes of the meeting of Stourbridge Area Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and associated correspondence.