

## **BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2007 at 7.00 p.m.  
at The Brier School, Bromley Lane, Kingswinford

### **PRESENT:-**

Councillors Mrs E Blood, D Blood, Ms Boleyn, Ms Foster, Harley, Ms Harris, Islam, Ms Jordan, Lavender, Miller, Nottingham, Southall, Tomkinson, Tyler and Mrs Wilson

### **Officers**

Director of the Urban Environment, (Area Liaison Officer), Assistant Director (Economic Regeneration), Manger of Executive Support Team, Head of Sports and Recreation, Principal Planning Officer (Policy), Principal Engineer and Group Engineer, Tourism Development Officer, (all Directorate of the Urban Environment), Assistant Director, Learning Disability and Mental Health (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services), Assistant Director of Children's Services (Resources), Senior Solicitor and Ms K Smith (both Directorate of Law and Property)

### **In Attendance**

Mr M Mason (Brierley Hill Community Forum) and the Sector Police Inspector, West Midlands Police, together with approximately sixty members of the public were in attendance.

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21

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs Harris declared a personal interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of agenda item number 15 (Capital Allocations, Hawbush Community Association), in view of her having a seat on the Board, and agenda item number 13 (Dudley Local Improvement Finance Trust), in view of her being Chair of the Dudley Primary Care Trust.

Councillors Nottingham and Islam both declared a personal interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of agenda item number 14 (Transforming Secondary School Education), in view of being school governors.

Councillors Mrs Wilson and Southall, declared a personal interest in agenda item 7a (land at Albion Street), in view of being members of the Development Control Committee.

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22

### **MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2007, be approved as a correct record and signed.

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## RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

A petition was submitted on behalf of users of Amblecote Library, situated within Brook Primary School, objecting to the proposed closure of the library. The petition was referred to the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services for consideration.

Councillor Lavender submitted a petition on behalf of users of Wall Heath Library, objecting to the proposed closure of the library. The petition was referred to the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services for consideration.

A petition was submitted on behalf of St Mary's RC School, Brierley Hill, requesting additional extended crossing patrols on Mill Street, Brierley Hill. The petition was referred to the Director of the Urban Environment for consideration.

Receipt of a petition submitted by Councillor Mrs Wilson on behalf of local residents requesting the removal of bushes in Chapel Street, at the side of Brickiln Court, Brierley Hill, was acknowledged by the Committee as being dealt with by the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

Receipt of a petition submitted by local residents of Tiverton Close, Kingswinford, requesting closure of a Public Footpath, was acknowledged by the Committee as being dealt with by the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

Receipt of a petition submitted by local residents of Lingfield Way, Kingswinford, requesting remedial action with regard to flooding drains in the cul-de-sac, was acknowledged by the Committee as being dealt with by the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

Receipt of a petition submitted by residents of The Grove, Amblecote, was acknowledged as being under the remit of the Stourbridge Area Committee, to which the petition would be forwarded for due consideration.

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## YOUTH ISSUES

The Head of Sports and Recreation informed the Committee that, the provision of a suitable site for a skatepark was still under investigation and that a further report would be bought back to the Committee on the sites under consideration. It was also noted that the youths concerned with promoting a skate park had received a donation of £3,000 to stage a local skatepark event, which was in the process of being organised.

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## PUBLIC FORUM

- (1) Several members of the public spoke out in opposition to the proposed closure of several local libraries, requesting that further consideration be given to the closures, as they considered they were an integral part of the community. It was stated that the Amblecote Library was situated within the school and two years ago the school had invested £50,000 in extending it.

It was also noted that the decision to close libraries had been “called in” and would be reviewed on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2007 by the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education.

- (2) Representatives from St Mary’s RC School requested that urgent action be taken in respect of the petition submitted, with regard to additional and extended crossing patrols in Mill Street, Brierley Hill.

Members supported the request for additional crossing patrols but noted that although the situation was currently under review, with officers and the Police supporting the request, it was noted there were difficulties in recruiting crossing patrol staff.

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26

## LAND ISSUES

(Councillor Mrs Wilson, having declared a personal interest, in this item in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct, in view of her being a member of the Development Control Committee, vacated the Chair. The Vice Chairman took the Chair for discussion of this item only.)

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted on applications received in respect of land and property owned by the Council.

### RESOLVED

- (1) That the application to purchase land off Albion Street, Brierley Hill, as indicated on the map attached to the report submitted, be deferred pending a site visit.
- (2) That the land application to purchase and for an easement over Council owned land adjacent to Peters Hill Primary School, Amblecote, be referred to Stourbridge Area Committee as the application falls within the boundaries of that Committee.

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27

## PROPOSED – JOHN STREET (ONE WAY TRAFFIC) ORDER

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on proposals for making John Street, Brierley Hill, one way to traffic with associated on street measures to address concerns regarding the speed of traffic and conflict with parked vehicles.

After a lengthy detailed discussion, with representations on behalf of the residents of John Street concerning traffic safety issues and alternative options for resolving the issue it was:

RESOLVED

- (1) That in deference to the previous concerns of the Fire Service traffic on John Street be restricted to travelling in a westerly direction from its junction with Dudley Road to its junction with Bank Street as shown on plan T100/02 at Appendix 1 to the report.
- (2) That to introduce a gateway, carriageway restriction calming effect, protected on street parking bays be constructed on John Street as shown on plan T100/02.
- (3) That on making John street one way the adjacent streets of Bent Street and Victoria Street be monitored for the impact and be subject to further reports should it be deemed necessary.
- (4) That the Cabinet Member for Transport in conjunction with the Director of the Urban Environment, be requested to amend the Brierley Hill Major Scheme Traffic Regulation Orders, currently in preparation to make the street one way as above and that the proposals be accommodated in the Major Scheme Works.

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28

PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF DRIVING ORDER – HOLBEACHE LANE AND OAK LANE, KINGSWINFORD

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on proposals for the introduction of a Prohibition of Driving Order in Holbeache Lane and Oak Lane in light of an objection received during the statutory period.

During discussion of this item and representation from residents of the Oak Lane Caravan Park, it was;

RESOLVED

That the making of the proposed Prohibition of Driving Order in Holbeache Lane and Oak Lane be deferred pending a site visit.

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29

PARALLEL ROUTE - UPDATE

A verbal update on behalf of the Director of the Urban Environment was given on the Parallel Route. An information sheet was circulated which identified the areas of disruption and progress to date during construction of the parallel route.

In response to a query by Councillor Tomkinson on how long it would be before Hill Street was re-opened, the representative of the Director of the Urban Environment agreed to respond in writing.

In response to a query by Councillor Ms Harris on items of archaeological interest that may have been uncovered during the site investigation, the representative of the Director of the Urban Environment agreed to respond in writing.

RESOLVED

That the information submitted to the Committee be noted.

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30                    BLACK COUNTRY STUDY - UPDATE

A verbal update on behalf of the Director of the Urban Environment was given on the Study and progress to date, including the expansion of retail on the Waterfront including office provision, which would create more jobs and opportunities.

RESOLVED

That the information submitted to the Committee be noted.

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31                    BIG LOTTERY APPLICATION – THE BLACK COUNTRY AS AN URBAN PARK

A visual presentation was given by the Tourism Development Officer, informing the Committee of the content of the proposed project, highlighting the Dudley element, which referred to the enhancement of the geological heritage on Wren's Nest National Nature Reserve to include new visitor facilities and the opening up of the underground canals and mines which linked the site to Castle Hill. The results of the lottery bid would be known in October 2007, with winning projects going through to a television vote, during the week commencing 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2007. The Tourism Development Officer encouraged everyone present to vote for the project at the appropriate time and to make the project known to friends so that they could do the same. The Tourism Development Officer expressed her belief that while the project was not specific to Brierley Hill, the wider Dudley area would benefit from the influx of visitors that would be attracted.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the contents of the report submitted and the visual presentation be noted.
- (2) That the Chief Executive be advised of the Committee's support for the Black Country bid.

- (3) That members of the public be encouraged to vote for the project on the television, should the project be successful in going through to the TV vote later in the year.

32

### DUDLEY LOCAL IMPROVEMENT FINANCE TRUST (LIFT)

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on the progress on the LIFT Scheme in Brierley Hill.

Construction had begun on the Health and Social Care Centre on the former Brier School site, at the end of June and the facility was expected to open in February 2010. The building would provide office accommodation for thirty-five members of staff from the District Housing Office in Cottage Street and forty-five staff from the Older People, Physical Disability Team.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the Committee note that financial closure of the Brierley Hill LIFT scheme has been achieved and that construction work is under way with a view to completion in February 2010.
- (2) That a further report be submitted to the Committee towards completion of the LIFT Scheme.

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33

### TRANSFORMING SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted on the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) preparation for the next group of local authorities to be included in the national Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

The Assistant Director of Children's Services (Resources), presented the report and in doing so indicated that Dudley would be included in Wave 7 which meant that construction could start around the year 2010 and that the first schools would open around 2012. He emphasised that the programme was about transformation and indicated that the first challenge was to get onto the programme and to persuade the DCSF that Dudley were ready, willing and able to participate.

The Assistant Director informed Members that the DCSF were expected to announce Wave 7 in the Autumn of 2008 and that Dudley had to have a draft strategy setting out intentions to achieve against key policy areas, such as collaboration between schools, 14-19 provision and Information and Community Technology (ICT). He reported that upon Dudley being accepted into the programme the relevant consultation processes would take place including consultation with children and young people, parents and the community.

The Assistant Director requested that Members wishing to submit comments on the BSF programme respond directly to himself.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and appendices to the report, be noted and that the emerging strategy for Transforming Secondary Education be endorsed.

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34

CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on applications for funding from the Capital Allocations budget.

RESOLVED

- (1) That an application submitted on behalf of Stourbridge and Black Country Events Corporation for £2,937, to fund equipment hire costs for a large stage to be erected at the Waterfront for a charity fund raising Halloween party, family fund day event on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2007, be refused as the lease or hire of equipment does not qualify as capital expenditure.
- (2) That an application submitted on behalf of Wordsley and District Community Centre for £3,500 towards the purchase of one hundred and fifty chairs, be approved.
- (3) That an application submitted on behalf of Hawbush and District Community Association for £2,256 towards sanding and resealing of the community centre floor be refused, as submissions should only be submitted from the same organisation once within a three year period, as stated in the approved revised Capital Allocations criteria.

35

MATTERS RAISED AT THE BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE ON 5<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2007

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on issues raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2007, which related to services provided by the Council.

It was noted that the issue raised at the meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2007, in relation to recent flooding and the Council's policy and procedures, was being reviewed by the Head of Contingency and Disaster corporately.

RESOLVED

That the report, referred to above be noted.

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WARD MEMBER ISSUES

No Member raised any issue under this item.

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37

NEXT MEETING

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

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2007, at the Kingswinford School, Water Street, Kingswinford.

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008, at the Brier School, Bromley Lane, Kingswinford.

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008, at Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Bank Street, Brierley Hill

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The meeting ended at 9:00 pm

CHAIRMAN