

## NORTH DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 16th September, 2004, at 6.30 p.m.  
Wallbrook Primary School, Coseley

### PRESENT

Councillor Mrs Ameson (Chairman)  
Councillor Simms (Vice Chairman)  
Councillors Davies, Evans, Mrs Millward, Ryder, Stanley and Wright  
and Mr Round (Co-opted Member), together with Mr Freeman (Area  
Liaison Officer), Mr Butler (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Mr  
D Lowndes (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Ms Adams  
(Directorate of Housing), Mr Pomford (Directorate of Education and  
Lifelong Learning), Mr P Tart (Assistant Director, Legal and  
Democratic Services), Mrs J Bennett (Neighbourhood Manager),  
Inspector Bailey (West Midlands Police) and Mrs Holland (Directorate  
of Law and Property).

Approximately 100 members of the public were in attendance.

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### MINUTES

#### RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13th  
July, 2004, be approved as a correct record and signed.

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### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Simms declared a Personal Interest in agenda item 6 (Land  
Issues – Former Sons of Rest, Adjoining Silver Jubilee Park) in view of  
his involvement with a local football team who use the Park's facilities.

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### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of  
Councillors Caunt, Fraser-Macnamara, Mottram and Mrs Ridney.

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### YOUTH ISSUES

THE OVAL PRIORITY NEIGHBOURHOOD CONSULTATION WITH  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted seeking the support of the Committee for the Neighbourhood Manager and partner agencies to develop an action plan addressing the needs of children and young people with regard to the provision of activities and facilities in the Oval Managed Neighbourhood and to also advise the Committee of the recommendations of the young people involved with regard to the sort of facilities they would like to see provided

In presenting the report, Miss J Bennett, Neighbourhood Manager, indicated that the Oval Priority Neighbourhood was considering bidding for capital funding from the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted be noted.

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APPLICATIONS IN RESPECT OF LAND AND PROPERTY OWNED BY THE COUNCIL

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted regarding land and property within the Committee's area.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Lead Member for Leisure be recommended to approve the demolition for the former Sons of Rest and for the land to be incorporated into the Silver Jubilee Park, as shown hatched on the plan attached to the report submitted.
- (2) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to approve the sale of an area of land, a former Housing garage site at Westfield Road, Sedgley, as shown hatched on the plan attached to the report, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
- (3) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to approve the granting of a lease to the Driving Standards Agency in respect of land at Turner Street, Lower Gornal, for use as a car park, as shown hatched on the plan attached to the report submitted, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Law and Property, subject to the plans for a proposed barrier at the access point to the car park being replaced with a more substantial fence structure to deter vandalism.

PUBLIC FORUM

- (a) The issue of the future of Coseley Swimming Baths was raised by a Mr R Whitehouse who asked whether the Council planned to close Coseley swimming baths or planned to refurbish them.

In response, Mr Lowndes stated that it had been agreed that a modest amount of resources would be committed to improving the resources at Coseley Swimming Baths.

- (b) The issue of ongoing traffic problems in Bradley's Lane, Coseley, was raised by Ms V Wilson, Mr Corbett, Mr Hill and other members of the public both in writing and verbally, in particular in regard to a previous request by members of the public for speed cameras to be installed and for a ban to be placed on HGV (Heavy Goods Vehicles) from using Bradley's Lane.

In response, Mr Butler explained that negotiations were ongoing with neighbouring Boroughs, in particular in regard to the imposition of a night-time ban on heavy traffic using the road; he stated that he would report the outcome to a future meeting.

- (c) The issue of the High Trees and Hedges legislation was raised by a Mr Ready.

In response, Mr Tart stated that when confirmation of the details of the new legislation was to hand, he would report back to the Committee.

- (d) The issue of the provision of new public toilets for Sedgley was raised by a member of the public.

In response Councillor Evans stated that the suitability of providing a "Super Loo" was being explored.

- (e) The issue of the newly formed "Access Group" and its involvement in "One Stop" shops was raised by a Mr White, in particular with regard to disabled access to public buildings.

In response, Mr Freeman updated Mr White on the progress made.

- (f) The issue of the volume and speed of traffic using the Ridgeway and incidents of potentially dangerous driving being recorded, was raised by a Mr White who requested that a meeting be arranged between Councillors and residents to discuss the imposition of weight limits and speed restrictions. He pointed out that the Ridgeway now fell within the boundaries of the Upper Gornal and Woodsetton Ward.

In response Mr Butler commented that he had discussed the issue with Councillor Evans and it had been concluded that because of numerous road works in the near vicinity monitoring needed to take place on the Ridgeway to ascertain whether the volume of traffic would decrease when the road works were completed.

Councillor Evans commented that since the Jews Lane road works had been completed there had been a fall in the volume of traffic using the Ridgeway.

Mr Freeman requested that Mr White speak to the appropriate Council Officer with a view to setting up a meeting to discuss the issues raised.

- (g) The issue of when the Dormston Youth Club would be re-opened was raised by Mr Round (Co-opted Member).

In response Mr Round was informed that the youth club would be handed over on or around the 24<sup>th</sup> September with a possible opening date of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2004.

## DELEGATED CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on applications received for funding from the capital allocation of the Committee.

In presenting his report, Mr Freeman sought the Committee's agreement to the recommendations of the Working Group at their meeting held on 11th August, 2004.

### RESOLVED

- (1) That the application received from the Turls Hill and Swanbrook Valley Residents' Association in the sum of £2,800 be deferred in order that the Area Liaison Officer can write to the Association requesting a more defined breakdown of the expenses incurred in producing copies of their video.

- (2) That the application received from Sedgley Junior Angling Club in the sum of £3,728 for the provision of equipment, be deferred, and that the Area Liaison Officer write to the applicant asking for clarification as to whether the proposed equipment would be securely stored.
- (3) That the Area Liaison Officer contact Wallbrook Primary School to ascertain whether they still wished to pursue the submission of a capital allocations funding application form following their verbal enquiry.
- (4) That the application from Beacon Hill Tenants and Residents Association in the sum of £1,535 for gardening tools, be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Working Group.
- (5) That the application from Upper Gornal Methodist Church in the sum of £4,000 towards a total cost of £8,124 for the relaying of the car par, be refused in view of the fact that the work had already been carried out.
- (6) That the application in respect of Dormston Youth Club with Sedgley Community Association in the sum of £11,663, be approved.
- (7) That the application from St James the Great Parochial Church Council in the sum of £1,663 for an indoor bowls mat and accessories for the St James the Great Bowls Club, be deferred to the next meeting of the Working Group, and that an invitation be extended to the appropriate Ward Councillor to attend the next meeting of the Working Group.
- (8) That the application from Sedgley Childminding Association in the sum of £1,493 for toys and accessories in respect of Sedgley Childminding Association be refused, as the venue used for their meetings lies within the boundary of the Wolverhampton City Council.
- (9) That the application received from Lower Gornal Scouts in the sum of £2,500 towards the replacement of a mini-bus, be approved.
- (10) That the application received from Coseley Community Education Network for the purchase of new curtains, carpets and other sundry items for the Summerhill Daughters of Rest meeting place, be refused.

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## RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED AT PREVIOUS MEETING

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the current status of responses to questions posed at previous meetings of the Committee.

Following a short discussion, it was

### RESOLVED

- (1) That Mr Lowndes to report on the issue of a proposed site for a skate-wheel park in North Dudley, and on the position with regard to public consultation, to a future meeting of the North Dudley Area Committee (Anti-Social Behaviour) Working Group to be arranged at a date and time to be instigated by Mr Lowndes.
- (2) That the reference in item 4(b) of the report submitted be amended to read Dudley Road and not Tipton Road.
- (3) That the information contained in the report and appendix to the report, submitted on the current status of the remaining responses to questions posed at previous meetings of the Committee, be noted.

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## INCLUSION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN CONSULTATION

A report of the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning was submitted on the formal consultation of the Inclusion Strategy Action Plan on the future provision for children with special educational needs and on the invitation of formal responses to the consultation.

In presenting his report, Mr Freeman stated that the report constituted the third stage of the consultation. He informed the Committee of the proposals contained in the report.

Following comments received from members of the public, Councillors and a deputation of teachers and parents from Woodsetton School, who pointed out strongly the very favourable recent OFSTED, it was

### RESOLVED

- (1) That Mr Freeman be requested to reconsider the position with regard to Woodsetton School and arrange for further consultation on this matter involving teachers and parents.

- (2) That the information contained in the report submitted be noted.
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## POST OFFICE PROPOSED BRANCH CLOSURES

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the proposed Post Office Branch Closures in North Dudley.

In presenting the report, Mr Freeman stated that the Post Office had agreed to extend the consultation period until 17<sup>th</sup> September 2004, and asked for comments on the proposals.

Following consideration of this matter, it was

### RESOLVED

- (1) That the Area Liaison Officer be requested to write to the Post Office by 17<sup>th</sup> September 2004, in order to comply with the date for closure of consultation, stating the Committee's views as to why the Post Offices should not be closed, and that the following comments be included in the response
  - (a) That the Committee strongly oppose the closure of the four named post offices; such retention being supported by some one hundred members of the public present at the meeting.
  - (b) That the Committee considered that the proposed closures would result in excessive distances between post offices that would lead to increased road traffic and congestion, and to great inconvenience and difficulty for people who did not rely on a car for transportation, in particular the old and disabled and mothers with small children.
  - (c) That the Committee considered that the proposed closures would lead to significant problems at the remaining post offices, including traffic congestion, parking problems, the increased danger of road traffic and pedestrian accidents, increased street crime on elderly and disabled customers, and unreasonably increased queuing times in post offices.

- (d) That the Committee suggest that consideration be given to the transfer of existing post office businesses into local supermarkets rather than the closure of post offices.
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WARD ISSUES

1. Councillor Davies called for Officers to expedite the actions being taken with regard to Bradley's Lane.
2. Councillor Davies raised the issue of the confusion in postal deliveries between Brunel Court and Bradley's Lane reported at the last meeting.

In response the Area Liaison Officer stated that Mrs Holland had written to the post office and had received a reply that the issue had been addressed.

3. Councillor Davies raised the issue of the state of repair of Sangwin Road leading into Bradley's Lane.
4. Councillor Davies raised the issue of large trees blocking the light from lamp posts causing a danger to road users.
5. Councillor Evans commented generally on road repairs being carried out in Sedgley and on the need for carrying out road repairs in the Borough.
6. Councillor Stanley raised the issue of adequate signage in the Gornal area and stated he would continue his campaign until adequate signage had been installed.
7. Councillor Stanley raised the issue of the right-of-way near to Roberts Primary School that was experiencing incidents of anti social behaviour.

Mr Freeman agreed to look at the issue again.

8. Councillor Stanley raised the issue of illegal parking on the footpath in Vale Street, Duke Street, Hill Street and Holloway Street.

Councillor Stanley was advised of a meeting to be held on the following Monday to discuss the issue.



9. Councillor Caunt submitted a note in his absence on progress regarding the provision of a new doctors surgery in Sedgley. The note was read out by the Area Liaison Officer who stated that a full report would be submitted to a future meeting.
10. Councillor Evans congratulated Inspector Bailey on her efforts to combat anti social behaviour in the Sedgley area.

In response Inspector Bailey reported on parking issues and commented that the Police Community Support Officers had been well received by members of the public. She also asked the public to contact her direct to report any incidents of anti social behaviour and any incidents of alcohol being sold to under age young people. She also reported on recent successes, in particular in response to off-road motorbike riding

Inspector Bailey also explained that Sedgley Police Station was manned by volunteers and called for more people to volunteer to assist.

11. Councillor Mrs Millward urged members of the public to contact their local Councillor to report incidents of anti social behaviour or crimes if they were hesitant about contacting the police direct or they could contact a local Estate Manager.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

CHAIRMAN