

**Central Dudley Area Committee – 8<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

**Report of the Area Liaison Officer**

**Matters Raised at the Meeting of the Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 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 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2010, other than those relating to the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

**Background**

2. The issues set out in paragraphs 3 to 10 (inclusive) below were raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2010, progress on which is as follows:
3. **Improvements to properties on the Woodside Estate**

Further to a recent press article, a member of the public referred to the Housing five year capital programme plan and asked to be advised on whether the properties in the Woodside area would be included in the plan.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning responded as follows:-

A budget of £200,000 has been allocated within the Housing five year capital programme to undertake bathroom and toilet improvements to properties identified with a specific layout within the Woodside Estate.

A detailed programme of which properties will benefit from this work is not yet available but surveys are planned to commence in the summer. A works programme will then be scheduled and residents will be notified.

4. **Anti-social behaviour in Osprey Drive and Falcon Way**

A Member of the Committee made reference to continued anti-social behaviour in Osprey Drive and Falcon Way. The Head of Housing Management – North has responded that the Council is actively investigating and taking action in respect of noise nuisance from the tenant concerned and that warning letters have been issued in respect of breaches of tenancy conditions. Although further

verbal complaints have been made by residents, no more diary sheets with documented evidence have been received to act upon.

Discussions in relation to the case are being held with the Community Safety Witnessing Team to see if they are able to provide support in collecting any evidence. The Police have been contacted in relation to the case, however, no calls have been received regarding the tenant concerned.

5. **Dog fouling is Osprey Drive and Falcon Way**

At the Central Dudley Area Committee concerns were also raised about a general dog fouling problem in Osprey Drive and Falcon Way. The Directorate of the Urban Environment have been requested to erect dog fouling signs to address the issue.

6. **Wastage of materials and rubbish on estates**

A Member of the Committee drew attention to household waste being left in gardens when repairs had been carried out to properties and requested that this matter be investigated. The Head of Housing Management – North has responded as follows:-

“Over the past two years a number of initiatives have been introduced to improve waste management, reduce waste and improve recycling. Building Services internal procedures have been refined and regular reminders are issued to its operatives and contractors regarding good housekeeping and reducing costs. This is now also included with the Employees Code of Conduct.

Significant progress has been made, including a 16% reduction in waste going to our waste transfer stations and recycling of this waste has increased to over 70%. New waste handling measures have also been introduced, including a greater use of skips and using large bags to hold the waste to ease collection and minimise its dispersal around tenants gardens etc.

Over 94% of waste is now collected within 24hours. There has also been an increase in the number of operatives collecting small volumes of waste back to depots for disposal.

Waste generated from excess or spoilt material has also fallen and is well within normal expected levels for housing refurbishment works, i.e. less than 5%. Building Services Specification Group also now considers the optimum size and volume of materials supplied by our merchants to minimise waste processes.

We acknowledge that there is always room for improvement and we are currently implementing new workforce management procedures that will improve the timing of waste collections and material deliveries to further reduce the risk of theft or weather related damage.

Waste generated by our contractors is also closely scrutinised and they are required to make annual submissions to us regarding their waste recycling rates. All contractors are commercially tendered and any excessive waste or material theft is funded by the contractor and not the Council.

Should any Building Services waste remain uncollected after 24 hours, a call should be made to our Repairs Management Centre, who will arrange for its disposal and investigate any delay”.

7. **Land parallel to Holly Hall Road**

A Member of the Committee requested that the ownership of the land parallel to Holly Hall Road be investigated and for fly tipping to be looked at. In responding, the Property Manager, North has indicated that the land is controlled by the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services and maintained as open space by Green Care. The issue of fly tipping has been referred to the Directorate of the Urban Environment for investigation and action.

8. **Wrens Nest Estate Office**

A Member of the Committee asked to be advised on the progress made in relation to the Wrens Nest Estate Office, in view of the new development. In responding, the Head of Housing Management – North has indicated that the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services are currently working in partnership with the Directorate of Children’s Services to deliver a Family Intervention Project. It is proposed that the Wrens Nest Local Office will be used by staff involved in delivering the project and therefore the office accommodation will be brought back in to use.

9. **Dudley Wood Learning Centre**

A member of the committee asked if the funding of a planning application could be considered with regard to erection of fencing around the Dudley Wood Neighbourhood Learning Centre.

In responding the Area Liaison Officer, in the belief that funding for the fencing had been secured, referred to a discussion she had had with her Assistant Director and advised the member that of the proposed plans for the erection of a fence adhered to planning regulation then funding for planning permission would be found.

It has since transpired that the erection of a fence is still only a proposal and that funding has yet to be secured. Indeed there are a number of concerns about whether erection of fencing might not have unintended consequences. The identification of funding to pay for planning permission is therefore not of relevance at this point.

Discussion will continue locally on options to successfully manage problems being identified.

10. **Re-instatement of the pillar box in Dudley Town Centre**

Further to minute no. 69(d) of the meeting of the Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2010, a Member of the Committee asked to be advised on the progress made in relation to the re-installation of the pillar box in Dudley Town Centre.

Having been raised again at the meeting of the Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2010, a further letter chasing progress has been sent to the Post Office. A

response has been received from a Mr Liam Fletcher, Collections Planning Manager at Royal Mail North West Midlands reporting that he has recently taken over the case and his intentions are to treat the case as a priority and resolve the situation as quickly as possible. The Area Liaison Officer spoke with Mr Fletcher on 20<sup>th</sup> May when he advised that he would visit Dudley with a view to identifying a site near the Market Place for the installation of a new post box. This process will take at least three months.

### **Finance**

11. This report has no direct financial implications.

### **Law**

12. 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**

13. This report complies with the policies of the Council on Equality and Diversity.
14. 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**

15. That the information above be noted.



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### **AREA LIAISON OFFICER**

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### **List of Background Papers**

Minutes of the meeting of the Central Dudley Area Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2010