

SELECT COMMITTEE
ON REGENERATION, CULTURE AND
ADULT EDUCATION

Thursday, 10th March, 2011
at 6.00 p.m. in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor K Turner (Chairman)
Councillor Mottram (Vice Chairman)
Councillors Ali, Attwood, Caunt, G H Davies, Evans, Knowles, Ms Partridge,
and J Woodall.

Officers

Assistant Director Housing Strategy and Private Sector (Lead Officer to the Committee); Assistant Director Culture and Leisure, Head of Planning, Head of Economic Regeneration Strategy and Economic Development Manager (All Directorate of the Urban Environment); Principal Policy and Performance Management Officer (Chief Executive's Directorate); Head of Human Resources and Principal Human Resources Officer (Supporting the Directorate of the Urban Environment) and Mr J Jablonski (All Directorate of Corporate Resources).

Also in attendance

Councillor L Jones (Cabinet Member for Regeneration)
Councillor Stanley (Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture)

together with two members of the public.

41 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Cowell.

42 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with Members' Code of Conduct in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

43 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 19th January, 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed.

44 PUBLIC FORUM

No matters were raised under this Agenda item.

45 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE'S EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2011/12

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on the annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2011/12 for the Chief Executive's Directorate.

Following a presentation of the content of the report, and copy of the action plan attached as an Appendix to the Report submitted, by the Principal Policy and Performance Management Officer, Members made a number of comments, including references to typographical errors involving dates contained in the Appendix which would be updated, which were responded to.

In response to two particular queries raised, the Principal Policy and Performance Management Officer undertook to respond direct to Councillor Ms Partridge with details in respect of Priority 5 – Objective CE7 –Update approaches to cohesion and tension – giving details of the current approach and the proposed changes and to give consideration to the role of the Chief Executive's Directorate as set out in paragraph 3.1 of the Appendix under the heading "Vision and Values" with a view to the role containing specific reference to the issue of diversity.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted on the Chief Executive's Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2011/12, be noted.

46 DUDLEY BOROUGH ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT AND DUDLEY BOROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2011/12 – 2013/14

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the draft statutory Dudley Borough Economic Assessment and the Dudley Borough Economic Development Strategy (2011/12 – 2013/14).

The Economic Development Manager in his presentation of the content of the report also referred to a supplementary briefing note that had been circulated at the meeting in respect of the Dudley Borough Economic Assessment and the Dudley Borough Economic Strategy. The supplementary information contained in particular the key projects over the lifetime of the strategy by theme.

Arising from the presentation given the Economic Development Manager undertook to respond to the Chairman in relation to his query regarding how the local businesses interviewed had been selected and the number of responses that there had been to the Dudley Borough Business Survey undertaken.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, Appendix to the report and supplementary information circulated at the meeting, submitted as part of the consultation process on the draft Dudley Borough Economic Assessment and the Dudley Borough Economic Development Strategy (2011/12 to 2013/14), be noted and that any further comments on the draft be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration prior to the Cabinet Meeting to be held on 16th March, 2011, when the Assessment and Strategy would be submitted to that meeting for approval.

47 UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF BRIERLEY HILL AREA ACTION PLAN

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the progress made on the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan.

The Head of Planning in her presentation of the content of the report commented that the draft report by the Independent Planning Inspector appointed to hear the examination had only just been received and that it was considered to be sound. A final report was expected on 17th March, 2011.

Arising from the presentation given Members asked a number of questions and in response the Head of Planning reported that Officers were currently working through the draft Report received but that no significant issues had been raised.

Similarly she could not at this time give an indication of any recommendations contained in the report.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, and as reported at the meeting, on the progress made on the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan be noted and that a further report on this matter be included in the Committee's work programme for 2011/12.

48 GLASS MUSEUM FEASIBILITY STUDY

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted updating the Committee on progress made and further work undertaken as part of the Glass Museum Feasibility Study. Attached at Appendix 1 to the report submitted was a copy of a report on this matter submitted to the meeting of Cabinet held on 22nd September, 2010.

Arising from a presentation given by the Assistant Director, Culture and Leisure of the content of the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted Members asked a number of questions referring in particular to:-

- The provision of carparking on the site.
- When a final report from L and R would be submitted for consideration by the Council.
- On the submission of a further report to this Committee in June, 2011 and the inclusion in that report of an action plan and milestones.
- A vision as to what a visitor might see arising from completion of the project.
- A query regarding the additional financial detail referred to in the first bullet point of the report submitted at paragraph 4.

In commenting on the points raised Officers referred to the number of stages that had still to be completed and referred to the funding issues involved including those involving European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Funding and the timescales involved in respect of this. It was noted that a significant amount of work in preparing an ERDF Funding application, as indicated in the third bullet point of paragraph 4 of the report submitted, had been undertaken. An indication was also given that the report to the June meeting would include the details requested.

Regarding the vision as to what a visitor could expect following the completion of the site the Assistant Director Culture and Leisure outlined one possible option involving the White House site and the Redhouse Cone site linked by a tunnel which went under the road separating the two sites and on what a visitor might see both on the White House site and on the Redhouse Cone site. It was also stated that under this option carparking would be on the White House site and that the Redhouse Cone site would be a closed site.

Arising from the comments made further comments were made in particular that consideration needed to be given to the current wharf adjoining the Redhouse Cone site if this was to be a closed site. In response to a further query regarding the public house opposite the cone which had been boarded up for sale Officers undertook to investigate the position regarding this property. A suggestion was also made that at an appropriate time Members should undertake a further visit to the site following the successful visits by Members held previously.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, and as reported at the meeting, on the progress made and further work undertaken as part of the Glass Museum Feasibility Study be noted and that a further report on this matter be included in the Committee's work programme for 2011/12.

49 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS UPDATE REPORT – APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2010

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted giving information on contributions that had been received and approved under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) during the first six months of the 2010/11 financial year together with information on the Section 106 and Unilateral Undertaking Legal Agreements that were signed during the same six month period.

The Head of Planning in her presentation of the content of the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted also commented on new information contained in the report in relation to Non-Financial Planning Obligations Approved between 1st April to 30th September 2010 and information in respect of Economic and Community Development Statements.

Arising from the presentation of the content of the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted a question was asked by Councillor Ali in relation to the lack of information in the Appendices concerning St. Thomas' Ward and in response the Head of Planning undertook to write to him direct on this matter.

Arising from further comments made in particular concerns expressed by two Members regarding an apparent lack of consultation with Members over the Section 106 funds to be spent in their Wards, and, arising from the consideration given to the concerns expressed, the Head of Planning undertook to provide details of the full process involved regarding Section 106 Funding citing as an example funding that had gone through all the stages involved and submit the information direct to Councillors Knowles and Ms Partridge together with additional information to Councillor Ms Partridge on a comment made by her that monies arising from applications in Cradley and Foxcote Ward had been spent elsewhere.

It was further agreed that the information would also be sent to all other members of the Committee so that if there were any questions arising from receipt of the information Members could raise them at a meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED

1. That the information contained in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted on contributions that had been received and approved under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the first six months of the 2010/11 financial year together with information on the Section 106 and Unilateral Undertaking Legal Agreements that were signed during the same six month period, be noted.
2. That the Head of Planning be requested to provide the details requested to all Members of the Committee on the process including consultation with Members regarding the spending of Section 106 funds and that should Members have any queries arising from receipt of the information requested consideration would be given to this matter at a future meeting of the Committee.

50 DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT'S EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN FOR 2011/12

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2011/12 for the Directorate of the Urban Environment, a copy of which was attached as an Appendix to the report submitted.

Following a presentation of the content of the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted and comments made and responded to, including updating of typographical errors in relation to dates, a particular question was raised regarding air quality and pollution in the Sedgley Area and other parts of the Borough. Arising from this the Principal Human Resources Officer was asked to arrange for information to be sent to all Members of the Committee updating them on the progress being made to improve air quality in the Borough.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted on the Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2011/12, be noted.

51 PROVISIONAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2011/12

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on a provisional work programme of the Committee for the 2011/12 municipal year with a request that Members consider any additions/deletions they would wish to make to the programme.

Arising from the consideration given to this matter the Chairman indicated that the item on the benefits shop review, due for consideration on 12th September, 2011, should be deleted and Councillor Caunt suggested the following additions to the work programme:-

- Update on library modernisation.
- Leisure Centre development.
- Dudley and Stourbridge Town Centre modernisation.
- Updates on the work of the New Heritage Regeneration Limited.

In addition it was noted that, arising from the consideration given to items at this meeting, there would be further update reports on the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan and on the Glass Feasibility Study Stage 2.

Arising from the further consideration given to this matter it was commented upon that the programme would be flexible so as to enable changes to be made to it in the light of changes in circumstance.

At this juncture the Chairman referred to a copy of a report and covering note in relation to Mount Pleasant School, Coseley from John Wilkes, Chairman of Coseley Civic Trust, circulated at the meeting. The Lead Officer undertook to arrange for consideration to be given to the content of the covering note and for a reply to be sent to Mr Wilkes.

Councillor Caunt also referred to a lack of response from Mr Wilkes in relation to information about the membership of the Civic Trust.

RESOLVED

That, subject to the deletion referred to and inclusion of additional items indicated, the provisional work programme for the Committee for 2011/12 be noted and that Members be requested to submit to the Democratic Services Officer any further suggestions concerning the work programme by 8th April, 2011 so that all comments received might be circulated to Members of the Committee with a view to a formal work programme being reported to the June, 2011 meeting of the Committee for approval.

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on the performance of the Council in relation to the activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee for the third quarter of 2010/11, October to December, 2010.

Arising from the consideration given to this matter the Lead Officer to the Committee undertook to forward to all Members of the Committee information in relation to the points of concern indicated in the extract from the report circulated in respect of the Credit Union.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and extract from the report, submitted in relation to the activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee for the third quarter of 2011/12, October to December, 2010, be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.48 p.m.

CHAIRMAN