

SELECT COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND RECREATION

Thursday, 16th March, 2006, at 6.00 p.m.
in Committee Room 3 at the Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor Southall (Chairman)
Councillors Attwood, Crumpton, Mrs Jordan, Mrs Pearce, K. Turner and Tyler

OFFICERS

Assistant Director of Law and Property (Corporate Estate Services – Lead Officer), Assistant Director of the Urban Environment (Culture and Community Services, Personnel Manager Policy and Executive Team, Principal Personnel Officer, PEST (Directorate of the Urban Environment), and Ms K Smith (Directorate of Law and Property).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs Mary Barker (Community Representative, Access and Disability Consultation Group) and Mr K Ahmed (Dudley Race Equality Council) for agenda item no. 6 – Equality and Diversity Annual Report Action Plan only.

34 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Kettle, Simms and C Woodall.

35 **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was reported that Councillor K Turner had been appointed to serve as substitute for Councillor Kettle for this meeting of the Committee only.

36 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor K Turner made a declaration of Personal Interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in agenda item no.6 – Equality and Diversity Annual Report Action Plan, as Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance General Purpose Committee, Groundwork Black Country.

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MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12th January 2006, be approved as a correct record and signed.

38

BLACK COUNTRY TOURISM AWARDS

The Chairman reported that the first Black Country Tourism Awards had been held and Dudley venues had been awarded the following medals:-

- Business Tourism – Himley Hall – Silver medal
- Best Small Visitor Attraction – Red House Glass Cone – Bronze medal
- Best Large Visitor Attraction – Dudley Zoological Gardens – Silver medal
- Outstanding Customer Service – Graham Worton, Dudley Museum & Art Gallery – Gold medal

The Chairman extended the congratulations of the Committee to all officers and staff concerned on the medals awarded.

39

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT ACTION PLAN 2006/2007 DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the Directorate of the Urban Environment's Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2006/2007.

Arising from consideration of the Plan the following issues were raised and discussed:-

- It was noted that the Borough parks are being reviewed by Access in Dudley including: play equipment for children with disabilities, raised flowerbeds, pathways being made suitable for wheelchair users, handrails, sensory gardens for the visually impaired and views of carers. The review was being undertaken with the help of the community representative's panel, disability and access consultation groups and organisation such as the Orchard Project. It was suggested that Friends of Parks groups be asked to contribute and the Assistant Director, Culture and Community Services agreed to assist in co-ordinating communication with the Friends groups.

- It was confirmed that “Liveability” was the only funding currently available for these projects and that “wish lists” had already been drawn up by Friends of Parks groups.
- In relation to the “Smartcard Scheme”, it was noted that further promotion of the scheme needed to be undertaken with innovative ways of getting forms and information out to residents. Residents needed to be encouraged to take up the scheme and reassured that their personal information will remain confidential.
- It was requested that a means of working with Black Minority Ethnic groups be reviewed to enable the collation of data to assist in service targeting and planning; not just in relation to use of leisure facilities
- It was noted that the corporate HR strategy encompassing equality and diversity would be phased in over three years until 2008.

The Members welcomed the involvement of Community Representatives joining them to scrutinise the report and felt that it strengthened the process

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted be noted and that the content of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2006/07 for the Directorate of the Urban Environment be supported.

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DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND RECREATION

A report of the Lead Officer was submitted updating Members on the work programme and key issues that the Committee had undertaken during 2005/06 and the potential areas of focus for 2006/07.

Arising from consideration of the Annual Report it was

RESOLVED

That the content of the Annual Report of the Select Committee on Culture and Recreation for the 2005/06 municipal year be endorsed for submission to Council.

41

COUNCILLOR C WOODALL

The Chairman expressed his and the Committee's thanks to Councillor Woodall, for his thirty years of service with Dudley Council and work within the community in promoting cultural and leisure interests. He wished him well on his retirement for the future.

The meeting ended at 7:15 pm

CHAIRMAN