

## HALESOWEN AREA COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2008, at 6.30 p.m.  
at Howley Grange Primary School, Howley Grange Road, Halesowen

### PRESENT

Councillors Body, Burston, Crumpton, Mrs Dunn, Mrs Faulkner, Hill, James, Ms Nicholls, Ms Partridge, Mrs Shakespeare, Taylor, K Turner, Mrs H Turner and Woodall.

### Officers

Area Liaison Officer, Assistant Director Culture and Leisure, Assistant Director for Resources, Assistant Director Policy, Performance and Resources, Head of Policy (Executive and Support), Head of Economic Regeneration Delivery, Group Engineer (Transportation), Principal Solicitor (Mr M Farooq) and Mrs M Johal (Directorate of Law and Property)

### Also in Attendance

Cabinet Member for Personnel, Legal and Property  
Mr Andy Middleton – CENTRO

Approximately 30 members of the public were in attendance.

---

1            ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor Mrs Faulkner be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

(Councillor Mrs Faulkner thereupon took the Chair)

---

2            APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor James be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

---

3            APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Vickers.

---

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members in respect of the matters indicated:

Councillor Body declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 16 (Cradley High School Leisure Centre) in view of him being the Chair of Friends of Homer Hill Park and that the meetings were held at Cradley High School.

Councillor Body declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 17 (Community Renewal Service) in view of him being the Vice-Chair of Cradley Community Centre and a Trustee of Community Centres.

Councillor Body declared personal interests in respect of Agenda Item No 20 (Delegated Capital Budget) in view of him being the Chair of Friends of Homer Hill Park and that an application for funding had been received from the Friends of Homer Hill Park and that he had supported the application for funding for the Heritage Boards.

Councillor Crumpton declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 17 (Community Renewal Service) in view of him being a Trustee of Community Centres.

Councillor Ms Partridge declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 17 (Community Renewal Service) in view of her being a Trustee of Community Centres.

Councillor Burston declared personal interests in respect of Agenda Item Nos 15 (Responses to Questions Raised at the Halesowen Area Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008) and 18 (Halesowen Town Centre Development) regarding references to Centro in view of him being employed by Centro.

Councillor Burston declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 22 (Earls High School Foundation – Application for Grants) in view of him being a Governor of the school. \_

Councillor Hill declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 17 (Community Renewal Service) in view of him being the Vice-Chairman of Shell Corner Partnership.

Councillor Hill declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 22 (Earls High School Foundation – Application for Grants) in view of him being a Governor of the school. \_

Councillor James declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 22 (Earls High School Foundation – Application for Grants) in view of him being a Governor of the school. \_

Councillor Taylor declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 19 (The Leasowes Restoration) in view of him being a Member of the Friends of Leasowes. \_

Councillor A Turner declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No 13 (Public Forum), as he would be asking a question about the closure of driving test centres in view of him being a licensed driving instructor.

Councillor Mrs Turner declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No 13 (Public Forum), as her son would be asking a question about the closure of driving test centres.

Councillor K Turner declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No 13 (Public Forum), as his son would be asking a question about the closure of driving test centres.

Councillor K Turner declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No 17 (Community Renewal Service) regarding reference to Groundwork in view of him being a Director and Treasurer of Groundwork Black Country. \_

Councillor K Turner declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 17 (Community Renewal Service) in view of him being a Member of the Caslon Community Partnership. \_

Councillor K Turner declared a prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No 20 (Delegated Capital Budget) regarding the application from the West Midlands Fire Service in view of him being a member of the Authority.

Councillor Woodall declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 19 (The Leasowes Restoration) in view of him being a Member of the Friends of Leasowes. \_

The Chairman informed the meeting that she was no longer the Vice-Chairman of Shell Corner Partnership. Owing to the number of declarations being made the Chairman requested that in future Members of the Committee inform the Democratic Services Officer of any declarations prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED

That, in future, if possible, Members of the Committee be requested to inform the Democratic Services Officer of any declarations to be made prior to the meeting.

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2008, be approved as a correct record and signed subject to the inclusion of Councillor K Turner being recorded as being in attendance at the meeting.

---

6

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROTOCOL FOR AREA COMMITTEES

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted setting out the terms of reference and protocol for Area Committees.

A Member referred to paragraph (h) of Appendix 2 attached to the report submitted relating to procedures for a report to be considered by more than one Area Committee. She suggested that this Committee should also consider certain reports that were considered by Stourbridge Area Committee as it also affected the Halesowen area. The Member particularly referred to issues such as the Lye and Wollescote Chapel and Wollescote Park and asked that they be considered as future agenda items for this Committee.

A Member referred to the requirement for Members to submit questions under Ward Issues in advance of the meeting and requested that consideration be given to the stipulation being removed. In responding the Chairman advised that this process would be maintained so that an appropriate and meaningful response could be given to the issue on the day. However, this did not prevent Members from raising urgent issues on the day.

#### RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendices attached to the report, submitted on the terms of reference and the protocol for Area Committees, be noted.

---

7

#### APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the appointment of Co-opted Members to the Committee for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

Arising from the presentation of the report Members were of the view that a youth representative should be appointed as a Co-opted Member of the Committee. It was suggested that, subject to appointment, the Halesowen Area Committee (Community Renewal Plan) Working Group, be requested to pursue the matter with a view to engaging the youth in Halesowen.

#### RESOLVED

That a youth representative be appointed as a Co-opted Member and that subject to appointment, the Halesowen Area Committee (Community Renewal Group), be requested to pursue the matter with a view to engaging the youth in Halesowen.

---

8

## APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the appointment of Working Groups of the Committee for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

### RESOLVED

- (1) That the Halesowen Town Centre Consultation Exercise Working Group be re-appointed for the ensuing year, with the following terms of reference:-
- To receive regular progress reports from the Project Manager detailing the physical developments taking place in Halesowen Town Centre
  - Identify and resolve any constraints to project progress
  - Guide public relations and communication issues for the project
  - To report recommendations and findings to the Committee on a regular basis.

and that the Working Group comprise the Chairman of the Committee and one Member from each Ward, namely:- Councillors Mrs Faulkner, James, Hill, Ms Partridge Taylor and K Turner.

- (2) That the Cradley/Windmill Hill Regeneration Plan Delivery Working Group be re-appointed for the ensuing year, with the following terms of reference:-
- To receive regular progress reports from the Local Centres Officer
  - To agree priorities for action
  - To identify and resolve any constraints to plan progress
  - Guide public relations and communications for the plan
  - To report progress to the Committee on a regular basis
  - To review the regeneration plan annually

and that the Working Group comprise the Chairman of the Committee and one Ward Member from each of the following Wards: Hayley Green and Cradley South, Cradley and Foxcote and Belle Vale Wards, namely :- Councillors Mrs Faulkner, K Turner, Ms Partridge and Mrs Dunn.

- (3) That the appropriate Lead Officer to the Working Groups be requested to submit written reports to this Committee on a regular basis on the work of the Groups.

---

9

## APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the appointment of representatives of the Committee to serve on outside organisations for the terms indicated.

### RESOLVED

That the following members be appointed to serve for the terms indicated on the organisations shown:

James Grove Sports Ground Recreational Trust – Councillor James – Four Year term from 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2008

Cradley Community Association – Councillor Crumpton - Annual  
Lutley Community Association – Councillor Burston - Annual  
Wollescote Community Association – The Ward Members for the Cradley and Foxcote Ward, namely Councillors Body, Crumpton and Ms Partridge - Annual

---

10

## PETITIONS

### (a) Stennels Avenue, Halesowen

The Committee noted that a petition had been submitted to the Council from residents of Stennels Avenue, Halesowen requesting that the Council consider crossing/calming measures on Manor Lane, Halesowen. The Directorate of the Urban Environment had advised that the request had not been received in time to be considered for this year's programme. However, the request had been duly recorded and would be taken forward for further detailed consideration in a future programme.

(b) Halesowen History Society

Councillor Burston submitted, for information, a copy of a letter from the Halesowen History Society that had been sent to the Asda Team. The letter referred to the current redevelopment of Halesowen Town Centre and the building of an Asda store and it was requested that consideration be given to the inclusion of a public work of art on an historical theme. The creation of an appropriate work of art, preferably with community involvement would be highly valued by the local community and visitors and would play its part in promoting a sense of heritage and a feeling of local pride.

---

11 YOUTH ISSUES

There were no issues raised.

---

12 POLICE ISSUES

Inspector Khatkar was in attendance at the meeting and she reported that various issues such as speeding and parking had been raised at Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings. Attempts were also being made to progress with Youth PACT meetings.

---

13 PUBLIC FORUM

(a) The Cabinet Member for Personnel, Legal and Property, on behalf of Quinton and District Association of Approved Driving Instructors, sought the views of the Committee with regard to the closure of the Quinton Test Centre and the proposed closures of the Kidderminster and Gornal Driving Test Centres. He also asked whether the Committee would be willing to support Wyre Forest District Council in lobbying the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) for a new multi purpose local test centre.

(Having previously declared a prejudicial interest in this matter, the Cabinet Member for Personnel, Legal and Property withdrew from the meeting for the consideration of the item and re-joined the meeting following its consideration.)

The comments made by the Cabinet Member for Personnel, Legal and Property were supported by the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the Area Liaison Officer, on behalf of the Committee, be requested to make representations to the Driving Standards Agency objecting to the closure of local test centres.

- (b) A Member of the public queried whether public footpaths would be provided from Pool Road car park entrance to Summer Hill following the removal of the concrete barriers that had been placed whilst the works took place.

In responding the Group Engineer (Transportation) advised that pedestrians continued to walk across to the bus station even though the route was closed to pedestrians. However, he informed the Committee that following the completion of the new bus station and measures being removed the demand to walk across should cease.

Following a request from a Member, the Group Engineer (Transportation) undertook to investigate the sequencing of the pedestrian lights near the junction of Summerhill and Queensway.

- (c) Reference was made to the proposals by St Modwens for Coombeswood Green Wedge and it was requested that the item be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

In responding the Area Liaison Officer reported that a planning application had not been submitted as yet. However, he assured the meeting that owing to its significance, the Area Committee's views would be sought. The Chairman also informed the meeting that St Modwens was holding a meeting the following Monday between 3pm – 8pm and that anyone who was interested could attend.

- (d) A member of the public referred to the electronic speed indicator on the A456 between Hayley Green Island and Hagley Wood Lane and queried why it had been removed and whether it would be replaced.

A Member also referred to the £750,000 that had been received for the de-trunking of the A456 and sought an assurance that some of that money would be spent on improving the crossing on Foxhunt Island to the Bromsgrove Boundary.

The Group Engineer (Transportation) indicated that he was not aware that the electronic speed indicator had been removed and undertook to investigate the matter. With regard to the de-trunking of the A456 he indicated that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

---

WARD ISSUES

## (a) Councillor Crumpton

- (i) Paid tribute to the people responsible for running the Wollescote and Cradley Community Centres. He further indicated that the person responsible for running the Cradley Community Centre was currently not well and arrangements were being made to commemorate her many years of service. He thanked the new people responsible for managing the Centre and indicated that a new Committee had been set up and an application would be submitted in the future for funding from the Delegated Capital Budget.
- (ii) Referred to a recent meeting that had been held with the new Youth Service Manager and the Outreach Worker and expressed concern at the lack of resources available. It was requested that a report detailing what youth services existed in the area and what resources were allocated to the service be submitted to a future meeting.

The Chairman indicated that the Halesowen Area Committee (Community Renewal Plan) Working Group would investigate these types of issues as part of their remit.

## (b) Councillor Mrs Dunn

Indicated that she had received several queries about the closure of Halesowen Library and stated that there were no plans to close the library.

## (c) Councillor K Turner

Referred to telecommunication masts and indicated that an offer in the past had been made to the five telecommunications companies to meet on a six monthly basis with Members and Officers to outline their plans for future masts. However, a response had not been received. He expressed concern that companies were turning up unannounced and installing masts without informing anyone and that often roads were closed for them to carry out work. Reference was then made to a recent press article about fourteen people that had died of cancer in Kingswinford and that they had all lived within a mile of a mobile phone mast.

It was requested that the Committee make strong objections and that discussions should take place with the companies with a view to acquiring a timetable of proposals for masts to be erected to enable appropriate objections to be made.

In responding a Member commented that as there was no medical evidence, formal objections could only be made on visual amenity grounds. With regard to the telecommunications mast in Kingswinford she indicated that the site had been tested and levels of radiation were within United Kingdom safety guidelines. The Health Protection Agency and General Practitioners were also consulted and no concerns had been raised.

The Area Liaison Officer undertook to explore the suggestion of engaging in discussions with the telecommunication companies.

(d) Councillor Body

- (i) Referred to several calls that had been made regarding blocked drains on Colley Lane and that a response had not been received. He also referred to another drain at the bottom of Mogul Lane that needed attention and indicated that it was difficult to walk across as it flooded each time it rained. A member of the public also complained about the blocked drains and commented that she had young children and that it was a health hazard.

A Member stated that the relevant Officer had indicated that the drains had been cleared and were being cleared on a regular basis and she asked that a report on the matter be submitted to the next meeting.

The Area Liaison Officer undertook to pursue the matter.

- (ii) Informed the meeting about an event to be held on Homer Hill Park and expressed concerns about access to extra car parking spaces.
- (iii) Thanked members of Homer Hill Friends of Park Group for organising the event and informed the meeting that booklets were on sale for those that wished to purchase them and that any money raised would be spent on the Park.
- (iv) Referred to the provision of Heritage Boards and informed the meeting that a Board would be erected on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2008 in Wollescote.

---

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED AT THE MEETING HELD ON  
12<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2008

---

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted informing the Committee of the written responses made to questions asked at the previous meeting.

A Member referred to paragraph 3 of the report submitted relating to bollards in Careless Green and requested that a further report with full details be submitted to a future meeting.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report now submitted, be noted.
- (2) That the Director of the Urban Environment be requested to submit a report to a future meeting with further details about the bollards in Careless Green.

---

CRADLEY HIGH SCHOOL LEISURE CENTRE

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted on options for the future use of the Cradley High School site. A revised report had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

The Assistant Director for Resources presented the report and, in doing so, referred to several documents and in particular legal advice that had been received concerning the status of the leisure facilities in planning policy terms. He reported that leisure centre users, with the exception of one club, had found alternative provision and he further stated that the school would close at the end of this term.

Arising from the presentation of the report the following comments were made by Members and members of the public:-

- It had been stated that the closure of Cradley High School would be phased over a four year period so that children would not need to attend alternative schools.
- Requests had been made for a consultation exercise to be undertaken prior to a decision being made. However, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services had stated that the decision had already been made and further debates or recommendations were pointless.
- It had been stated at the Special Meeting of the Committee in September, 2006 to consider the proposal to close the school that leisure facilities would continue subject to consideration being given to the financial arrangements.
- Concern was expressed about misleading statements and it was requested that the matter be deferred again as certain Members were not satisfied with the information provided.
- Following the closure of the School the building would be boarded up and become derelict and the Leisure Centre should be kept open until an appropriate resolution could be reached or discussions held with a developer.
- The Unitary Development Plan stated that if indoor leisure facilities were taken away the facilities should be replaced. However, the Council were getting round this by saying that the leisure facilities were part of the school and were not stand-alone facilities.
- Initially the school had not run the leisure facilities and a decision to transfer responsibility to the school had been taken in the mid 90's. This background information had been omitted from documents and the appropriateness of the legal advice was queried.
- Previous advertising of the leisure facilities had been portrayed as the Cradley Leisure Centre but now it was Cradley High School Leisure Facilities.
- It was queried as to why copies of the legal advice had not been made available. Reference was also made to background documents that were referred to by the Assistant Director for Resources but that they were not listed in the report, making it incomplete.
- Reference was made to the decision made by the School Organisation Committee and the validity of that decision was queried due to misinformation.
- The public meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2008 had not been advertised and upon asking the Cabinet Member for Children's Services whether it was a consultation meeting the response was that it was just a meeting. An article in the press had also stated that the Cabinet Member for Children's Services had indicated that there was no funding available for wider consultation on the issue.
- Reference was made to a leaflet that had been circulated in May 2007, which stated that the leisure facilities would be retained and improved by the Council.
- The need for a Health Impact Assessment to be undertaken had been mentioned at the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care.

The Principal Solicitor reiterated the legal advice as stated by the Assistant Director for Resources and confirmed that the advice was that the planning policy consideration of the school premises would look at the whole site as the planning unit. Therefore, in policy terms, the primary and dominant use of the site in question is as a school for educational purposes. In planning terms the area used for a sports hall would not be considered a sport or recreation use. The sports hall was part of the planning unit that is the school and therefore the hall is in educational use and not in sports use. A copy extract of the legal advice given could be made available for those who required it. With regard to the alleged statement made by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services in that she had already made her decision, the Principal Solicitor informed the meeting that this could only have been a preliminary view, as a decision could not be made until the submission of a recommendation from the Committee. The Area Liaison Officer indicated that all documents referred to were in the public domain and that they could be made available by contacting the appropriate person.

At this juncture a draft resolution was circulated to Members of the Committee. However, as some Members had not seen the wording of the resolution it was agreed that a five-minute adjournment takes place.

The meeting adjourned at 8.23 pm and reconvened at 8.27 pm.

The following statement was read out by Councillor Partridge, who asked that it be included in the minutes verbatim:-

"The record needs to show that Cradley has been badly served by Council procedures, which have prejudiced the decision making process and disadvantaged local people and users of the leisure centre. Furthermore it has placed Members of the Halesowen Area Committee in an impossible position. As a Committee we are asked to endorse a report, which is the result of corrupt decision making, which compromises the integrity of the Committee and which in the final analysis undermines our ability as Councillors to represent those we are elected to serve."

Councillor Shakespeare supported by other Members strongly objected to the use of the word "corrupt" and said that the statement could not be supported.

At this stage Councillor James, seconded by Councillor Burston moved a proposal and upon being put to the vote it was:-

RESOLVED

That the Committee notes the outcome of the evaluation of the four options presented at a recent public meeting as indicated in the report circulated, and that in the context of Option 4, at paragraph 13 of the report circulated, asks the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, when considering the future of the site, to have regard for the possible development of the site for improved community facilities.

---

17

### COMMUNITY RENEWAL SERVICE

(Having previously declared a prejudicial interest in this matter, Councillor K Turner withdrew from the meeting for the consideration of the item and re-joined the meeting following its consideration.)

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on the new arrangements for the Community Renewal Service (former Neighbourhood Management) and on the appointment of a Working Group of the Committee to consider the Halesowen Community Renewal Plan.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That approval be given to the appointment of the Halesowen Area Committee (Community Renewal Plan) Working Group for the 2008/09 Municipal Year with terms of reference as indicated in the Appendix attached to the report submitted to engage with the further development of the draft local community renewal plan supported by the Area Community Renewal Officer and Head of Community Renewal.
  - (2) That membership of the Working Group comprise the Chairman of the Committee and one Member from each Ward and that nominations be submitted direct to the Head of Community Renewal.
  - (3) That approval be given to inviting representatives of local neighbourhood partnerships to contribute to the work of the Working Group.
- 

15

### HALESOWEN TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on progress made with regard to physical developments taking place within Halesowen Town Centre together with a verbal update on information discussed at formal and informal meetings relating to Halesowen Town Centre.

During the course of the presentation, the Head of Policy (Executive and Support) informed the meeting that the Asda development remained on target and was scheduled to open on the 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2008. The highway works were progressing well and were substantially complete. The construction of the bus station was also progressing well and Carillion, the contractor endeavoured to complete the bus station to complement the opening of the Asda store and all partners aimed to maintain timescales for the development. He further reported that following a recent informal meeting of the Working Group Members had a guided tour of the development.

The Group Engineer (Transportation) then updated the Committee on the A456 and Grange Roundabout. He informed the meeting that the de-trunking of the A456 had taken place on the 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2008 and that the Highways Agency had made available a contribution of £750,000 towards construction of the safety scheme. A consultation exercise on the Grange Roundabout had been undertaken during February – May 2008 and a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee together with issues relating to pedestrian crossings on the A456.

The Group Engineer (Transportation) further reported that the Council would take over enforcement of parking enforcement from the Police from 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2008. He indicated that Civil Enforcement Officers would be issuing penalty tickets and he reminded people to park their vehicles correctly.

In response to a query from a Member the Group Engineer (Transportation) confirmed that the scheduled date for the completion of the bus station was 19<sup>th</sup>, December 2008. However, attempts were being made to complete the work earlier to complement the opening of the Asda store. In response to a complaint about an overgrown planter outside Wilkinsons, the Head of Policy (Executive and Support) indicated that the Town Centre Manager was currently pursuing the matter with a view to replanting.

#### RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and the verbal update given on discussions held at formal and informal meetings of Members in relation to Halesowen Town, be noted.

#### THE LEASOWES RESTORATION

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the progress of the restoration of the historic landscape at Leasowes Park.

A member of the Friends of the Leasowes asked that the figures as detailed in the report and at a previous meeting of the Committee together with any further information be submitted to the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education for consideration at its meeting in September, 2008. He also queried whether there was a co-ordinated plan for the future of the park and queried the anticipated timescales. It was also indicated that the Friends of the Leasowes wished to be involved in a review of the factors that had led to the delays in the restoration programme since it commenced. It was also requested that representatives from both the Restoration Team and the Heritage Lottery Fund be included in discussions.

In responding the Head of Economic Regeneration Delivery reported that future plans included the need to complete Phase one of the work and that consideration could then be given to further phases in due course. It was pointed out that the Select Committee would receive full details of the scheme and members of the public would be invited to contribute to the deliberations of the Select Committee at its meeting in September, 2008.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report, and Appendix attached to the report, be noted.
- (2) That information on costs as detailed in the report and submitted to previous meetings together with any further information be submitted to the Chairman of the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education for consideration at its meeting in September, 2008.

#### DELEGATED CAPITAL BUDGET

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on requests for funding from the Delegated Capital Budget.

(Having previously declared a prejudicial interest in this matter, Councillor K Turner withdrew from the meeting for the consideration of the application made by the West Midlands Fire Service and re-joined the meeting following its consideration.)

In presenting the report the Area Liaison Officer referred to the application made by the Halesowen Youth Centre and indicated that an application to support youth activities across Halesowen and Cradley had been received since the circulation of the report. It was therefore recommended that a total of £8,000 be allocated for youth activities in Halesowen and Cradley to include the application from the Halesowen Youth Centre.

Arising from the ensuing debate about match funding and that applications should be limited to £5,000, the Area Liaison Officer confirmed that, in principle, approval of funding was generally on the condition that match funding was applied for. However, in certain situations some groups that had been supported did not have the ability to raise other funding and he advised that funding should not be constrained. With regard to Halesowen Community Rangers and Cradley Town Cobras, the Area Liaison Officer stated that he had recommended to the groups that they might wish to apply for funding to both Awards for All and the Football Foundation to pay for items that were not capital expenditure.

A Member requested that consideration, under delegated powers, be given to an application from the Earls High School for funding for litter bins on the school site.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That a total amount of £60,000 being available for allocation in 2008/09, be noted.
- (2) That the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Chairman and a representative from the Opposition Group, be authorised to consider and agree, where appropriate, requests for funding from community and voluntary groups for small grants, and that the criteria against which all bids/allocations should be considered be as set out in Appendix A to the report submitted.
- (3) That the Area Liaison Officer be authorised to take appropriate action to promote the availability of funding for 2008/09, as indicated in paragraph 6 of the report now submitted.
- (4) That the action of the Area Liaison Officer in authorising a grant to the Lye and Wollescote Historical Society and the Cradley Then and Now Historical Society, of £2000 each, from £5000 that had previously been earmarked, be noted.
- (5) That approval be given to a grant of £350 to Walton Allotment Association (Halesowen) towards a Mantis 4 Stroke Garden Cultivator.
- (6) That approval be given to a grant of £634 to Friends of Homer Hill Park towards the cost of a new Business Inkjet Printer.

- (7) That approval be given to a grant of £6000 to Halesowen/Dudley Yemeni Community Association for funding to improve the appearance of the Yemeni Centre at Highfield Lane, both internally and externally, which was currently in a poor state of repair.
- (8) That approval be given to a grant of £1613 to the West Midlands Fire Service, towards their FIRE project courses, subject to a similar amount being approved by the other four Area Committees.
- (9) That approval be given to a grant of £830 to Access in Dudley towards the purchase of a laptop and printer.
- (10) That approval be given to a grant of £300 to Lye and Wollescote United Communities Group towards the purchase of a tent, subject to a similar amount being approved by the Stourbridge Area Committee.
- (11) That approval be given to a grant totalling £8000 to Youth Services towards youth activities in Halesowen and Cradley, to include a grant of £2000 to Halesowen Youth Centre to purchase furniture, a video conference screen, pool table and table tennis table for use at the Centre.
- (12) That the actions detailed in paragraph 33 of the report submitted be noted and that approval be given to the release of funds, under delegated authority, subject to satisfactory information being received from Arab Women's and Children's Community Association, Halesowen Community Rangers, Cradley Town Cobras and Cradley Town Football Club.

#### PROGRESS OF ELECTED MEMBER VISITS TO ADULT AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ESTABLISHMENTS 2007/08

A joint report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Director of Children's Services was submitted on the progress of visits to Adult and Children's social care establishments undertaken by Members during 2007/08, actions taken in response to Member visits and on nominations for Members to carry out visits to Social Care establishments during 2008/09.

In introducing the report the Assistant Director Policy, Performance and Resources thanked Members who had taken part in previous visits. He explained that Members undertaking visits had to be Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checked and he indicated that training was available.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted, be noted.
  - (2) That Members be requested to submit nominations for the 2008/09 Municipal Year direct to the Assistant Director – Policy, Performance and Resources (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services).
- 

20

EARLS HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION APPLICATION FOR GRANTS

A report of the Director of Finance was submitted on a request for an application for funding from the Trust.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to a grant of £2000 to a pupil at Earls High School to help support her to pursue dancing at the Hammond School of Dance in Chester.

---

21

BRITISH TELECOM – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED PUBLIC PAYPHONE REMOVALS

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on a current programme of proposed public payphone removals, in the area of this Committee. A similar report had been submitted to other Area Committees.

Arising from the presentation of the report by the Area Liaison Officer a Member requested that consideration be given to retaining the payphone on Netherend Lane, as mobile coverage was poor in the area making it difficult to contact emergency services. It was also pointed out that that particular payphone had not been subject to vandalism.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendices submitted to the report, be noted and that the contact officers shown on the report be requested to make representations to British Telecom with a view to retaining the Netherend Lane payphone.

---

22

REPORT OF THE HALESOWEN AREA COMMITTEE (CRADLEY/WINDMILL REGENERATION PLAN DELIVERY) WORKING GROUP

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the deliberations of the Working Group meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2008 and the informal meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2008.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, submitted, on the deliberations of the Working Group meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2008 and the informal meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2008, be noted.

---

23

DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the dates and venues of future meetings of the Committee be noted as follows:-

4<sup>th</sup> September, 2008 – Colley Lane Primary School  
12<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 – Earls High School  
22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2009 – Hurst Green Primary School  
11<sup>th</sup> March, 2009 – Lutley Community Centre

---

24

SELECT COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

As a way of giving additional publicity to meetings of the Council's Select Committees, details of Select Committee meetings had been included on the agendas of meetings of Area Committees.

The information given in respect of publicity for future meetings of Select Committees was noted.

The meeting ended at 9.20 pm.

CHAIRMAN