
DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2006

REPORT OF THE BRIERLEY HILL AREA LIAISON OFFICER

MATTERS RAISED AT THE BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 6TH JULY 2006

Purpose of Report

1. To update Committee on a number of issues raised at the 6th July 2006 Brierley Hill Area Committee that relate to services provided by the Council.

Background

2. The Council provides a number of services that have considerable impact on local communities.
3. Requests for service and information are received at Area Committee on a regular basis from both members and the general public, relating to a range of services. Few enquiries can be answered immediately, with many prompting further investigation, feasibility studies and public consultation, prior to being reported back to Committee.
4. To keep Committee updated, a progress report is attached.

Finance

5. There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

Law

6. Anti Social Behaviour Orders are largely governed by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
7. Provisions relating to Highways including trees thereon are contained in the Highways Act 1980.
8. Provisions relating to the Council's Housing stock are contained in the Housing Act 1985.

9. Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on the Council as Waste Disposal Authority for its area to provide places where its residents may deposit their household waste free of charge.
10. Traffic Regulation Orders are made under Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
11. The Traffic Calming Act 1992 amends the Highways Act 1980 to allow works to be carried out to promote safety and to preserve or improve the environment
12. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 authorises the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the exercise of any of its functions.

EQUALITY IMPACT

13. This report is consistent with the Council's Equality and Diversity policy. There is no direct effect on children or young people.

RECOMMENDATION

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



.....
Brierley Hill Area Committee Liaison Officer

Contact Officer: John Millar
Telephone: 01384 814150
Email: john.millar@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

See progress report attached

DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 28th SEPTEMBER 2006

REPORT OF THE AREA LIAISON OFFICER

1. PETITION

Issue

A petition was received from Councillor Harley on behalf of traders, residents and users of the shops in and around Beech Road, Kingswinford, requesting improved lighting and making secure the garages to the rear of shops. This was referred to the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services. In addition, concerns were raised about the amount of litter and general rubbish in the area.

Response

The Principal Housing Manager has implemented the following measures:

- *Garages secured, boarded up and graffiti removed.*
- *Liased with Community Safety Team and arranged for Police to visit at week ends and PCSO's to monitor area concerning reported anti social behaviour.*
- *Letters sent to residents and traders advising them to keep entrance doors closed and to report incidents of rubbish dumping and ASB.*
- *Quotes received for security lighting to the rear of the shops/garage site. Application for funding to be made via Community Safety bidding process.*

With regard to rubbish being dumped in the area, a site inspection was carried out on the 31st July, following which, DUE's Street Care team arranged a clean up on the 2nd August. A further inspection on 30th August confirmed that the area in question remained clean and free from any accumulation of litter and waste.

Street Care provides a regular litter patrol service in the area twice per week.

2. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AT PARKES STREET

Issue

The Chair of Parkes Street Area Tenants and Residents Association raised concerns about anti-social behaviour and fast cars being driven along the cul-de-sac thereby causing danger to Parkes Street residents. In addition, he referred to other instances of anti-social behaviour in the area. Despite actions taken by the local Police and Ward Members, the problems persist.

Response

Following the Area Committee, meetings have been held with Sergeant Madden and PC Sinar from Brierley Hill Police Station, and Peter Burford, the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, the outcome of which is as follows:

PC Sinar had recently attended a meeting with the TRA and had visited Parkes Street to see the problems for himself.

The Police did not feel that any traffic calming measures were needed along Parkes Street, as this was a cul-de-sac and hence there was no issue of through traffic causing a problem because any vehicles using this road had to turn around and come back along the same route. He did however, feel that the residents were concerned about traffic speeds along Fenton Street and that any action along this street would be appreciated.

As a result, the following actions have been implemented/planned:

- (i) Temporary 30mph 'Speed Kills' signs have been erected as a reminder of the prevailing speed limit that will encourage a more responsible driving behaviour by motorists.*
- (ii) The installation during the coming quarter (October to December) of speed visor equipment as an additional reminder of the speed limit. The flashing message associated with this approach will make a more visual impact on driving behaviour.*
- (iii) Pass data collected by the speed visor equipment on the volume and numbers of speeding traffic to the Police so that they can assess the extent of any speeding problems and deploy their resources accordingly.*

Similar concerns about speeding along Fenton Street were also expressed on behalf of the TRA by Michelle Moriarty, the Housing Manager at the Brierley Hill District Housing Office. Peter Burford has agreed to liaise directly with Michele Moriarty in order to address issues raised by the TRA and to consider what help can be offered to support the Police.

With regard to the issue of ASB, the Police have advised that they would prefer to resolve any concerns in an amicable way if at all possible. With this in mind, PC Sinar had already spoken to the youths.

The Police commented further by stating that they do not have the resources to patrol the area continually. Therefore, in order to be as effective as possible in their response to public concerns, they are seeking the support of residents to contact them directly when problems arise. To date, they had only received one complaint outside of the TRA meeting and that was several months ago.

3. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AT MYLES COURT

Issue

Councillor Islam referred to antisocial behaviour affecting residents of Myles Court occasioning visits by Police and the need for the residents to be supported.

Response

The Council's Anti Social Behaviour Officer has been working closely with the Police to minimise the affects of anti social behaviour on the residents of Myles Court and the adjoining area. As a result of their joint actions, during the period since the previous meeting of the Committee, only one incident has been reported. ASBOs have been placed on two individuals, one of whom has since left the area, whilst the other has adhered to the tight restrictions placed upon him. The local Police maintain a regular presence in the area.

In addition, residents of Myles Court have received comprehensive crime reduction advice on four separate occasions. Under the Locks and Bolts Scheme, as part of the Home Security Initiative, inhibitors have been fitted to the windows of all ground floor flats.

4. **Speed Camera at Cinder Bank**

Issue

A question had been asked about the speed camera at Cinder Bank which was allegedly obscured by foliage.

Response

The speed camera itself is not directly obscured although some foliage in advance of the site, coupled with the alignment of the road, did restrict the forward visibility of the camera to approximately 48 yards.

Following a site inspection, an instruction was issued and the foliage was cut back during the first week in August.

5. **Victoria Street**

Issue

A question was raised by Mr Tolley about the activities of builders and their effects on local residents in Victoria Street.

Response

A meeting was arranged the day following Area Committee with Mr Tolley in order to discuss concerns raised in more detail. During the discussions, a number of other issues were also raised:

- (i) Local residents had suffered a lot of inconvenience from noise, dust, etc. when Hagley Builders had carried out their works on Dudley Road, Brierley Hill and that there had not been any enforcement action taken by the Local Authority to protect the residents, including the areas relating to the contamination issues affecting the former Garage site. Mr. Tolley did however, accept that the works on the Dudley Road site had since finished but did not want the same problems with the development on the corner of Bent Street/Bank Street/Victoria Street.

DUE's Environmental Protection Officers reported that no complaints were received during the works carried out by Hagley Homes. Contamination issues were resolved through the planning regime that require developers to investigate for the presence of contamination, assess risks to people, property and the environment, and then put measures in place to prevent these risks.

The Council does respond to incidents of alleged nuisance. Local residents are encouraged to bring to the attention of DUE's Environmental Protection team any concerns they may have.

- (ii) Recent excavation works to the footways at Bent Street and Bank Street, Brierley Hill had made the area very untidy with facilities for pedestrians being non-existent in places. Bent Street for example had excavations taking place in the footways on both sides of the road so that pedestrians had to walk into the road with no protected walking area whereas in Bank Street the excavations were more extensive and even when they did not entirely block the footway, they certainly make it difficult to pass.

This matter was quickly referred to DUE's Street Care team who served Notice on the relevant Statutory Undertakers to correct the situation immediately. Remedial action was taken and the footways were freed from obstruction.

- (iii) The Street Lighting Column No.5 in Victoria Street (close to the junction with Dudley Road) is a concrete column that has previously had the access cover banded for security. Unfortunately the concrete column had degraded around the cover meaning that it was possible to get a hand into the electrics. As such, the matter needed to be investigated and appropriate action taken in order to make the situation safe.

An immediate site visit was carried out. The access cover was dealt with and all electricity connections made safe. An order to replace the column was placed on the 10th July and a new column erected on the 18th July. Central Networks have removed the old column.

- (iv) The internally illuminated Give Way sign at the junction of Victoria Street with Dudley Road had no fascia and all the electrics were exposed.

DUE's Street Care team confirmed that an order was raised on the 12th July and the work completed on the 2nd August.

- (v) Outside the Methodist Church in Bank Street (near to its junction with Victoria Street) a large tree had been taken down with the remaining up stand above the footway being about 3 feet high. Mr. Tolley appreciated that it was probably overhanging the road and that it may have been difficult to take out the tree stump entirely due to services but the stump still took up most of the footway.

Elsewhere on the Bromley estate, Mr. Tolley also commented that a number of trees had been cut back but left with much higher tree trunks and that this made them look ridiculous.

The first matter was referred to the Green Care team in DUE who confirmed that the stump had been left initially at the height to prevent it from being a trip hazard to the users of the pavement. The stump has since been ground out and the roots treated appropriately. A temporary tarmaced surface repair has been carried out to allow time for the roots to rot. These will be removed in time when a more permanent and effective repair to the footway will be undertaken.

The comments about trees on the Bromley estate related to a process known as pollarding. However, the trees in question have already started to regenerate as expected.