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**Halesowen Area Committee – 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009**

**Report of the Area Liaison Officer**

**Responses to Questions Raised at the Halesowen Area Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009**

**Purpose of Report**

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

**Background**

2. **Public Forum** – At the meeting of this Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 several members of the public expressed extreme concerns regarding the problems of flooding in the Grange Crescent Area. An allegation was made that the situation had been exacerbated since the building of residential homes and the actions of the Council and the Environment Agency in permitting such development on a flood plain was criticised. Reference was also made to information in respect of the matter, which on enquiry, had been missing from the Council's file. The questioner has been responded to and it has been explained that as part of the original planning submission, existing levels information was provided, and in order to discharge a condition attached to the permission, a further plan detailing proposed levels was provided. Notwithstanding these facts, the development is suspected to have been built to different levels again (albeit potentially lower than those approved via the condition) and at a site meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009, the developer agreed to provide pre and post development levels information to the Environment Agency. When in discussions with the Environment Agency it was established these had not been provided, the Local Planning Authority offered to assist in following the matter up. To date the Local Planning Authority has not received a response and it is their understanding that the Environment Agency has not either. The state of play remains that no "offence" has taken place, which can be pursued under the Planning Acts, and in the absence of expert witness support, the Directorate of the Urban Environment remain unable to pursue the matter further in any event. The matter rests with the Environment Agency and the developer. However, once the outstanding information is received it is likely that further discussions will take place with the Environment Agency.
3. **Cradley/Windmill Hill Local Centre Regeneration Plan** – A local resident drew attention to motorists ignoring a turn left sign at the junction of Two Gates Lane and Stourbridge Road and turning right onto the Stourbridge Road carriageway and requested that consideration be given to making Two Gates Lane into a one way street in the direction away from Stourbridge Road. Upon consideration of the request the Directorate of the Urban Environment have deemed that the proposal is not advisable at this time, as it would detract from the current problematic situation with traffic on the A458 Stourbridge Road.

4. **Halesowen Town Centre Development** – A Member of the public referred to problems in crossing Manor Way and sought the signalisation of the pedestrian crossing at the Grange Island. In response to a petition on the same subject the Directorate of the Urban Environment have agreed to revisit the justification for signals in the new year when the current scheme is complete and travel patterns have re-established following the disruption of construction. The findings will be reported to the Committee in due course.

### **Finance**

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

### **Law**

6. 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**

7. The report takes into account the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and there are no direct implications for children and young people in noting the report.

### **Recommendation**

8. That the Committee notes the contents of the report.



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**Bill Baker**  
**Area Liaison Officer**

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### **List of Background Papers**

Minutes of the Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009