
Halesowen Area Committee – 22nd March 2006

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Responses to Questions Raised at the Halesowen Area Committee held on 25th January 2006

Purpose of Report

1. To inform the Committee of the written responses made to questions asked at the previous meeting.

Background

2. At the meeting of this Committee held on 25th January 2006, questions were raised under the Public Forum item and the responses to those questions are as follows:-
3. A resident complained about G Clancey Limited and Fish 4 Dogs Limited in relation to the smell and pollution that emanated from the premises and queried what action the Council would be taking. A report is to be considered at this meeting as Agenda Item No 10 in respect of the matter.
4. Questions were asked in relation to the supermarkets in Halesowen and the closure of the Safeway Store and it was queried what action the Council were taking to ensure that the development of Halesowen took place as quickly as possible. A response has been sent to the questioners confirming that it was the Council's role to grant planning permission for major superstores in the Town Centre, which in relation to Halesowen had already occurred in relation to the Asda proposals. It was acknowledged that in the interests of all residents of Halesowen, the development of the Asda Superstore should be put together as quickly and as effectively as possible, in order that a major supermarket existed in Halesowen Town Centre once again. However, in relation to the Safeway Store it was pointed out that there was little that the Council could do by way of direct intervention and the store had closed in relation to matters of commercial operations of the Safeway stores nationally. Attempts were being made to encourage occupation of these premises and a number of major food retailers had shown interest and were inspecting the vacant store. Reference is also made to supermarkets in the report of the Halesowen Town Centre – Transportation and Regeneration Issues that is to be considered as Agenda Item No 14 later in the meeting.
5. A written question was received from Halesowen Abbey Trust querying the details of the Development Control decision to refuse retrospective planning permission for the flood barrier on the Scheduled Monument of the Halesowen Abbey and instigation of enforcement action for the total removal of the unauthorised work within six months. A response was sent to the questioner confirming that the Council had served an enforcement notice on the owners of Manor Abbey Farm on 23rd December, 2005. This required the removal of the gabions installed without the appropriate consents and

reinstatement of the site to the original form of land within nine months of the notice taking effect. The owner had until 8th February, 2006 to submit an appeal, which he has done so.

With reference to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the operation of the scheduled monument consent procedure, this is a matter for English Heritage who directly advises the Secretary of State and the owners of scheduled monuments on such matters. The legislation affords Dudley Council no role in this. Council Officers have, however, discussed the matter of scheduled monument consent with English Heritage who advises that scheduled monument consent is required for the removal of the gabions. English Heritage are currently in discussions with the site owner with a view to his making an application for scheduled monument consent and the outcome of those discussions is currently awaited.

6. A written question was received requesting details on the general maintenance budget for Leasowes Park. The annual budget for maintenance activities is £28,102.00. A consultant is to be appointed for the preparation of a 10-year management and maintenance plan for the site and this study will include a review of the maintenance activities and site priorities.
7. A resident referred to a petition that had been submitted in respect of providing off road car parking in Butchers Lane and also complained in relation to the excessive speed of cars. A Member also commented that he had, on a number of occasions, requested that the speed limit be reduced. The Member and an Officer met on site on 20th February, 2006 and consideration is being given to the possibility of introducing a local safety scheme in Butchers Lane.
8. Regarding Minute No 68 in relation to the concerns expressed at the unsafe highway on the brow of Mucklow Hill and in respect of Resolution No 68(2), a site meeting was held between Ward Members, the Head of Traffic and Road Safety and the complainant and consideration will be given to revoking the 40 mph speed limit on Mucklow Hill to 30 mph.

Finance

9. There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

Law

10. Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972 enables the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

11. The report takes into account the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
12. This report will have no specific effect on children and young people. There is no requirement for consultation with children and young people or the involvement of children and young people in noting the report.

Recommendation

13. The Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report.



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List of Background Papers

None