

STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE

Monday 19th November 2007 at 7.00 pm
at Hob Green Primary School, Stourbridge

PRESENT:-

Councillor Mrs Cowell (Chairman)

Councillors Banks, Mrs Collins, Hanif, Jones, Kettle, Knowles, Lowe, Mrs Martin, Mrs Rogers, A Turner, Mrs Walker and C Wilson.

OFFICERS:-

Director of Law and Property (As Area Liaison Officer); Assistant Director of Adult Community and Housing Services (Libraries Archives and Adult Learning), Area Manager - Stourbridge Housing (Directorate of Adult Community and Housing Services), Group Engineer - Traffic and Road Safety, (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Group Accountant (Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement), Marketing and Communications Officer (Chief Executive's) and Mrs J Rees (Directorate of Law and Property)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Inspector P Boardman, of the West Midlands Police, was in attendance at the meeting, together with approximately 50 members of the public.

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APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Adams, Attwood; Mr J Downing, Mr K Rodney and Ms P Shepherd.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lowe declared a personal interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of Agenda Item No. 7 (Application to purchase, and request for an easement, over Council owned land adjacent to Peter's Hill Primary School, Amblecote), in view of his being a parent of a pupil attending Peters Hill Primary School.

Councillor Mrs Walker declared a prejudicial interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of Agenda Item No. 10 (Capital Allocations – Holy Trinity Church, Amblecote), in view of her Chairmanship of the Holy Trinity Church Hall Committee and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the application. Councillors Banks and Mrs Martin declared a

personal interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of Agenda Item No. 10 (Capital Allocations – Holy Trinity Church, Amblecote), in view of their respective memberships of user groups at Holy Trinity Church Hall.

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MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5th September 2007, be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the amendment of Minute No. 39, to note the date of the meeting in March 2008, as being held on 10th March.

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RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

It was reported that the following petitions had been received prior to the meeting and referred to the officers indicated.

- a) A petition, previously submitted to the meeting of the Brierley Hill Area Committee on 2nd October 2007, relating to land within the area of the Stourbridge Area Committee, on behalf of some residents of The Grove, Brierley Hill, expressing concerns relating to night time anti social behaviour problems at the car park at the end of Turners Lane, Brierley Hill. The Director of the Urban Environment had investigated the concerns and responded to the petitioners.
- b) A petition, on behalf of some residents of Simeons Walk, Dunns Bank and Lawnsdown Road, expressing concerns relating to noise nuisance at the Speedlink Waste Transfer station at Stour Valley Industrial Estate, was referred to the Director of the Urban Environment for consideration and attention.

A petition was submitted, on behalf of residents living in the vicinity of Bigmoor Playing Fields, Stourbridge, expressing concerns over the possible displacement of anti social behaviour which might occur, in this locality, as a result of an Order to ban the consumption of alcohol at Mary Stevens Park and Swinford Common, Stourbridge. This petition was acknowledged and deferred for consideration under Agenda Item 9 on the agenda.

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YOUTH ISSUES

There were no youth issues to be discussed at this meeting. Some Members expressed concern that young people did not attend meetings and the resultant lack of issues relating to young people being raised.

Councillor Mrs Walker, as Cabinet Member for Children's Services, expressed

concern at the lack of input from young people and suggested that it might be expedient to contact Detached Youth Workers to request that they encourage young people to send their views to the Committee, on pertinent issues affecting young people.

RESOLVED

That the Director of Children's Services be requested to pursue possible means of encouraging more involvement of young people in the work of the Area Committee.

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PUBLIC FORUM

Before reading questions from the public, the Area Liaison Officer stated that any questions which were not addressed at the meeting would receive a written response from the appropriate officer.

Questions and answers were then given as follows:

- a) A member of the public requested that any planning application for high density housing on the site known as The Hill, Amblecote, be refused, on the grounds that the land should be developed for the poor of the area, in accordance with a Deed of Trust from John Corbett, dated 1892. He also requested that the decision on the Unitary Development Plan be called in, as there were material considerations indicated by government policy for social and affordable housing.

He further requested that a variation order be sought from the Secretary of State, in view of the fact that there had been no change to the 1892 Deed of Trust. Should the request be approved he requested that the Council establish a Citizens Panel to take the issues to parliamentary jurisdiction.

Some Members of the Committee supported the comments made by the member of the public.

During the ensuing discussion it was considered appropriate that the concerns be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration for his consideration, to ensure that appropriate measures were taken to protect the area from inappropriate development

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration be requested to give consideration to the concerns expressed above, in respect of the development of the land at The Hill, Amblecote.

- b) The same member of the public requested that the Committee consider contacting the West Midlands Passenger Transport Committee to ask that they undertake an appraisal of public transport from the Audnam and Wordsley areas to the site of the three Villages General Practice in Vicarage Road, Amblecote, taking into account the needs of the elderly, parents with young children and people with mobility difficulties.

The Head of Bus Network, Centro had responded that he had recently undertaken a site visit of the area and considered that the transport facilities for the new Three Villages Health Centre were sufficient and did not necessitate a long walk for travellers. However, the Committee felt that an appraisal was necessary and asked the Director of the Urban Environment to pursue this matter with Centro.

- c) A member of the public, who was unable to attend the meeting, requested an update on concerns expressed at a previous meeting, relating to parking restrictions in Old Ham Lane, Stourbridge and adjoining roads, to address the issues of unlawful and dangerous parking by parents delivering and collecting children from the school. He also referred to an undertaking for a meeting to be organised between the Group Engineer, Traffic and Road Safety (Directorate of the Urban Environment) and the Head Teacher.

The Group Engineer, Traffic and Road Safety advised that he would investigate the concerns and send a written response to the questioner.

- d) A member of the public requested that urgent attention be given to the imminent break-up of an important collection of Stourbridge photographs, documents and books, currently held at Stourbridge Library and the removal of its dedicated librarian/curator.

In response, the Assistant Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services (Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning), advised of the Council's review of library and archive services, including plans to move all the Borough archives to a single suitable unit, and the need for all the items of historic interest throughout the Borough to be catalogued, stored in appropriate conditions and cared for by a trained archivist. There would be an opportunity for local history societies to become involved with the proposals. The Assistant Director undertook to ensure that all comments would be taken into consideration during the review processes, and that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee, updating on the current situation.

In response to a query as to whether the Stourbridge photographs could be copied, the Assistant Director advised that there were insufficient funds available currently, to copy all photographs, but that the matter would be kept under review.

Views expressed by the Committee and members of the public, relating to the proposals included:

- 1) That Stourbridge historic memorabilia be retained in Stourbridge.
 - 2) That local history societies become involved in discussions relating to the retention of the historic artefacts.
 - 3) That the Stourbridge items be retained in Stourbridge Library, until such time as an alternative, suitable venue is identified to store the items.
 - 4) That the wealth of knowledge of the current librarian/curator at Stourbridge Library could be lost when the officer was relocated.
- e) A member of the public requested that a traffic survey at Platts Crescent, Amblecote be undertaken, owing to the apparent increase in traffic to a late night store, and the Crescent being used as a “rat run”, to avoid queuing to turn right from the A491 into Brettell Lane. The Group Engineer, Traffic and Road Safety undertook to arrange for a traffic survey to be undertaken and consideration to be given to any necessary actions, once the results of the survey had been analysed.

Owing to time restraints, a number of questions were not addressed during the meeting and it was therefore agreed that the relevant officers would respond to the following questions in writing:

1. A request that the apparent lack of cleansing and maintenance of pathways and footpaths in the Withymoor Village area, adjacent to Chapel Hill Estate, Brierley Hill, be looked into, would be investigated and replied to by the Directorate of the Urban Environment.
2. A request for a zebra crossing at the Stanley Road entrance to Mary Stevens Park would be investigated and replied to by the Directorate of the Urban Environment.
3. A question as to whether the library review proposals would result in a reduction in the management team at Stourbridge Library would be investigated and replied to by the Director of Adult Community and Housing Services.

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted on reports relating to land and property controlled by the Council.

RESOLVED

- a) That the Cabinet Member for Leisure be advised to approve the sale of the small area of land, adjacent to Peters Hill School, as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, and required for the sub-station and the easement across Council owned land, subject to terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
 - b) That the Cabinet Member for Personnel, Legal and Property, be advised to approve the application to purchase a reduced area of land, adjoining 90 Trinity Road, Amblecote, as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, subject to terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
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BIG LOTTERY BID – A MILLION PEOPLE: BLACK COUNTRY AS AN URBAN PARK

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted updating on the current situation regarding the joint bid by the Black Country authorities for a £50 million lottery Giveaway.

The Committee received a visual presentation from the Tourism Development Officer in relation to the progress of the People's Millions Lottery Giveaway – Black Country Urban Park. Members were shown a short DVD outlining the project, and it was noted that copies of the DVD would be made available shortly to all schools in the Borough, in order to publicise the project.

It was reported that since the last meeting of the Committee, the bid had successfully progressed to the final, which would be contested between four candidates and televised on ITV1 in early December. The competition would be decided by a national vote in which all members of the public were entitled to participate, either via the internet from 26th November, or by telephone or text message from 7th December.

It was reported that a change in the rules had resulted in only one vote per telephone number and e-mail address being allowed.

Some Members commented on the difficulties experienced when trying to register to vote. The Tourism Development Officer advised that the organisers were aware of the issue and were working to rectify the problems and she encouraged the public to continue to vote. The cost of telephoned votes had still to be confirmed.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the contents of the report submitted and the visual presentation be noted.

- 2) That members of the public and businesses be encouraged to vote for the project commencing week beginning 26th November, 2007.
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ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN PUBLIC PLACES – MARY STEVENS PARK AND SWINFORD COMMON, STOURBRIDGE

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on a proposed Designated Order to declare Mary Stevens Park and Swinford Common, Stourbridge, a place where the consumption of alcohol would be prohibited.

The Area Liaison Officer advised that he had received a number of individual representations from local residents, more than half of whom supported the proposal. A few objections to the proposal had been received. A number of residents from the Albemarle Road area had expressed concerns that enforcement would result in the displacement of anti social behaviour to the Bigmoor Playing fields area and had requested that the playing fields therefore be included in the ban.

A petition previously submitted, on behalf of residents living in the vicinity of Bigmoor Playing Fields, Stourbridge, expressing concerns over the possible displacement of anti social behaviour to other areas, should the order for an alcohol ban be enforced at Mary Stevens Park and Swinford Common, was referred to the Director of Law and Property for consideration.

Inspector Boardman advised that currently there was insufficient evidence to support including the Bigmoor Playing fields in the ban, but that the matter would be kept under constant review. He encouraged members of the public to report any concerns relating to anti social behaviour to the police, so that evidence could be collected and appropriate action taken.

In response to a query as to whether the police would take any action against licensees who sold alcohol to under age young people, Inspector Boardman advised that where there was evidence of alcohol being sold to under aged young people, appropriate action was taken in conjunction with Trading Standards Officers.

The Area Liaison Officer advised that, should the proposal be approved, there would be a need to cover the cost of the requisite signage. He requested that, should the proposal for a Designated Order be approved, the Committee give consideration to the allocation of £1,500 from the 2007/08 capital allocations budget, to purchase and install the signs, in order to allow the Order to be progressed.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the making of a Designated Order for Mary Stevens Park and Swinford Common, Stourbridge, as shown in Appendix 2 of the

report submitted to the Licensing and Safety Committee, be supported.

- 2) That approval be given for £1500 allocated from the 2007/08 Capital Allocations budget for the Committee to cover the cost of signage.

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CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

(Having previously declared a prejudicial interest in the application by Holy Trinity Church, Councillor Mrs Walker withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the application)

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on three applications for funding from the Committee's capital allocation budget.

RESOLVED

That the sums referred to below be allocated to the following organisations, for the purposes indicated:-

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
The Caledonia Residents Association	To renovate and make safe a wall separating two levels of ground on the Caledonia estate and the replacement of the original steps, a new disability ramp, handrail and flag stoning of the base of the wall	£4,535
Lye Cricket Club	Towards the replacement of the pavilion following the original which was destroyed with an agreed extension to twelve months for collection of the funding	£5,000
Holy Trinity Church, Amblecote	Renovation of the Church Hall, principally including the replacement of 13 windows in the hall, kitchen and toilet	£5,000

Directorate of the Urban
Environment

Subject to the making of £1,500
the Order referred to in
Minute 48 above, the cost
of signage supporting the
introduction of an Order
to ban the consumption
of alcohol in Mary
Stevens Park and
Swinford Common,
Stourbridge

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**STEVENS PARK AND RECREATION GROUND FOUNDATION TRUSTS
GRANT APPLICATION**

A report of the Director of Finance was submitted on an application by the Lye Cricket Club for a grant of £5,000, or more, if the Committee were minded, towards the replacement of the wooden pavilion, which was destroyed in August 2007, with a brick structured pavilion.

RESOLVED

That the application for £5,000 by Lye Cricket Club be approved, and that the time for claiming the grant be extended to twelve months, to allow the remainder of the required funding to be obtained.

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**CRANBOURNE ROAD AND ADJACENT STREETS, STOURBRIDGE –
PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF WAITING ORDER**

A report of the Director of The Urban Environment was submitted on the making of a Prohibition of Waiting Order in Cranbourne Road, Sherbourne Road, Red Hill, The Heathlands and Margaret Drive, Stourbridge, in the light of objections received during the statutory period.

A number of concerns were expressed relating to the proposals, as set out in the report submitted, including:

- a) Concerns that a Prohibition of Waiting Order, proposal, as set out in the report, was too extensive and would inconvenience local residents in Cranbourne Road.
- b) That it might be expedient to consider the making of a limited Order to cover Monday to Friday's from 9 am to 7 pm.
- c) Concerns that in the area referred to there were inadequate parking facilities, and that the Order would therefore move the problem from one area to another.
- d) That there was no need for the proposals in Red Hill, but a need for new proposals at the narrowest part of Red Hill to be introduced.

RESOLVED

- 1) That a further report on this matter be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

53 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on written responses to questions sent since the meeting of this Committee in September 2007.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report submitted be noted.

54 SELECT COMMITTEE PUBLICATION

Information was given regarding the dates for future meetings of all Select Committees, which were to be held at the Council House, Dudley. Members of the public were welcome to attend such meetings.

RESOLVED

That the information given in respect of the dates of future meetings of Select Committees, be noted.

55 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates and venues of future meetings of the Committee, were noted as follows:

21st January 2008 at 7.00 pm at Red Hill School, Junction Road, Stourbridge.

10th March 2008 at 7.00 pm at Hob Green Primary School, Hob Green Road, Stourbridge.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm.

CHAIRMAN