

**WARDS:** Brierley Hill, Brockmoor & Pensnett, Kingswinford North & Wall Heath, Kingswinford South  
Wordsley

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 12**

**DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 7 JULY 2005**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT**

**SKATE/WHEELED SPORTS FACILITY FOR BRIERLEY HILL AREA**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To apprise Members of developments with regards to the proposed skate park for the Brierley Hill Area.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In March 2004 Members of the Brierley Hill Area Committee received a report outlining a series of site investigations into ten locations suitable for possible skate park provision within the geographic area covered by the Area Committee. Members considered the report and selected a location to the rear of Kingswinford Youth Centre and Kingswinford Community Centre, adjacent to a children's play area, a youth shelter and two football pitches, as the Area Committees preferred option for a facility. An area of tarmac was available and although it had basketball hoops, these could be relocated. The Committee supported the provision of a skate park at the Kingswinford Youth Centre location and requested that the planning application process be progressed.
- 2.2 A series of site investigations was undertaken and a planning application (PO4/2667) was submitted late in 2004. In December 2004 letters of notification were issued to residents of High Street, Water Street, Greenfields Road, Standhills Road, Wasdale Drive, Windermere Drive and Greystoke Drive advising that a planning application was under consideration and site notices were posted in High Street, Kingswinford.
- 2.3 There has been a considerable number of objections received opposing the development of a skate park facility at Kingswinford Youth Centre. With initial responses citing probable anti-social behaviour, noise, disturbance, insufficient consultation and a lack of public conveniences as the reason for objecting.
- 2.5 A public meeting was held in January 2005 and elicited similar objections and also identified that the proposed location was used by the Air Cadets for drill and exercise purposes. Car parking issues were highlighted at this meeting and representatives from the Community Centre stated that they had a clause in their lease that made them consultees to any proposed use of neighbouring land. This has been verified through an examination of the lease document. Furthermore the Community Association representatives indicated that they perceived the

proposed facility to be an impediment to the workings of their facility and to the activities of their users.

- 2.6 Further written submissions were received by the Planning Section and due to the level of public opposition the planning application has been withdrawn to allow the Area Committee to consider this issue further.
- 2.7 A petition was raised with 98% of signatories opposed to the development of a skate park in this location, and further representations were made to the meeting of Brierley Hill Area Committee in March 2005 and the scale of local objection to the proposal has been further reinforced in meetings/discussions held with the local community.
- 2.8 Clearly the Area Committee need to take a view on this matter in order to move the project forward and provide a Skate/Wheeled Sports facility for young people in the Brierley Hill Area Committee Area.
- 2.9 In principal there are two options available:-

Option 1

To proceed as per the Area Committees previous resolution and re-affirm that the site at Kingswinford Youth Centre is the preferred location for this facility, in the knowledge that there is significant local opposition to provision on that site.

Option 2

To over-rule the Area Committees previous decision and reject Kingswinford Youth Centre as the preferred site for a skate/wheeled sports facility.

- 2.10 Should the Area Committee resolve to choose Option 2 above, Officers will then have to review the sites previously considered in the report to the Area Committee on 16 March 2004 alongside any additional sites that Members may wish to suggest for a further report to the Area Committee in due course.
- 2.11 If this option is chosen it will inevitably lead to a delay in the provision of facilities being made but may be more advantageous in the long-term given the scale of local opposition to the Area Committees current proposal and it would be the intention that a report be presented to the Area Committee in September detailing the other potential sites for the facility, the planning and technical issues associated with each in order that an alternative preferred site be identified for further consultation as in the case of the Kingswinford Youth Centre Site.

**3.0 PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 That the Area Committee notes the content of this report, considers the options contained therein and resolves accordingly.

**4.0 FINANCE**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.

## **5.0 LAW**

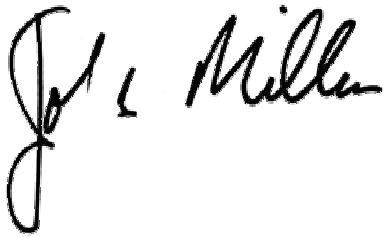
- 5.1 Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972, enables the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its statutory function.
- 5.2 Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976, empowers the Council to provide recreational facilities in its area.
- 5.3 There is a duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to account for the implications of the impact on community safety of actions and decisions relating to service areas.

## **6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- 6.1 This report contains proposals which accord with the equal opportunities policies of the Council.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 That the proposals set out in Section 3 of this report be approved.



**Director of the Urban Environment:**.....

Contact Officer: Andy Webb, Head of Sport and Recreation, Ext: 5579

### Background Papers Used in the Compilation of this Report

- Brierley Hill Area Committee reports
- Lease – Kingswinford Community Centre
- Representations to Planning with regards to Planning Application PO4/2667
- Papers submitted in support of Planning Application PO4/2667