
Halesowen Area Committee – 16th November 2005

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Responses to Questions Raised at the Halesowen Area Committee held on 14th September 2005

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 14 September 2005, questions were raised under the Public Forum item and the responses to those questions are as follows:-
3. A complaint was made in relation to the damage to a historical wall in Tenter Drive that had caused stones from the wall to spread onto Bromsgrove Road making the site unsightly. The Head of Policy (Executive and Support) has referred the matter to the Directorate of Children's Services who are the owners of the wall.
4. A member of the public expressed concern in relation to a long-term dispute with the Council in relation to the need for a fence, due to health and safety reasons, alongside a public highway in Hightown, which bordered residential properties. The Head of Policy (Executive and Support) is investigating the matter, which has a complicated legal history and will respond in the near future to the questioner.
5. A question was received querying whether the Council were contemplating dissolving the Trust governing Bernard Oakley Memorial Park, and if so, what would happen to the funds of the Trust. The matter was referred to the Directorate of the Urban Environment and the response is that there are two trusts for which the Council are the Trustees:
Bernard Oakley Memorial Gardens Trust – the Site is designated as a local park. The Directorate are not aware of any proposals to dispose of this land and clearly the planning policy status of the land would prohibit any development here. The Directorate are currently working with an emerging friends group for this park who wish to improve and protect it as an important community facility.
Bernard Oakley Gardens Trust Fund. This is a fund of money originally meant to maintain the gardens. On 13th February, 1996, the Leisure Committee of Dudley Council agreed that this fund should be capitalised and used to carry out site improvements. The gates were restored leaving approximately £9,000, which was to be used in conjunction with some money from the Barratt Development for additional site improvements. This was reported to the Halesowen Area Committee in July 2002 but this work has yet to be implemented. Once the remaining funds from this Trust are spent it will effectively wind up this Trust as detailed in the February 1996 report.
6. A written question was submitted querying why the Iron Work in Colman Hill, particularly the one opposite the bus stop had not been replaced. The Area Liaison Officer has

arranged for the matter to be investigated. A letter has been drafted to the questioner, bringing him up to date with the current situation and inviting him to discuss the subject with officers.

7. A written question had been submitted in advance of the meeting asking for an explanation of the £100 million overspend on upgrading Dudley's National Health Service (NHS) and its consequences for the local health budget and services and also a question in relation to the inclusion of Grazebrook Park, Dudley as part of Government plans to recycle brownfield land and expressing concern over the future of Highfields Park. The Area Liaison Officer has responded to the questioner in writing stating that the Hospital Trust and the contractors are undertaking a process of mediation and, until that is concluded, they would not know how much money is actually involved or how it will be funded. The reference to Grazebrook Park and the national pilot project to recycle brownfield land appears to have been taken out of context in the Express and Star article. The inclusion of Grazebrook Park in the pilot is about improve the park itself and not as a development opportunity. There is no intention to develop any Parks within Dudley Borough for any other form of development.

Objections to Disabled Parking Places – Programme H

8. The decision in respect of disabled spaces at Nimmings Road and Long Innage was deferred pending a site visit. Following the site visits it was agreed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Transportation that a double disabled parking place be introduced in front of 115 and 116 Nimmings Road. In respect of Long Innage a letter has been submitted to the Ward Members explaining that the application should not succeed, owing to the applicant having a drive and a garage. The applicant claimed she had difficulty using the drive and the garage, so it was agreed to advertise the application. However, it was also explained at the time, that if there were any objections, we would be unable to proceed.

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.

Recommendation

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



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Mike Williams, Area Liaison Officer

Contact Officer: Manjit Johal
Democratic Services Officer
Telephone: 01384 815267
Email: manjit.johal@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers
None