

Halesowen Area Committee - 12th November 2008

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Responses to Questions asked at the meeting of the committee held on 4th September, 2008

Purpose of Report

1. To receive responses to questions asked at the meeting of the Committee held on 4th September.

Background

2. The issues below were raised through at the meeting of the committee held on 4th September 2008 through questions asked by Members of the Committee and the public, responses to which are as indicated:
3. Cradley/Windmill Hill Regeneration Plan Delivery Working Group

At the last meeting, certain Members expressed the view that the composition of this Working Group should not include the Chairman of the Area Committee, referring to decisions made by the Area Committee in the previous Municipal Year. The Area Liaison Officer agreed to peruse the Terms of Reference of the Working Group, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Group and report back on the issue of composition.

The Working Group was first established at the Area Committee meeting on 12th March 2008, with the following terms of reference:-

- Receive regular progress reports from the Local Centre Officer
- To agree priorities for action
- Identify and resolve any constraints to plan progress
- Guide public relations and communications for the plan
- Report progress to the Committee on a regular basis
- To review the regeneration plan annually.

At that time, the Area Committee agreed that the composition of the Working Group should be one Member from each of the affected wards namely, Belle Vue, Cradley and Foxcote and Hayley Green and Cradley South Wards. Although it would be good practice for the Chair of the Area Committee to be,

effectively, an “ex-officio” member of all Working Groups, the then Chairman decided he did not want to be a Member.

The Committee considered the appointment and reappointment of Working Groups for 2008/9 Municipal Year at its last meeting and agreed the reappointment of the Cradley/Windmill Hill Regeneration Plan Delivery Working Group with the same Terms of Reference and similar composition, save for the inclusion of the Chairman of the Area Committee.

The Area Liaison Officer has discussed this issue with the Chairman of the Working Group, who asks that this be referred back to the Committee for clarification.

In the opinion of the Area Liaison Officer, it is good governance practice to include, on an “ex-officio” basis, the Chairman of any parent committee in the membership of its Working Groups.

Recommendation

That the Area Committee determine the composition of the Cradley/Windmill Hill Regeneration Plan Delivery Working Group

4. Youth Provision in Lye and Wollescote

In response to the question asked by a Member at the meeting of the Committee held on 4th September 2008, on the extent of youth provision in the Lye and Wollescote area, in the light of the number of Dispersal Orders being placed on young people at Wollescote Park, youth provision in that area is as set out below:-

Mondays -Youth Club for 13-19 year olds at Valley Road Youth Centre

Girls' Group for 13-19 year olds at Lye Community Centre

Detached Youth Worker for 13-19 year olds at Lye and Rufford.

Tuesdays - Project night for 13-19 year olds for young people doing specific projects at Valley Road Youth Centre.

Boxing at Lye Boxing Club, which facilitates young people.

Cyber bus for 13-19 year olds at Wichbury Park, Wollescote

Detached Youth Worker for 13-19 year olds at Wollescote

Wednesdays -Inclusive Youth Club for young people with disabilities at Valley Road Youth Centre

Cyber bus for 13-19 year olds at Withymoor

Thursdays -Youth Club for 13-19 year olds at Valley Road Youth Centre

Detached Youth Worker at Enville Street, Stourbridge

(The above information does not include the voluntary sector work, which takes place for young people, eg at Christ Church Youth Club twice a week and at Bethel Chapel Youth Club once a week, as well as others).

The Member of the Committee who raised the issue has been apprised of the information above, and also of youth provision in the Cradley and Foxcote area. This was provided by way of a report from the Area Youth Team Leader for Halesowen, a copy of which may be obtained from Richard Sanders in Democratic Services at the contact addresses on the cover of the agenda.

5. Alleyways behind Beaumont Road, Halesowen

A petition requesting consideration to be given to the making of a Gating Order at the alleyways to the rear of Beaumont Road, in consequence of anti-social behaviour problems being experienced there, was presented at the meeting of the committee on 4th September, 2008.

Under the relevant legislation regarding Gating Orders, such Orders can be made only in the event of persistent **high** levels of anti-social behaviour. The evidence that the Police have on record currently (logs from residents reporting and complaining about anti-social behaviour) is not sufficient to support this requirement and an application by the Council to gate the alleyways cannot therefore be pursued.

At a meeting held on site between the Chairman of the Committee and officers from the Council, Beth Johnson Housing Trust and the Police, it was agreed that the following work should be undertaken in order to alleviate the situation: the tarmacing of the two alleyway branches leading into Beaumont Road; the removal of the tree growing against the retaining wall; the cutting back of trees and bushes currently overhanging (some of which are in the ownership of residents), and the tidying up of the rear boundaries of some houses. Beth Johnson Housing Trust are awaiting the outcome of an inspection of a retaining wall in their ownership.

Arrangements are being made for these measures to be taken. At the same time, the Chairman urges any resident who suffers or witnesses any worrying anti-social behaviour to ring the Police and ask for a log number in order that a true picture of any anti-social behaviour issues can be evidenced.

6. River Stour Walkway

At the last meeting of the Committee, a request was made by a local resident for action to be taken to improve the safety of the pathway along the Stour Valley Nature Walk, in consequence of its being overgrown.

The Director of the Urban Environment has confirmed that maintenance of the walkway that the walkway is cleared twice a year under the Council's maintenance regime but has pointed out that the weather in August, this being the wettest on record for that month, impacted adversely on plant growth. The further maintenance of the walkway was undertaken on 15th September 2008, with the walkways being trimmed and cut back. Fallen branches, particularly from a lime

tree, which was obstructing the walkway, were also removed. The resident has been notified of progress.

7. Re-instatement of double yellow lines at Tenter Drive, Halesowen

Reference was made at the meeting by a local resident to yellow lines at Tenter Drive having been re-laid incorrectly when the carriageway was re-surfaced. The Director of the Urban Environment has confirmed that an instruction has been issued for the yellow lines to be laid correctly.

8. Bromsgrove Street, Halesowen

In response to reference made by a local resident to weeds growing out onto the pavement at Bromsgrove Street, the Director of the Urban Environment has confirmed that remediation to the overgrown pavement was effected on 6th September 2008.

9. Halesowen Town Football Club Development Proposals

At the request of the Committee, following discussion at the meeting on 4th September 2008 regarding the development proposals of Halesowen Town Football Club for a reconstructed stadium and hotel facility, which would involve the use of part of the Grove Recreation Ground, the Area Liaison Officer wrote to the James Grove Recreation and Sports Ground Trust indicating that the matter had been raised at the meeting and conveying the wish of the Committee that the Trust engage in as full as possible consultation with the Committee on the matter as soon as possible.

The Chair of Trust has replied, indicating that the contents of the letter had been discussed at a recent meeting of the Trustees and reporting the response of the Trustees that any details of the proposed development are in the domain of Halesowen Town Football Club and that is to the Football Club that requests for any information should be directed. The Chair of the Trust has also stated in his letter that it is not the Trust that will be making any final decisions but the (sic) Planning Committee of Dudley Local Authority and that he assumes that as part of the normal planning process the (sic) Planning Committee will undertake extensive public consultation.

10. Re-instatement of double yellow lines in the vicinity of Hob Green School

At the meeting of the Committee held on 4th September 2008, it was reported that the double yellow lines in the vicinity of Hob Green School had not been reinstated following resurfacing of the carriageway. The Council's Highways Inspector has been requested to ensure that all relevant lining is consistent with the requirements of the Traffic Regulation Orders in force and, if necessary, to rectify any omissions.

11. Pedestrian traffic lights near the junction of Summerhill and Queensway

At the meeting of the Committee held on 4th September 2008, a member of the public reported that the sequencing of the traffic lights at the pelican crossing near

the junction of Summerhill and Queensway needed to be addressed. The Director of the Urban Environment has confirmed that a fault has been traced and rectified.

12. Sequencing of traffic lights at the junction of Chapel House Lane and Colley Lane, Cradley

At the last meeting of the Committee, a local resident requested urgent action be taken to improve the sequencing of the traffic lights at the junction of Chapel House Lane and Colley Lane. An oral response was given at the meeting that the issue was being considered in conjunction with the scheme for the A458 route, a report on which would be submitted to the Committee. It was also indicated that consideration was being given to amending the stop lines to improve the co-ordination of the traffic lights.

The Director of the Urban Environment has indicated that proposals for the junction are being consulted on and will be considered by the Cradley/Windmill Hill Working Group in the first instance. The outcome will be reported to the Committee in due course.

13. Vegetation on roundabout at junction of A456 and B4183

Further to comments made at the meeting of the Committee held on 4th September 2008, the Council's Green Care Manager has been asked to investigate the cutting back of vegetation at this roundabout, with a view to improving visibility around the island.

Finance

14. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Law

15. 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

16. The report takes into account the Council's Policy on Equality and Diversity Policy. Since this is a feedback report on issues raised by members, there are no direct implications for children in noting the report

Recommendations

17. That the contents of this report be received and noted.
18. That the issue of the membership of the Cradley/Windmill Hill Working Group, as referred to in paragraph 3 above, be determined.



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M WILLIAMS
AREA LIAISON OFFICER

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List of Background Papers

Minutes of the meeting of the Halesowen Area Committee held on 4th September, 2008.