

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON REGENERATION, CULTURE AND  
ADULT EDUCATION**

Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2006, at 6 p.m.  
in the Council Chamber at the Council House, Dudley

**PRESENT:-**

Councillor K Turner (Chairman)  
Councillors Attwood, Body, J R Davies, Hill, Jones, Rahman, Southall  
and Tyler

**Officers**

Assistant Director Learning Disability and Mental Health (Directorate of  
Adult, Community and Housing Services) (as Acting Lead Officer to the  
Committee), Senior Assistant Director of Finance and Mr J Jablonski  
(Directorate of Law and Property).

**Also in Attendance**

Councillors G H Davies and members of the public.

21                    **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of  
Councillors Crumpton, Jackson and C Wilson and the Assistant Director  
of Housing (Strategy and Private Sector) (Lead Officer to the  
Committee) and the Assistant Director for Community Education and  
Development.

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22                    **APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBER**

It was reported that Councillor Attwood had been appointed as a  
substitute member for Councillor C Wilson for this meeting of the  
Committee only.

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23                    **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- (1)            In accordance with the Member's Code of Conduct the following  
Members declared personal interest in the matters stated as  
follows:-
- (a)            Councillor Attwood – in agenda item No. 8 – Quarterly  
Corporate Performance Report in that he is the  
Chairman of the Friends of Mary Stevens Park and a  
Member of the Environmental Task Group on Livability.

- (b) Councillor J R Davies – in agenda item No. 6 – Update on the Council's Capital Strategy in that he attends meetings of Friends of Parks Groups and in respect of any other item on the agenda relating to parks.
- (c) Councillor Hill – in agenda item No. 6 – Update on the Council's Capital Strategy in that he is a member of the Friends of Hurst Green Park.
- (d) Councillor Rahman – in agenda item No. 6 – Update on the Council's Capital Strategy in that he attends Netherton Park meetings.
- (e) Councillor Southall –
  - (i) In agenda item No. 6 – Update on the Council's Capital Strategy in respect of references to the move of the Archive Service to the Kingswinford site from Coseley in that he is a member of the Development Control Committee and reference to move resources to improve facilities within Borough Parks in that he attends meetings of the Friends of Wordsley Park Group and also relating to the feasibility study into the development of a sports village complex in Dudley, to include a football stadium for Dudley Town Football Club in that he is a member of the Council of the Birmingham County Football Association to which the club is affiliated.
  - (ii) In agenda item No. 7 – Recommendations from the Economic Regeneration Working Group 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 – in respect of progress on the Local Development Framework in that he is a member of the Development Control Committee.
  - (iii) In agenda item No. 8 – Quarterly Corporate Performance Report – relating to Appendix 3 of that report and issues regarding key issues for the Directorate having implications for the delivery of Council Plan milestones (Planning), Better Parks – Steps to health and Better Parks – Livability in that he is a member of the Development Control Committee and in respect of the latter two items in that he attends meetings of the Friends of Wordsley Park.

- (iv) In agenda item No. 9 – Annual Report of the former Select Committee on Economic Regeneration in respect of Planning Obligations – Section 106 Agreements in that he is a member of the Development Control Committee.
  - (f) Councillor K Turner – in respect of any matter on the agenda relating to parks in that he is a member of Huntingtree Park Friends of the Park.
- (2) That, given the number of interests declared relating to Friends of Parks, the Monitoring Officer be requested to clarify for Members of the Committee the position regarding the declaring of interests where a Member attends meetings of Friends of Park Groups.

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MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2006, be approved as a correct record and signed.

It was noted that, arising from the resignation of Councillor Ms Foster, Councillor Body had replaced Councillor Ms Foster as a Member on this Committee. In view of this change Councillor Body would also be replacing Councillor Ms Foster as a Member of the Economic Regeneration Working Group.

In commenting on the change made the Chairman expressed concerns regarding the need for consistency in membership of Select Committees given their role and responsibilities and of the need for members to attend as many meetings as they were able despite their varying commitments.

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PUBLIC FORUM – MOVE OF THE ARCHIVES FROM COSELEY TO KINGSWINFORD

A member of the public expressed his disappointment that the report on various issues relating to the move of the archives from Coseley to Kingswinford, as set out in the minutes of the last meeting of this Committee, was not on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

Prior to further discussion on this matter, Councillor Southall, a member of the Development Control Committee, left the meeting in view of the possibility that an outline planning application received in respect of the site of the current archives service would be considered at a future meeting of the Development Control Committee so as not to prejudice his consideration of that matter at any such future meeting.

In reiterating various questions, as indicated in the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, the member of the public also stated that a response had not been received to a request made for information under the Freedom of Information Act, 2000. The Chairman indicated that he would investigate the position on this matter.

The member of the public also indicated that it was the intention to refer the matter to the Audit Commission for investigation.

A Member also expressed his disappointment that following the discussions held at the last meeting of the Committee a response had not been submitted to any of the points raised and considered that even if all the information was not available a partial response could have been submitted.

Reference was again made to statements made in the press regarding cost of refurbishment and the lack of information available on this and on the basis on which any move should take place.

It was also considered that a report to the January meeting of this Committee would be too late given the projected start on the Kingswinford site of the end of this year.

The Chairman, in responding to points made indicated that the feasibility study had not been completed and so a report could not be made available for this meeting of the Committee. Furthermore, he raised concerns about damage to archives held and considered that it was of prime importance to ensure that the condition of the archives was maintained and safeguarded. It was doubted whether the current location would assist in this.

Discussions then ensued on the background to this matter in that a decision had been taken approximately three years ago to move the archives. Only the Cabinet could reverse the decision made.

In response, a member of the public indicated that a number of questions remained unanswered, even following the call-in meeting held, and that these should be addressed with a view to the decision possibly being reversed hence their attendance at these meetings to raise points of concern.

Concluding remarks were then made with disappointment being expressed that the decision taken had not been acted upon especially as there was a need to ensure that archives held were preserved as a matter of urgency.

A member of the public also thanked the Chairman and Members for listening to the points raised by them and considered that this had not always been the case when this matter had been raised.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That it be noted that a report on the move of the archives from Coseley to Kingswinford, addressing points raised at the last meeting of this Committee, as set out in the minutes of that meeting, would be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee to be held in January, 2007.
- (2) That the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive be recommended to take all the necessary action, as a matter of urgency, to preserve the archives held at Coseley so that no documents that could be saved were lost.

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#### UPDATE OF THE COUNCIL'S CAPITAL STRATEGY

A report of the Director of Finance was submitted on the update of the Council's Capital Strategy a copy of which was attached as an Appendix to the report submitted.

During the consideration of this matter in particular the transportation issues relating to Midland Metro and public transport it was considered that this Select Committee needed to keep the issue of the Midland Metro, in particular, under review given the latest announcement of the delay in the commencement of this project.

#### RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted on the update of the Council's Capital Strategy be noted and that no issues be raised to be taken into account when the Strategy was considered by full Council.

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#### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND CULTURE AND RECREATION WORKING GROUPS OF THE COMMITTEE

A report of the Lead Officer was submitted setting out two recommendations made at a meeting of the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education (Economic Regeneration) Working Group held on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2006, as set out in paragraph 2 of that report.

Consideration was also given to two recommendations, reported orally at the meeting, arising from the meeting of the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education (Culture and Recreation) Working Group held on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2006.

In respect of the first recommendation of the Economic Regeneration Working Group in respect of the possible provision of Blackberries to Members of the Council it was noted that this matter had been raised at a recent meeting of the Members' ICT Working Group and the conclusion reached was that at this stage the provision of such equipment was not appropriate and that the matter would be kept under review.

Regarding the second recommendation in respect of the provision of statistics on planning applications approved for apartments and other housing and the percentage of affordable housing contained therein it was suggested that the details requested be clarified to involve just the numbers of such applications and not a detailed breakdown.

Regarding the two recommendations of the Culture and Recreation Working Group it was considered that the first recommendation regarding the issue of where libraries should be included for Comprehensive Performance Review purposes should be amended as set out below and that the second recommendation be adopted, again as set out below.

## RESOLVED

- (1) That it be agreed that the issue of the provision of Blackberries to members of the Council be referred to the Members ICT Working Group for further consideration and that the Head of ICT Services provide to that Working Group details of the usage by Members of their ICT equipment in order to inform the debate on this matter, as recommended by the Economic Regeneration Working Group, and that the outcome of the consideration given to this matter by the Members' ICT Working Group be noted.

(2) That the recommendation of the Economic Regeneration Working Group that information be submitted to future meetings of that Working Group on planning applications approved for apartments and other housing and the percentage of affordable housing contained therein over a six/twelve month period for inclusion in the work programme of that Working Group with a view to a report arising from the statistics produced relating to these matters being produced for consideration at a future meeting of this Committee be approved subject to the details submitted relating to numbers involved and not a detailed breakdown.

(3) That the recommendation of the Culture and Recreation Working Group regarding the issue of libraries for Comprehensive Performance Review purposes be amended to read as follows:-

That the Chief Executive be requested to clarify, with the Audit Commission, where libraries should appear for Comprehensive Performance Review purposes given that libraries were currently included in the Cultural Strategy and were not the responsibility of the Directorate responsible for producing that Strategy.

(4) That approval be given to the recommendation of the Culture and Recreation Working Group that the Lead Officer raise with the Director of Children's Services the issue of the reluctance of schools within Dudley to allow community school usage of their sport and leisure facilities with a view to the formulation and introduction of a Borough wide arrangement with regard to community school usage.

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on performance in the first quarter of 2006/07, April to June, 2006, in relation to the activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee.

**RESOLVED**

That the information contained in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted on performance in the first quarter of 2006/07, April to June, 2006, in relation to the activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee, be noted.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FORMER SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
ECONOMIC REGENERATION FOR 2005/2006

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on the Annual Report of the former Select Committee on Economic Regeneration for 2005/2006.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Report of the former Select Committee on Economic Regeneration for 2005/2006 be received and noted and referred to the Council.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm.

CHAIRMAN