

NORTH DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7th February, 2007 at 6.30 pm
at Wallbrook Primary School, Bradley's Lane, Coseley

PRESENT

Councillor Ryder (Chairman)
Councillor Simms (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Mrs. Ameson, Caunt, G. Davies, Evans, Fraser-Macnamara,
Mrs. Millward, Mottram, Mrs. Ridley, Stanley and Wright; Mr. J. Millward

Officers

Assistant Director of Law and Property (Legal and Democratic Services)
(Acting Area Liaison Officer), Assistant Director Culture and Community,
Assistant Director Targeted Services, Group Engineer (Traffic and Road
Safety), Area Team Leader (Youth Service), Neighbourhood Managers
for Coseley and Upper Gornal and Mr. J. Jablonski (Directorate of Law
and Property)

Also in attendance

Inspector L. Bailey of West Midlands Police.
Mr. S. Vincent of West Midlands Fire Service

together with 17 members of the public.

52 **APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of the
Director of Children's Services (Area Liaison Officer).

53 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the
Members' Code of Conduct.

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MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28th November, 2006 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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PETITIONS

The following petitions were submitted and referred to the officers shown for attention:-

- (a) A petition submitted on behalf of residents of Central Drive, Coseley, expressing concern at the parking of residential vehicles in Central Drive, was referred to the Director of the Urban Environment and the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services.
 - (b) A petition requesting that the ground upon which High Arcal Park once stood be saved and that the ground be left as it is, was referred to the Director of the Urban Environment.
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YOUTH ISSUES

The Area Team Leader (Youth Service) reported on the following events and achievements in respect of the venues indicated:-

- The holding of a speed garage event (disco) on 8th December, 2006 at Coseley Youth Centre, which was a great success.
- The gaining of a Me2 Award by Lower Gornal Youth Centre, the first Youth Centre in the Borough to gain this award and the participation of this Youth Centre in a Black Country football competition.
- The delivery of a Junior Sports Leaders' Award at Gornal Youth Centre in partnership with Ellowes Hall School.
- The success in gaining external funding of approximately of £20,500 from the Youth Opportunities Fund for an outside safe space play area by young people from the Gornal Youth Centre.
- The gaining of external funding of approximately £1,500 from the Youth Opportunities Fund by young people from Sedgley Youth Club to build a DJ studio at the Centre.

- The gaining of £5,600 from the Youth Opportunities Fund by young people from The Oval Detached project to have a football field marked on ten-acre fields.
- The setting of a programme of activities and workshops until the end of March in respect of The Oval Detached project and the use of the cyber bus 2 on a Tuesday evening to engage with young people from the Upper Gornal area.
- The delivery at the Rainbow Centre of the Castle Award, which was similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award but for 12-14 year olds and the gaining by eight young people of the Bronze Award.

Joe Millward (Co-opted Youth Member), then circulated details of a youth conference to be held and referred to details in respect of Youth Parliament elections.

POLICE ISSUES

Inspector Bailey of Sedgley Police reported on Panel meetings and Police surgeries held in the four police neighbourhood areas of Sedgley, Gornal, Woodsetton and Coseley. Information was also given regarding priorities arising from Panel meetings.

Priorities arising from the Panel meetings indicated were as follows:-

Sedgley Neighbourhood Panel meeting held on 11th January, 2007 – litter around Sedgley Bullring at school lunchtimes and end of school and anti-social behaviour in and around Lyndon Close.

It was noted that police surgeries would be held on 22nd February and 22nd March, 2007 at 2.00 p.m. at the Queen Victoria School on both occasions.

Gornal Neighbourhood Panel meeting held on 4th January, 2007 – anti-social behaviour in Quarry Park and High Arcal Recreation Ground during the hours of darkness – problems including youths drinking alcohol, litter and general anti-social behaviour.

It was noted that police surgeries would be held on 13th February, 2007 at 5.30 p.m. at Gornal Library; on 22nd February, 2007 at 10.00 a.m. at Jephson Housing and at 4.00 p.m. at the Kent Street Centre; at 4.00 p.m. on 24th February at Ellowes Hall School; at 5.30 p.m. on 13th March at Gornal Library; and at 4.00 p.m. on 24th March at the Darby and Joan Club, Abbey Street, Gornal.

Woodsetton Neighbourhood Panel meeting held on 10th January, 2007 – priorities were anti-social behaviour around the High Arcal Estate, in particular, Roper Way, Roper Walk, Bosworth Close and Tamar Drive and issues regarding youths congregating on open land adjacent to the estate.

It was noted that neighbourhood meetings would be held on 7th March and 4th April, 2007 at 6.30 p.m. at the Bramford Primary School on both occasions.

Coseley Neighbourhood Panel meeting held on 10th January, 2007 – priorities were the Coseley Swimming Baths in that small groups of youths were beginning to congregate at the rear and sides of the premises; the Local Authority owned garage site serving residents of Whitegates Road, Coseley and arson attacks on the Newey Business Park, Sedgley Road West and the Bean Industrial Site, Coseley.

It was noted that neighbourhood meetings for the Coseley Neighbourhood would be held on the same dates and times as for the Woodsetton Neighbourhood Area.

Inspector Bailey also reported that further details regarding the Dudley North Operational Command Unit relating to these four neighbourhood areas could be found on the following police website:-

www.westmidlands.police/dudleynorth

Regarding the above priorities Inspector Bailey stressed that if there were any other more pressing priorities or if residents wished a change in those priorities, they needed to inform the police accordingly and attend the neighbourhood meetings arranged.

In respect of other issues, Inspector Bailey referred in particular to the fact that a further four community volunteers had been recruited which would lead to the opening of the Sedgley Police Station between the hours of 9.30 to 3.30 p.m., Mondays to Fridays.

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TRANSPORT ISSUES

No issues in respect of transport were raised at the meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM

- (1) In response to a question submitted regarding further investigation into the footpath in Hopyard Lane to the Straits, and not Stickley Lane, as reported at the last meeting, Councillor Stanley reported that he had spoken to the person who had submitted the question and had been supplied with an Ordnance Survey Map indicating the footpath in question. He further indicated that he would speak to the Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) about this matter after the meeting so that it could be progressed.
- (2) In response to a question regarding the clearing of High Arcal Pond, the Assistant Director, Culture and Community reported that investigations were in progress and he hoped that the problem would be resolved in the near future.
- (3) In response to a question raised about the lack of a 20mph sign at Wallbrook School, the Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) reported that discussions had been held with the Head Teacher of Wallbrook School on this and related issues and that Wallbrook School would be included in a future years' Safer Routes to Schools Annual Programme.

Given the background to this issue, the Chairman, and other Members present, expressed the wish that the school would be included in a programme in the near future.

- (4) A question was submitted regarding the provision of a speed camera in Bradley's Lane and the Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) reported that he had met the person who had submitted the question and been provided with a lot of background information from him and another resident of the area. The Group Engineer also indicated the process by which speed cameras were provided and indicated that the matter would be given further consideration in consultation with the questioner and the resident indicated.

A Member also considered that the possible relocation of one of the speed cameras on Milking Bank to Bradley's Lane could possibly be investigated and suggested that the Cabinet Member for Transportation be asked to look into this.

Arising from the consideration given to this matter it was

RESOLVED

That the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the appropriate officers, be requested to send a letter on behalf of the Area Committee to the appropriate body requesting that the provision of a speed camera in Bradley's Lane, Coseley be investigated.

- (5) In response to a question as to why the weight restriction signs in Bradley's Lane were not illuminated, the Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) reported that the signs had never been connected to a power source but that instructions had now been given to so connect them as soon as possible.
- (6) A further question was received in respect of the provision of a 20mph sign at Wallbrook School and the information previously given was reiterated.
- (7) A question was submitted regarding the lack of parking in Central Drive, an issue the subject of a petition reported on earlier in the meeting.

In the consideration given to this matter, it was proposed and agreed that the Cabinet Member for Housing give consideration to a proposal to use the garage site at Central Drive, which was currently on the disposal list, for use as secure car parking by residents of the area.

In response to comments made, the person who had submitted the question considered that if the site became a secure car park it would be used as persons signing the petition that had also been submitted by her had indicated that they would use such a facility.

- (8) In response to a question regarding additional Police Community Support Officers on patrol and why it was that they were not seen in Bradley's Lane at school times, Inspector Bailey indicated that she would speak to the person who had submitted the question after the meeting.
- (9) A number of questions were raised in respect of a newspaper article concerning the relocation of Coseley Youth Centre. In response, it was noted that as this matter had yet to be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting next week, the questions raised were premature and, therefore, once a decision had been made, the matter could, if appropriate, be raised again at a future meeting.

(10) A general question was raised regarding the need for planning and building control to work together to ensure that when changes of services took place, any new access installed was suitable for wheelchair users and others. It was agreed that the question be referred to the Director of the Urban Environment for his attention.

(11) In response to a question as to why the speed limit sign had not been changed on Cotwall End Valley and in respect of the erection of a public footpath sign in front of a Nature Reserve sign, it was agreed that the Director of the Urban Environment would report on these matters at the next meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Caunt also reported that he had now been advised that Cotwall End Valley would be included in the next edition of A-Z maps.

(12) A question was submitted on the exact philosophy of Dudley Council as to the education of learning difficulties for children of the autistic spectrum, in particular, for children with very little or no speech and very little understanding.

During the consideration of this matter, it was noted that the Assistant Director Targeted Services was aware of the issues involved and would, in consultation with interested parties, give further consideration to this matter.

(13) On-going problems in relation to the Ridgeway were raised at the meeting. It was noted that the matter had been under constant review and the concerns had been raised previously. However it was agreed that the issues needed to be addressed and the Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) was requested to further investigate this matter.

APPLICATION IN RESPECT OF LAND OWNED BY THE COUNCIL

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted regarding requests from owners of properties on Stickley Lane to purchase, for use as garden land, Council-owned land at the rear of their properties, as indicated on the plan attached to the report submitted. The request had been submitted as a result of Council action to recover the area in question which had been encroached on by the owners of the properties in Stickley Lane so that it could be returned to its proper use as Public Open Space.

Arising from comments made by the Acting Area Liaison Officer, it was

RESOLVED

That further consideration of the request made by owners of properties in Stickley Lane to purchase, for use as garden lane, Council owned land at the rear of their properties, be deferred pending investigation by the Council of the possessory title claims in respect of each resident concerned.

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DELEGATED CAPITAL BUDGET

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on applications made for funding from the Committee's Delegated Capital Budget.

It was noted that, should the recommendations made be approved, a sum of £93,868 would remain to be allocated. Requests were therefore made for organisations to submit bids for capital allocations based on the criteria set out in the Appendix to the report submitted.

During consideration of the applications made, in particular that submitted by Dudley North Youth Service, in respect of the provision of a skate/bike park, comments received from the Secretary of Turls Hill and Swan Brook Valley in respect of this application were drawn to the attention of the Committee and noted.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the decision of the Capital Allocations Working Group to re-affirm their original decision, to refuse the request submitted by Oval and Tudor Managed Neighbourhood Community Safety Project for a sum of £5,000 as a contribution to the provision of dropped kerbs and hardstandings to gardens on the Oval and Tudor Estates for the reason indicated in the report submitted, be approved.
- (2) That the decision of the Capital Allocations Working Group to refuse the application submitted by Age Concern Sedgley and District for a sum of £1,472.50 for the upgrading of safety and security at the Day Centre in Ettymore Road, for the reasons indicated in the report submitted, be approved.
- (3) That, following discussions regarding eligible expenditure, eligible expenditure in the sum of £3,986.20 be approved in respect of the application submitted by Coseley Youth Centre for the purchase of various sports and entertainment equipment and safety equipment.
- (4) That, as further information requested had not yet been received, consideration of the application made by St. Andrew's United Reform Church be deferred, pending receipt of the further information requested.

- (5) That, having ascertained that no mobiles were available from within the Council that could be used for the purpose, further consideration of the application made by Gornal Athletic Football Club for a contribution towards the purchase of a portakabin be deferred pending further investigation as to whether planning permission would be required.
- (6) That, subject to planning permission and receipt of the balance of funding for the scheme, approval be given to the application made by Dudley North Youth Service in the sum of £20,000 for the provision of a skate/bike park and to the splitting of the allocation across the North Dudley Wards.
- (7) That the application made by Dudley Caving Group for the sum of £2,258 for the purchase of computer equipment, software and a projector, be approved.

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AVINGTON CLOSE, CATHOLIC LANE, GOSPEL END STREET AND PRIORY LANE, SEDGLEY – PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF WAITING ORDER

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the proposed introduction of a Prohibition of Waiting Order in Avington Close, Catholic Lane, Gospel End Street and Priory Lane, Sedgley.

RESOLVED

That support be given to the making of a Traffic Regulation Order for the Prohibition of Waiting in Catholic Lane and Priory Lane, Sedgley, as shown on Drawing No. TM2478 and for the Prohibition of Waiting in Avington Close and Gospel End Street, Sedgley, as shown on Drawing No. TM2479 Revision B and that the Cabinet Member for Transportation be recommended to introduce this scheme.

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TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF A PUBLIC FOOTPATH CROSSING GORNAL WOOD CEMETERY, GORNAL

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on a proposed temporary closure of a public footpath based upon the opening and closing times of the Cemetery.

RESOLVED

That support be given to the making of a Gating Order under Section 129A of the Highways Act, 1980 to temporarily close a public footpath as shown on Plan TMD/CP/480, outside of the normal Crematorium opening hours and that the Cabinet Member for Transportation be recommended accordingly.

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RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED AT PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the current status of responses to questions posed at previous meetings of the Committee, as set out in the Appendix to the report submitted.

During consideration of this matter, it was noted that the reference to Milton Road, Sedgley should, in fact, have been to Milton Road, Coseley and that this matter would receive further consideration. Similarly, the reference to the footpath in Hopyard Lane to Stickley Lane, referred to earlier in the meeting, should have referred to the Straits and, again, further consideration would be given to this matter.

The Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) would also arrange for the issue of poor carriageway surfacing from High Street, Sedgley down to the Bull Ring to receive further consideration.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted, and as updated at the meeting, be noted.

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WARD ISSUES

- (1) Councillor Davies expressed his thanks to those concerned regarding the provision of signs at Jack Newell Court, Coseley.
- (2) Councillor Mrs. Ridney
 - (a) Expressed her thanks to those concerned in respect of the Christ Church Walking Bus.
 - (b) Requested that the footpath from the railway bridge to The Paddock, in particular, where it divided be tidied up and maintained, given its current untidy state and the overhanging bushes. The Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) was requested to arrange for the points raised to be investigated.
 - (c) Councillor Mrs. Ridney referred to the lack of car parking at Coseley railway station car park to cope with the numbers of commuters using the facility, giving rise to a knock-on effect in surrounding streets, such as Gough Road, Southall Crescent and Webb Street.

Given the concerns raised by residents, the Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) was asked to investigate the matter.

- (3) Councillor Evans referred to a previous request for a crossing in Gospel End Road, Sedgley and, in response, the Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) referred to the assessment that had been carried out in the area.

In view of the further concerns expressed, the Group Engineer undertook to review the matter.

- (4) Councillor Simms referred to:-
- (a) The need for a crossing arising from the use of an adjoining public house car park by parents of pupils attending Woodsetton Special School, which involved the crossing of Tipton Road. The Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) was asked to investigate this matter.
 - (b) The petition reported on earlier in the meeting regarding High Arcal Park and the fact that lighting was out of action. It was considered that once the lighting was reinstated the concerns raised would be mitigated.

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SELECT COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

The information given in respect of publicity for future meetings of Select Committees, as set out in the Agenda for this meeting of the Committee, was noted.

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DATE AND VENUE OF FUTURE MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held as follows:-

28th March, 2007 – Roberts Primary School

The meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.

CHAIRMAN