

HALESOWEN AREA COMMITTEE

Wednesday 4th July, 2012 at 6.30 p.m.
At Cornbow Hall, 10 Hagley Street, Halesowen

PRESENT

Councillors Bills, Body, Burston, Crumpton, Hill, James, Ms Nicholls, Russell, Mrs Shakespeare, Taylor, K Turner and Vickers

Officers

Area Liaison Officer (Treasurer), Assistant Director of Housing Strategy and Private Sector (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services), Assistant Director Economic Regeneration and Transportation, Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) (all Directorate of the Urban Environment), Assistant Director for Quality and Partnership, Youth Area Team Leader (Directorate of Children's Services), Assistant Director Law and Governance and Mrs M Johal (Directorate of Corporate Resources).

Also in Attendance

Inspector Des Lambert – West Midlands Police
Mr Chris Wood – Station Commander, West Midlands Fire Service
Ms Julie Winpenny – West Midlands Fire Service

There were approximately 20 members of the public in attendance.

1 **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

RESOLVED

That Councillor Burston be elected Chair of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

(Councillor Burston thereupon took the Chair)

2 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

RESOLVED

That Councillor Taylor be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Partridge, Mrs Turner and J Woodall.

The Chair reported that Councillor Woodall and Honorary Alderman Jackson were both in hospital because of falls and wished them both a speedy recovery.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary 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 disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item No 18 (Area Committee Grants) in view of him being the Chair of Homer Hill Friends Group.

Councillor Crumpton declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item No 18 (Area Committee Grants) in view of him being a Member of the Homer Hill Friends Group.

5 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21st March, 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed.

6 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 2012/13 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED

That co-opted members be not appointed to the Committee for the 2012/13 Municipal Year.

7 APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the appointment of Working Groups of the Committee for the 2012/13 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED

That no Working Groups be appointed for the 2012/13 Municipal Year.

8 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 on the organisations shown for the terms indicated:-

Cradley Community Association – Councillor Crumpton – Annual

Lutley Community Association – Councillor Burston – Annual

Wollescote Community Association – The Ward Members for the Cradley and Wollescote Ward, namely Councillors Body, Crumpton and Ms Partridge – Annual

9 YOUTH SERVICE

A report of the Acting Director of Children's Services was submitted on the Youth Service provision for the Halesowen Township Area.

Arising from the presentation of the report a Member referred to an ongoing concern about parking issues in and around Greenhill Youth Centre and asked that support be given to develop increased parking around the area.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, on the Youth Service provision for the Halesowen Township Area, be noted and endorsed.

10 PETITIONS

It was reported that no petitions had been received since the last meeting and no petitions were submitted at the meeting.

11 EMERGENCY SERVICES ISSUES

Mr Chris Wood, Station Commander, West Midlands Fire Service briefly reported on incidents in Halesowen since the last meeting and in doing so, reported that incidents in Halesowen were continuing to reduce.

He also reported on various projects that the Fire Service were involved in on community safety awareness and with a view to engaging young people.

RESOLVED

That the information given in the verbal update on emergency services issues be received and noted.

12 AREA POLICE AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER (PACT) ISSUES

A schedule of PACT meetings arranged in the area of the Committee had been included with the agenda for information.

Inspector Des Lambert introduced himself and informed the meeting that he had taken over from Inspector Mick Palmer. In his brief presentation Inspector Lambert thanked members of the public for their support in reporting crimes and then reported on crime issues pertinent to the Halesowen area, providing statistical information on crime by category and by ward, in terms of the numbers and percentages of crimes recorded. Figures given indicated that, overall, there had been fewer crimes and that there was a continued downward trend however there was still some cause for concern around vehicle crime as there had been an increase.

Arising from the presentation a member congratulated the police on their commendable achievements and reported that Stourbridge and Dudley publicised court results in their local newspapers and suggested that the same should apply for Halesowen. In responding Inspector Lambert indicated that he would be willing to share information on figures and arrests that were made in Halesowen but that it was up to press representatives to apply for the information to courts with a view to publication.

In response to a query about the timings of PACT meetings as they sometimes clashed with Council meetings and the lack of meetings in Belle Vale, Inspector Lambert indicated that he would be speaking to the relevant officer with a view to scheduling meetings well in advance in the future.

A Member thanked the police on the support given to various events that had recently been held.

RESOLVED

That the information given in the verbal update on policing issues be received and noted.

13 PUBLIC FORUM

A Member of the public referred to a petition that had previously been submitted to the Committee with regard to the state of the Tanhouse Estate and indicated that a response had not been received. In responding the Assistant Director of Economic Regeneration reported that Green Care was dealing with the issue and that an acknowledgement had been drafted and was ready for despatch.

14 WARD ISSUES

(a) Councillor Body

- (i) Reported on an ongoing issue concerning emails that were being sent to certain officers in the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services and that they were not being acknowledged or responded to.

The Assistant Director of Housing Strategy and Private Sector requested that details be submitted to him and he would ensure that a response was given.

- (ii) Referred to railings on Abbey Road that had been placed because of the height differential in part of the road and indicated that Hillbank also had similar or greater slabs and queried why that particular road did not benefit from the railings.

In responding it was indicated that work on Abbey Road could have been undertaken as part of a road safety scheme, however the Assistant Director of Economic and Regeneration undertook to look into the matter.

- (iii) Requested again for the installation of a barrier at the entrance of West Road to Homer Hill Park.

- (iv) Thanked members of the Tanhouse Tenants and Residents Community Association for the voluntary work undertaken in clearing the site.

(b) Councillor James

- (i) Requested that thanks be placed on record to members of the Friends of Leasowes Park for work undertaken for their efforts in replanting to make Halesowen Town Centre better.
- (ii) Thanked the Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) for the long awaited pedestrian refuge island in Highfield Lane and indicated that further safety measures would be pushed for in that particular area.

(c) Councillor Crumpton

Praised the efforts of local people for support given to the charity events that had taken place with a view to raising money and he informed Members that a total of £1400 had been raised so far.

(d) Councillor Taylor

Referred to the Friends of Leasowes Park Planting Board and indicated that the Board should be changed to show that work had been undertaken by the members and not sponsors.

(e) Councillor K Turner

Suggested that consideration be given to welcome boards being placed at a gateway into Halesowen.

15 RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED AT THE MEETING OF THE HALESOWEN AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON 9TH NOVEMBER 2011

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

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, be noted.

16 HIGHWAYS MINOR WORKS CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2012/13

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the proposed programmes of work for Local Safety Schemes, Safer Routes to School and Pedestrian Crossings within the Halesowen Area for the 2011/12 financial year. Details of proposed schemes were set out in Appendix A to the report submitted.

Arising from the presentation of the report a Member referred to the Lyde Green Safety Scheme and indicated that consideration should be given to installing lights at the bridge as the road was narrow. He also asked if any promotional methods had been used to inform schools about the 20mph zones that can be applied for and introduced outside of schools.

In responding the Assistant Director of Economic and Regeneration indicated that discussions were taking place with the Cabinet Member for Transportation on the approach on informing schools on the process and to make them aware of the Council's policy on the 20 mph zone outside of schools.

RESOLVED

That the proposed Local Safety Schemes and Safer Routes to School Schemes and Pedestrian Crossings, as outlined in Appendix A to the report submitted, be noted.

17 AREA COMMITTEE GRANTS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer on the allocation of expenditure from the delegated Area Committee grants budget for 2012/13 was submitted.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the action taken by the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with Members of the Committee, in approving a grant of £3350 to the Friends of Homer Hill Park towards the cost of installing two metal bench and table sets with disability access overhang into a new children's play area, be ratified.
- (2) That unspent grants, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report submitted, be made available for reallocation.
- (3) That approval be given to a grant of £5000 being made to Greenhill Youth Centre towards the cost of purchasing roller shutter doors, kitchen refurbishment, Information Communication Technology (ICT) update and recreational equipment.
- (4) That approval be given to a grant of £2400 being made to Halesowen Cricket Club towards the total cost of £3200 for the refurbishment of the toilets to include baby changing facilities.
- (5) That approval be given to a grant of £3500 being the total cost of advance funding to guarantee the Victorian Fayre event for 2013 for Rotary Clubs of Halesowen and Rowley Regis and Hasbury and Cradley.

- (6) That approval be given to a grant of £4180 being the total cost for the purchase and fitting of a cooker and dishwasher (commercial) for St Peters Church.
 - (7) That the approval of a grant of £423 to the Over '50s' Club under delegated powers of the Area Liaison Officer in consultation with Members, be noted.
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17 DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That it be noted that future meetings of the Committee would be held at 6.30 pm at the Cornbow Hall on 7th November, 2012 and 20th March, 2013.

18 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

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

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

The meeting ended at 7.55 pm.

CHAIR