

STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE

Monday 15th June 2009 at 7.00 p.m.
At Hob Green Primary School, Hob Green Road, Stourbridge

PRESENT-

Councillors Adams, Attwood, Banks, Mrs Cowell, Hanif, Jones, Kettle, Knowles, Lowe, Mrs Rogers, A Turner and C Wilson and following his co-option Mr Hamza Mursaline.

OFFICERS:-

Assistant Director of Children's Services (Area Liaison Officer), Assistant Director Planning and Environmental Health, Group Engineer – Traffic and Road Safety (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Assistant Director Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning, Area Community Renewal Officer, The Area Team Leader (Adults) - Stourbridge (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services), Area Youth and Community Worker, Area Detached Youth Worker (Directorate of Children's Services) and Mrs J Rees (Directorate of Law, Property and Human Resources).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs Virginia Williams and Mary Raey from the Stourbridge Fair-trade Group were also in attendance together with approximately 50 members of the public.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor C Wilson be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillors Barlow, Mrs Martin and Mrs Walker, and Mr G Downing and Ms P Shepherd.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hanif declared a personal and prejudicial interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of Agenda item 14 (Capital Allocations – an application by the Lye and Wollescote Partnership Group) in view of his being a member of the Partnership Group.

Councillor Lowe declared a personal interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of Agenda item 14 (Capital Allocations - application for funding from the Lye and Wollescote Partnership Group) in view of his attendance at the Partnership Group)

Councillor A Turner declared a personal and prejudicial interest in accordance with Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of Agenda item 14 (Capital Allocations – an application by the Lye and Wollescote Partnership Group) in view of his being secretary of the Partnership Group.

Councillor C Wilson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of Agenda item 14 (Capital Allocations – application by the Stourbridge Radio Group) in view of his having represented the residents of the Dobbins Oak Flats in their request for the removal of the aerial installed by the Stourbridge Radio Group.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 9th March 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed.

5. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor A Turner be appointed Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROTOCOL FOR AREA COMMITTEES

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

RESOLVED

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

7. CO-OPTED MEMBERS

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

The Area Liaison Officer advised that both Mr G Downing and Ms P Shepherd had indicated their willingness to stand for reappointment and that the organisations they represented were happy for them to stand. She also advised that Ryan Nokes' term of office had ended and that the Stourbridge Youth Council had nominated Mr Hamza Mursaline to serve as a co-opted member.

The Chairman requested that a letter of thanks be sent to Ryan for his work and regular attendance at meetings.

RESOLVED

1. That the following persons be appointed as co-opted members of the Committee for the 2009/10 municipal year representing the group or organisation indicated:-

Mr G Downing – Local Businesses

Ms P Shepherd – Tenant and Residents Organisations

Mr H Mursaline – Young People.

2. That the Area Liaison Officer be requested to send a letter of thanks to Ryan Nokes on behalf of the Committee.

8. APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the reappointment of working groups for the 2009/10 municipal year.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the Stourbridge Area Committee Consultative Group be reappointed for the ensuing municipal year, with its existing terms of reference and that the Consultative Group comprise the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Councillors Adams and Mrs Cowell, together with the co-opted members of the Committee and representatives of the outside agencies with an interest in Stourbridge.
- 2) That the Stourbridge Town Centre Traffic Management Working Group be reappointed for the ensuing municipal year, with its existing terms of reference and that the Working Group comprise the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Councillors Adams, Knowles, Jones and Lowe.
- 3) That the Stourbridge Town Hall Working Group be reappointed for the ensuing municipal year with its existing terms of reference and that the Working Group comprise the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Councillors Mrs Cowell, Hanif, Knowles and, subject to her agreement, Councillor Mrs Walker.

- 4) That the Stourbridge Community Renewal Plan Working Group be reappointed for the ensuing municipal year with its existing terms of reference and that the Working Group comprise the Chairman, Vice Chairman and one member from each ward namely Councillors Attwood, Barlow, Hanif, A Turner, C Wilson and, subject to her agreement, Councillor Mrs Walker.

9. APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE BODIES

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the appointment of representatives of the Council to various outside organisations for the 2009/10 municipal year.

The Area Team Leader (Adults_ - Stourbridge (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services) gave a brief résumé on the work of the Stourbridge Relief and Sickness Charity which had evolved from a legacy given by carers and users of the Mary Stevens Hospital. The charity had approximately £6,000 currently invested. The Charity awarded grants to people resident in the Stourbridge Area, with referrals usually coming from local G.P.'s, Health Workers and Church Leaders. The Area Team Leader indicated his willingness to continue with the work on the charity.

Some Members expressed concerns that, despite having commented previously, they still did not receive invitations to attend meetings of the some of the bodies to which they had been appointed.

RESOLVED

That the appointments to the organisations indicated be made as follows:-

<u>ORGANISATION</u>	<u>REPRESENTATIVE</u>	<u>PERIOD OF OFFICE</u>
<u>Social Inclusion</u>		
Mary Stevens Hospice	The three members of the Council for the Pedmore and Stourbridge East Ward	Annual
Margaret Westwood Memorial Charity	Mr A Fisher	Four years from the 23 rd March 2010.
Stourbridge Relief in Sickness Charity	Area Team Leader (adults) – Stourbridge	Four years from 26 th February 2010

Community
Associations

Lye Body Building Gym	Councillors A Turner and Lowe	Annual
Lye	The three Ward Members of the Council for the Lye and Wollescote Ward	Annual
Norton	Councillor Adams	Annual
Withymoor	Councillor Banks	Annual

10. PETITIONS

The following petitions were submitted and referred to the officer indicated.

- a) A petition was submitted on behalf of 30 signatories directly affected by problems due to anti social behaviour and noise nuisance arising from young people using the Bell Street multi storey car parking in Stourbridge between the hours 10.00 p.m. and 4.00 a.m. in the morning as a race track. The noise of this was disrupting the reasonable living conditions of local residents. The persons submitting the petition indicated that the petition was supported by the local MPs and a Member of the Committee.

The Group Engineer Traffic and Road Safety (Directorate of the Urban Environment) responded to the petition and advised that a structural survey was being undertaken currently to determine the future of the Bell Street car park. He also advised that Members and officers of the Council were working in close partnership with the Police to resolve the situation.

The petition was referred to the Director of Urban Environment for further consideration.

- b) A petition was submitted on behalf of 40 local residents requesting that the trees around the field at Westwood Avenue/Maynard Avenue and flats at the Broadway, Norton be cut down. The petitioner advised that she had contacted a number of Officers of the Council regarding this issue, but that to date no response had been received.

The Assistant Director of Planning and Environmental Health undertook to investigate the concerns and have a written response sent to the first named person on the petition.

RESOLVED

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

12. YOUTH MATTERS

A report of the Interim Director of Children's Services was submitted on the new Youth Service Plan for the Stourbridge area.

In presenting the report, The Youth and Community Worker from Valley Road Youth Centre advised that the report followed the recent reorganisation of the Youth Service. The two year plan could be amended, adapted or added to as and when required. It was intended that update reports would be submitted to Area Committee in the future.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and appendix to the report submitted, be noted and endorsed.

11. PUBLIC FORUM

Before reading questions from the public the Area Liaison Officer stated that in future questions of a personal nature would be directed to a relevant Directorate who could be contacted via Dudley Council Plus, details of which were circulated at the meeting.

Questions and answers were then given as follows:-

- a) A member of the public, in support of the petition regarding the anti social behaviour and noise nuisance at Bell Street car park, Stourbridge, expressed concerns regarding the horrendous noise and the adverse affect it was having on his life and health and making him feel suicidal.
- b) A member of the public spoke in support of the petition that had been submitted, requesting that action be taken regarding overgrown trees in the Westwood Avenue, Norton area of Stourbridge which the Assistant Director of Planning and Environmental Health had undertaken to investigate and send a written response.

- c) Concerns were raised by a member of the public regarding the unkempt derelict garage area on land surrounding and at the back of 102 Hagley Road, Stourbridge who requested that the possibility of the two adjacent land owners being allowed to use the derelict land as private garages be considered. The concerns were referred to the Director of the Urban Environment for consideration and a written response to the questioner.
- d) A member of the public expressed concerns regarding speeding in Redlake Drive and submitted photographic evidence of alleged inaccurate speed signage which meant that action could not be taken against drivers exceeding the limit.

The Group Engineer, Traffic and Road Safety, had advised that a review of the traffic regulations for Stourbridge would be undertaken in 2010, at which time, appropriate action would be taken.

- e) A number of local residents expressed concerns about the reported proposal for the relocation of the glass collection currently housed at Broadfield House. Comments included:
 - 1) When would the feasibility study take place, how much it would cost and where funding would come from?
 - 2) Whose decision was it to move the collection to the Redhouse Cone?
 - 3) Why could the collection not be returned to Mary Stevens Park, where there was adequate parking and it was easily accessible?
 - 4) The lack of a response to the offer of funding from the Friends of Broadfield House to cover the annual running costs of Broadfield House?
 - 5) What would happen to the land surrounding Broadfield House and New Bradley Hall?
 - 6) Where would the money from the sale of the land go, if it was to be sold?

The concerns and comments were referred to the Director of the Urban Environment for consideration.

Some members of the Committee also commented on the proposals for relocating the glass collection and advised that a feasibility study was to be undertaken and consultations held as part of the feasibility study before any decision was made on whether to relocate the glass collection currently at Broadfield House to an alternative accommodation whether that be the Redhouse Cone or some other suitable premises. A decision had therefore not yet been made as to the building or the relocation of the glass collection.

Reference was made to the process to be gone through before any decision was made and it was suggested that a special meeting of the Committee be held to enable the matter to be considered in more detail.

RESOLVED

That a special meeting of the Stourbridge Area Committee be convened as soon as possible in order to allow opinions to be sought and information fed back to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture.

- f) Due to lack of time, two questions which could not be raised in the public forum session connected to the Stevens Trust and the Committee's Capital Allocations were referred to the Area Liaison Officer for investigation and a written response to the questioners.

12. PROGRESS OF ELECTED MEMBER VISITS TO ADULT AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ESTABLISHMENTS 2008/9

A joint report of the Directors of Adult, Community and Housing Services and Children's Services was submitted on the progress of visits to Adult and Children Social Care establishments during the 2008/09 municipal year and requesting further nominations to make visits in the 2009/10 municipal year.

In introducing the report, the Assistant Director, Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services) thanked all Members who had taken part in previous visits. She also advised that Members wishing to take part in the visits in 2009/10 would need to be CRB checked and attend a training programme prior to the commencement of visits.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report now submitted be noted.
- (2) That the Directors of Adult, Community and Housing Services and Children's Services be advised that the following members would undertake visits during the 2009/10 municipal year:-

13. CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on five applications for funding from the Committee's Allocations budget.

(Having previously declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of the application by Stourbridge Radio Group Limited, the Chairman withdrew during consideration of this application only).

(Having previously declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of the application by the Lye and Wollescote Partnership Group, Councillor Hanif withdrew during consideration of this application only). (Councillor A. Turner (Vice Chairman) in the Chair for the consideration of the application by Stourbridge Radio Group Limited only).

A representative of the Wollaston Village Hall, speaking in support of their application, advised that the reason for the application was to prevent further vandalism, following the recent fire damage, which had resulted in over £70,000 damage. She also commented that the need for the fencing was to protect the Centre from vandalism by people gaining access from the adjoining fields.

Ward Councillors supported the application, suggesting that there were special circumstances which would warrant the granting of the application, in view of the Association comprising local volunteers who undertake an enormous amount of good work for the benefit of the community.

In regard to the application by Barnado's Time For Me, Members expressed concerns at the lack of information contained within the report submitted.

In regard to the application by the Lye and Wollescote Partnership Group, concerns were expressed as to whether or not it was appropriate for the Group to seek funding from Halesowen Area Committee, as the building was clearly within the area covered by Stourbridge Area Committee.

In response to comments from the Committee regarding the amount of funds held by the Group, the Community Renewal Officer advised that a large proportion of the funding mentioned in the Group's funds had been ring fenced for Community Renewal work.

RESOLVED

1. That the application by Wollaston Village Community Association for £1,910.92 towards the cost of purchasing fencing and improved security facilities at the site be approved as the Committee considered this application to be a special circumstance which would warrant the approval of the application in the public interest.
2. That the application by Barnardos Time for Me Project for £900 towards the project to create a fire escape from the part of the building occupied by the group be deferred to enable more detailed information to be provided to members of the Committee.
3. That the application by the Stourbridge and District Chamber of Trade (Stourbridge in Bloom) for £5,000 towards a project to purchase automatic watering systems, half barrel planters, barrier baskets and a three tiered planter be approved.
4. That the application by Stourbridge Radio Group for £5,000 towards the purchase of an outside broadcasting unit be approved.
5. That the application by Lye and Wollescote Partnership be deferred to enable a site visit to be undertaken to inspect the proposed “story telling chair” piece of community art in the grounds of the Butterfly Children Centre at Lye.

14. HIGHWAYS MINOR WORKS CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2009/10

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the proposed programmes for Local Safety Schemes, Safer Routes to schools and Pedestrian Crossings within the Stourbridge area for the 2009/10 financial year as described in the appendices A, B and C attached to the report submitted.

Arising from consideration of the information submitted, it was suggested that variable speeding signs be used rather than cameras in future.

Members of the Committee requested that in future reports with appendices detailing projects to be undertaken have a plan of the area attached in order to allow members of the public to see where the proposed schemes were situated.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet Member for Transportation be advised of the Committee's support for:

- a) the proposed Local Safety schemes for Charles Road, Stourbridge, Glasshouse Hill/Redhill/Church Road/Brook road, Stourbridge
- b) the proposed Safer Routes to Schools scheme for Gigmill Primary School, Stourbridge, and
- c) the proposed zebra/puffin crossing for Vicarage Road, Amblecote.

15. STOURBRIDGE FAIRTRADE

Mrs Williams, a representative of the Stourbridge Fairtrade Group gave a brief visual and oral presentation on the Stourbridge Fairtrade initiative, promoting items for sale, as shown in the display, and encouraging those present to purchase these Fairtrade goods to help regenerate third world countries. By purchasing from the third world countries it would enable the organisation to meet its five goals in order to obtain fair trade status within the Stourbridge area which necessitated the sale of at least two products in seventeen shops and nine café and/or bars within the area.

The representative encouraged those present to become involved in local initiatives to join the National Federation of Fairtrade.

RESOLVED

That Mrs Williams be thanked for her oral and visual presentation on the Fairtrade, the contents of which were noted.

16. HEALTHY TOWNS PROGRAMME

It was noted that consideration of this matter had been deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

17. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on written responses sent in respect of questions asked at the previous meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report submitted be noted.

18. SELECT COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

RESOLVED

That the dates and venues of future meeting of all Select Committees held at the Council House, Dudley, be noted.

19. DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED

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

2nd September 2009 at 7.00 p.m. at Stourbridge Town Hall, Crown Centre, Stourbridge, West Midlands.

16th November 2009 at 7.00 p.m. at Wollaston Village Hall, Bridgnorth Road, Stourbridge.

18th January 2010 at 7.00 p.m. at a venue to be confirmed.

8th March 2010 at 7.00 p.m. at a venue to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 8.55 p.m.

CHAIRMAN