

**Stourbridge Area Committee - 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

**Report of the Area Liaison Officer**

**Responses to Questions**

**Purpose of Report**

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

**Background**

2. At a meeting of this Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008, it was indicated that written replies would be sent to the questioners on the following questions:
3. A member of the public, unable to attend the meeting, expressed an opinion that the Council had missed an opportunity to have utilised the most cost effective and economical method of the repair to the Heath Lane Gates. Other comments he made included whether or not Dudley Council employed people with specialised craftsmanship. He considered that the Grade II listing for the gates would provide no problems for qualified craftsmen employed by the Council. He suggested that the repairs to the gates could be carried out in-situ and that obtaining existing paint would be unnecessary as the white and lead based paint used originally when the gates were installed had since been painted over with whatever paint was available, so long as it matched the colour. He believed mature and Final Year students should have the ability to undertake such remedial work required to repair the gates. He also believed that lottery funding during the forthcoming lead up to the 2012 Olympics would be given, as a priority, to creating new parks and new towns and East London Developments.
4. The Head of Museums, Greenspaces and Bereavement Services has responded advising that the comments have been noted. She also advised that the Stourbridge Area Committee had supported the submission of an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for financial support to deliver the wider objectives of improving and developing the whole park, including the gates and railings under the Parks for People Programme. The Committee had also agreed that a contingency plan should be drawn for the restoration of the main gates in the event that the HLF bid was unsuccessful.

5. A member of the Management Committee of the Wollaston Community Hall, the Acting Greenspaces Team Leader expressed concerns regarding a recent arson attack on the Hall, and the number of unauthorised people having access to the master key for the gates which give access to the Hall as well as the playing fields adjacent to the Hall. In response the Acting Greenspaces Team Leader has written advising that previously the Park Keeper had had difficulties locking the padlock. New arrangements had been made for a member of the Centre to open and close the gates on Saturdays and Sundays which should, he felt sure, ensure the perimeter fencing would be appropriately secured.
6. A member of the public expressed concerns regarding nuisance from tall trees in Westwood Avenue and Maynard Avenue. The Team Manager, Greencare (Directorate of the Urban Environment) has written confirming that the concerns were logged on the system and that an inspector would assess the concerns as soon as possible. There had been a delay in addressing the concerns due to a long term shortage of staffing. The Team Manager further advised that the concerns would be assessed from a risk management and borough tree strategy point of view.

### **Finance**

7. There are no direct financial consequences arising from this report.

### **Law**

8. 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**

9. The report takes into account the Council's Policies on equality and diversity.

### **Recommendation**

10. The Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report.

*John Polychronakis*

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**J POLYCHRONAKIS**  
**AREA LIAISON OFFICER**

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**List of Background Papers:**

Question slips handed in at previous meetings of the Stourbridge Area Committee.  
Correspondence sent in response by Council Officers.