

Central Dudley Area Committee – 16th November, 2010

Report of the Acting Area Liaison Officer

Matters raised at the Meeting of the Committee held on 14th September, 2010 other than those relating to the Directorate of the Urban Environment

Purpose of Report

1. To note progress on issues raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 14th September, 2010, other than those relating to the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

Background

2. The issues set out in paragraphs 3 to 9 (inclusive) below were raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 14th September, 2010, progress on which is as follows:

3. **The Birch Coppice and The Golden Cross public houses**

Concerns were raised with regard to the potential fire hazards at the Birch Coppice and The Golden Cross public houses. In responding, the representative of the West Midlands Fire Service reported that The Golden Cross public house would have metal shutters fitted immediately and The Birch Coppice public house was now secure and that access could be gained via a grass bank at the rear of the building.

4. **Petition in respect of the Dudley Mosque and Community Training and Enterprise Centre**

Further to the petition submitted by a Member advocating the implementation of the buyback clause in the covenant regarding the proposed development of land at Hall Street, Dudley for a Mosque and Community Training and Enterprise Centre, the matter was considered at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 22nd September, 2010 at which it was resolved:-

- a. That the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to pursue the re-purchase of land at Hall Street under the terms of the 2005 Transfer, to include any necessary application to the High Court.
- b. That the Chief Executive, the Director of the Urban Environment and the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to continue to work with representatives of the Dudley Mosque in order to explore alternative

sites/building options to the proposed Hall Street development, and to submit a further report to Cabinet in due course.

The terms of the petition has therefore been met and no further action will be taken regarding the petition.

In response to a question on why meetings regarding the Mosque held within the Council had not been open to the public, a letter has been sent to the questioner indicating that there are currently issues of commercial sensitivity and legal advice that might prejudice ongoing negotiations should there be disclosure at this stage.

5. **Taxi drivers displaying Black Tassels and Ribbons**

A member of the public drew attention to taxi drivers displaying black ribbons and tassels on their vehicles and requested clarification on what was represented by the ribbons and tassels. In responding, Sector Inspector Richard Jones reported that the black tassels were purely a good luck charm displayed to bring the driver good luck and ward off any evil spirits.

6. **Boundary Fences**

A member of the public circulated photographs and drew attention to the health and safety implications of replacing a boundary fence with two pieces of wire when a property became vacant. In responding, the Head of Housing Management – North explained the policy on boundary fences, however he confirmed that health and safety was taken very seriously and undertook to carry out a risk assessment with a view to reviewing the policy.

7. **Right Access off Darby End Road**

A Member of the Committee queried the possibility of extinguishing the right of access off Darby End Road to land in between houses in Darby End Road and Vale Road, Netherton. The land had previously been used for garages that had since been removed and now attracted anti-social behaviour. Following consideration of this matter, it was reported that the site was being considered for allotments and car parking.

8. **Fencing Policy**

A Member of the Committee requested clarification on the Council's fencing policy. In responding, the Head of Housing Management – North forwarded the Member a copy of the policy. In relation to the complaint he had received from a resident in relation to the Council's refusal to replace his fence, he indicated that, following inspection of the fence at issue, he stated the fence had been found to be in good order and not in need of repair.

9. **Parking problems at Sycamore Green Pupil Referral Centre**

A Member of the Committee referred to the traffic and parking problems at Sycamore Green Pupil Referral Centre and indicated that he was still receiving complaints from residents. He suggested that the nearby garage site be used for an overspill car park for the Centre.

The Acting Director of Children's Services has responded to the Member in writing indicating that all staff at the centre were aware of the difficulties and have been asked to consider local people when parking at the centre. Managers have also been asked to monitor this and to encourage staff and visitors to park away from housing around the green.

Similarly, the play centre is now directing visitors to park on un-used land between houses 18-19, which can act as an overflow facility in the short term.

Managers have been asked to work with Housing to explore a more permanent solution and the Member will be updated on any progress regarding this matter.

Finance

10. This report has no direct financial implications.

Law

11. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council is empowered to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or conducive to, or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

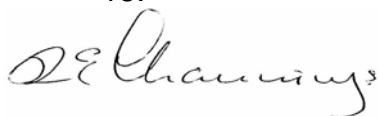
Equality Impact

12. This report complies with the policies of the Council on Equality and Diversity.
13. Children and young people have not been consulted on the preparation of this report, as report seeks only to note progress on issues raised at its previous meetings.

Recommendations

14. That the information above be noted.

15.



DIANE CHANNINGS
ACTING AREA LIAISON OFFICER

Contact Officer: Karen Farrington – Democratic Services Officer
(Democratic Services)
Telephone: 01384 818219
Email: Karen.Farrington@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Minutes of the meeting of the Central Dudley Area Committee held on 14th September, 2010