

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE

Thursday 3rd February, 2011 at 7.00 pm
at The Brier School, Bromley Lane, Kingswinford

PRESENT:-

Councillor Mrs D Harley (Vice Chairman) (in the Chair).
Councillors D Blood, Mrs Blood, Foster, Mrs Greenaway, P Harley, Ms Harris, Islam, J T Jones, Mrs Jordan, Tyler and P Woodall.

Officers:-

The Director of the Urban Environment (As Area Liaison Officer), Head of Sport and Physical Activity, Manager, Executive Support Team, Section Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) and Head of Street and Green Care (all Directorate of the Urban Environment); Assistant Director Housing Management (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services); Senior Account Manager, Marketing and Communications (Chief Executive's Directorate); Group Accountant, Ms H Kidd, Solicitor and Miss K Fellows (Directorate of Corporate Resources),

together with Inspector Garry Malpass and Sergeant Richard Evans, West Midlands Police, Mr C Newton and Ms J Winpenny, West Midlands Fire Service, Mrs M Guestford (For Agenda Item No. 4a), Mr Brian Warwick – Census Manager (For Agenda Item No. 5), Mr Phil Higgins and Ms Kay Cullen – West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (For Agenda Item No. 6), Mr A Lacon (For Agenda Item No. 9) and approximately 23 members of the public.

35 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Miller, Southall and Mrs Wilson.

36 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Tyler declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item Number 10 – Capital Allocations – in so far as it related to the application made by Maidensbridge Primary School in that he was Chair of Governors at the school and left the meeting for the consideration of this application.

37 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That, the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 September 2010, be approved as a correct record and signed.

38

PETITIONS

Petition in respect of the provision of street lighting – Bull Street, Brierley Hill.

It was reported that a Petition in relation to the provision of street lighting of the path linking the two halves of Bull Street, Brierley Hill had been referred to the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

The Area Liaison Officer reported in his capacity as the Director of the Urban Environment, that a proactive tidy up of the pathway had taken place and the two lights which currently illuminated the pathway were now working and that the provision of street lighting in relation to the above would be added to the Street Lighting Programme for consideration.

The Ward Members confirmed their support for the provision of street lighting in relation to the above pathway.

No further Petitions were presented at this meeting.

39

INTRODUCING THE 2011 CENSUS

Mr Brian Warwick, Census Area Manager, gave a presentation on the 2011 Census and explained the processes involved.

It was reported that from 7th March, 2011 census questionnaires would be sent out to every household in England and Wales and that the completion of the questionnaires was a legal requirement.

It was stated that the information contained within the questionnaires would be treated confidentially and that pre-paid envelopes would accompany the questionnaires, which could also be completed on-line.

In responding to a question from a Member in relation to the questionnaires, the Census Area Manager confirmed that Immigrant Community Groups were being consulted; there was a telephone and translation helpline available for foreign nationals and that discussions had been undertaken with the Carers Association in relation to the Census.

It was further reported that in relation to the completion of questionnaires, drop in centres and the Citizens Advice Bureau would be available to help and Census staff would also assist if necessary.

RESOLVED

That the information given in the presentation made on the 2011 Census, be noted.

40

WEST MIDLANDS AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST – CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITY GROUPS.

Mr Phil Higgins, Trust Board Secretary, gave a brief presentation on the West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust and plans for becoming an NHS Foundation Trust.

Mr Higgins advised that public consultation was being undertaken from 1st November, 2010 to 6th February, 2011, however comments and suggestions received following that period would also be considered.

It was reported that Foundation Trusts sought to accommodate the local population in order to provide the highest quality of service and care for patients and their relatives within the available resources.

Mr Higgins referred to a surplus in resources stating that these would be re-invested in the service.

The structure of the Foundation Trust was also referred to as contained within the Consultation document that had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In concluding the presentation Mr Higgins indicated that a report would be published on the outcome of the consultation and he would welcome members views and comments.

Arising from the presentation given, questions were asked by members and a member of the public and comments were made including reference to the long term plans of the West Midlands Ambulance Service and the possible merger with other Public Sector Services; how the calculation of the number of Governors required was derived at given that three had been suggested in the Black Country although that area covered four major municipal authorities and how the formation of the Foundation Trust would impact upon the provision of the service to the public.

In responding to questions the Trust Board Secretary indicated that to his knowledge there were no plans to merge the services referred to and in relation to the number of Governors referred to, members comments were welcome and would be reported on as part of the Consultation.

RESOLVED

That the information given in the presentation made, and as contained in the Consultation document circulated on the West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust consultation with Local Authority Groups, be noted.

41

PUBLIC FORUM

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

- (a) In response to a written question regarding obstructive and hazardous parking on Larch Road and Standhills Road, Kingswinford, it was reported that the Section Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) was undertaking a review of the area and would respond direct to the questioner.
- (b) In response to a written question in relation to the accessibility from the Brierley Hill town Centre to the Health and Adult Social Care Centre in Venture Way, Brierley Hill, the Area Liaison Officer indicated that an investigation would be undertaken in conjunction with CENTRO in relation to the possibility of providing a bus service to service the above location and would respond direct to the questioner and Members.
- (c) A member of the public raised concerns in relation to stray horses and whose responsibility it would be to remove these from either the Highway or from private properties.
- (d) Further members of the public raised concerns that the horse bailiff had removed horses that had been tethered from land where they had grazed for a number for years.

In responding the Area Liaison Officer, in his capacity as Director of the Urban Environment, advised that the Police, Council, Horse Bailiff, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and some of the horse owners would be working together in order to attempt to find solutions and solve the problems surrounding stray horses. He also advised that he would be willing to meet personally with members of the community to discuss issues and how to improve the situation with stray horses.

- (e) A member of the public raised concerns in relation to problems that drivers faced in relation to the no entry sign operating in Mill Street, Brierley Hill. The Section Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) would respond direct to the questioner and Members following alternative routes being investigated.

A Member stated that Brierley Hill Ward Councillors were aware of problems in Mill Street, Brierley Hill and were working with the Section Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) in order to attempt to

reverse or change the Traffic Regulation Order in Mill Street, Brierley Hill.

- (f) A member of the public raised concerns with over spilling litterbins in Brierley Hill High Street. The Head of Street and Green Care would respond direct to the questioner.
- (g) A member of the public requested that consideration be given to the provision of a bus stop within Brierley Hill High Street for those commuters leaving the Brierley Hill High Street.

The Area Liaison Officer indicated that he would discuss the issue with CENTRO and respond direct to the questioner.

- (h) In responding to concerns raised in relation to Brierley Hill High Street being obstructed due to loading and unloading, the Area Liaison Officer confirmed that the Council's Parking Enforcement Officers would be instructed to investigate the above.
- (i) In response to a question regarding proposed residential parking in Byron/Tennyson and Milton Street, Brierley Hill, it was noted that Central Dudley Area Committee Russells Hall Traffic Working Group which included Ward Members of Brierley Hill Area Committee had been appointed in order to investigate proposals in relation to residential parking and that the Cabinet Member for Transportation would be examining proposals for Traffic Regulation Orders within the area.

The Area Liaison Officer responded indicating that following consideration of parking problems by the above Working Group a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

MANAGEMENT OF POTHoles AND HIGHWAY DETERIORATION.

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the Council's progress in managing potholes and highway deterioration, outlining the Council's resource capacity in the delivery of the service.

In presenting the report, the Head of Street and Green Care made particular reference to the number of reported pothole defects, the impact of the severe weather conditions upon the highway and the teams undertaking work on the highway which included major re-surfacing work.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, on the Council's progress in managing potholes and highway deterioration, outlining the Council's resource capacity in the delivery of the service, be noted.

WORDSLEY ART AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTE FUND APPLICATION FOR A GRANT

A report of the Treasurer was submitted on a request for an application for funding from the above Charity.

In presenting the report the Group Accountant made particular reference to the Appendix to the report submitted, which detailed the costs incurred by the applicant in the average academic year studying at the Royal College of Art. Details of the capital and accumulated income available for distribution was also referred to.

Following the presentation of the report Mr Lacon, the applicant advised that he was studying at the Royal College of Art in London for a Masters degree in Fine Art which was all practice based within the Black Country. He referred to the items of his work, which were exhibited at the meeting and made reference to the two awards for which he had been short-listed and the National Magazine Fine Art Photography award that he had won.

In responding to a question from a Member Mr Lacon advised that his work had been exhibited in the Black Country and it was also accessible from his website.

Arising from the presentation members commended the work of Mr Lacon and wished him every success in the future.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report submitted, on a request for an application for a grant from the Wordsley Art and Technical Institute Fund and as presented at the meeting, be noted.
- (2) That approval be given to the application received from Mr A P Lacon in the sum of £1782 towards the cost of studying fine art at the Royal College of Art in London.

CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on recommendations made in respect of applications received for funding from this year's Capital Allocation budget and to update Members on progress to date.

The Area Liaison Officer informed the Committee of the recommendations of the Members of the Capital Allocations Working Group arising from consultations held with them following the last meeting of the Area Committee.

RESOLVED

- (1) That in respect of the application received from Maidensbridge Primary School in the sum of £2,930 a maximum allocation of £4,000 be offered for various items of equipment to assist the running and development of the Forest School sessions held at the school.
- (2) That approval be given to the application received from the Brierley Hill Methodist Church in the sum of £5,000 to refurbish the old kitchen facilities so as to provide a new one that meets health and safety standards.
- (3) That approval be given to the application received from the Team Parish of the Holy Trinity, Wordsley in the sum of £4,222 to purchase a full and comprehensive range of kitchen equipment to be installed in their church hall.
- (4) That the application received from Age Concern in the sum of £4,820 be refused as it did not meet criteria 1.8 of the required criteria in respect of applications to be met from the Capital Allocations Budget and that there were no exceptional circumstances that applied to the application.
- (5) That in respect of a previous deferred application approval be given to the application received from Insight in the sum of £5,000 to undertake essential work to the meeting room ceiling, to provide a new ceramic floor to the café area and to finance the purchase of furniture for the meeting room.

MATTERS RAISED AT THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2010.

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted updating the Committee on a number of issues raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 30th September, 2010. Details of the matters raised at that meeting was set out in the Appendix to the report submitted.

RESOLVED

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

WARD ISSUES

A written response to a Ward Issue raised by Councillor Foster in advance of the meeting had been circulated to Members and to the members of the public present at the meeting prior to the start of the Committee.

Matter Raised by Councillor Foster:

Residents in High Street Brockmoor are complaining about the parking situation in Brockmoor High Street. I understand that parking officers visit the area but most remain in their vehicles rather than stop to photograph the vehicle so that a fine can be issued. Please can this be addressed as soon as possible.

Response

Since the start of January 2011, High Street, Brockmoor has been patrolled by five different officers who visited a total of eleven times. The earliest visit was 11:12am, the latest visit being 4:57pm.

During that time, ten vehicle registrations were recorded and one Penalty Charge Notice has been issued.

Additional information: The Enforcement Team currently consists of nineteen officers who are responsible for the whole of the Borough. There are in excess of two thousand Traffic Regulation Orders covering some nine hundred streets, together with over one hundred schools and sixty seven car parks. Enforcement is a sample check on these restrictions and compliance with them.

SELECT COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

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

DATE AND VENUE OF FUTURE AREA COMMITTEE MEETING

That the following date for the remaining meeting, and venue in this municipal year be noted:-

Thursday 24th March, 2011 at The Brier School, Bromley Lane, Kingswinford, commencing at 7pm.

The meeting ended at 8.15 p.m.

CHAIRMAN