

BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 14th September, 2004, at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor Mrs Wilson (Chairman)
Councillors Blood, Burt, Debney, Ms Foster, Harley and Ms Harris, Islam, Mrs Jordan, Miller, Mrs Patrick, Mrs Pearce and Mrs Southall together with Mr E Lowson (Area Liaison Officer), Mr J Woodall, Mr I Withey, Mr A Webb and Mr R Dugdale (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Mrs Porter and Mr R Bishop-Rowe (Directorate of Education and Lifelong Learning), Mrs Bacon and Ms K Smith (Directorate of Law and Property).

There were approximately 60 members of the public in attendance

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MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7th July, 2004, be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the substitution of the name of Councillor Harley for Councillor Mrs Patrick in resolution (e) to minute number 10.

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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Tomkinson and Tyler.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ms Harris declared a personal interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in agenda item 11 (Brierley Hill High Street Development and Investment Framework) – in view of her being Chair of Dudley Beacon and Castle Primary Care Trust.

Councillor Mrs Jordan declared a personal interest in agenda item 14(Inclusion Strategy Action Plan Consultation) – in view of her Governorship of Pens Meadow School.

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PETITIONS

It was reported that the following petitions had been received and would be referred to the officers indicated for attention:-

From Councillor Debney a petition on behalf of residents of Rangeways Road and surrounding area, requesting traffic calming measures - referred to the Director of the Urban Environment for investigation.

From Dudley South Conservatives on behalf of residents of Bromley Lane and surrounding area, objecting to the closure of the Post Office - referred to the Chief Executive for the Post Office to note the objections of the Brierley Hill Area Committee.

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YOUTH PROVISION

1. Ms J Hartnell, a detached Youth Worker, raised concerns on behalf of local young people over the lack of progress of youth provision on the area of land known as "The Square" adjacent to the Next Generation fitness facility.

It was confirmed that a representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment would respond in writing to Ms J Hartnell.

2. A representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment confirmed that plans for a skateboard park in Kingswinford would be submitted to the Development Control Committee for consideration within the next couple of months.

Councillor Burt reported to the Committee that skateboard equipment, namely a "quarter-pipe" to the cost of £5,000, had been purchased from a "Sports for All" grant.

It was confirmed that the following Members be appointed to the Young People's Group; - Councillors Ms Harris, Mrs Patrick and Mrs Pearce.

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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.

On consideration of the report it was

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to refuse the application to purchase 15 Waldron Avenue, Brierley Hill as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted for the reasons set out in the report, and that the Director of Housing be asked to continue the efforts already being made to improve parking facilities in the area.
 - (2) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to refuse the application to purchase an area of land adjacent to 2 Ash Crescent, Kingswinford, as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, for the reasons set out in the report, but approve the sale of a 1 metre strip of the land on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
 - (3) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to refuse the application to purchase the outhouse of 27 Farfield Road, Brierley Hill, as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, for the reasons set out in the report.
 - (4) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to approve the application to purchase the land adjoining 76 Corbett Road, Brierley Hill, as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, for garden purposes on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property and offer the remaining area to the adjacent property owners.
 - (5) That the Lead Member for Housing be recommended to defer the application to purchase land adjoining 137 The Portway, Kingswinford as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, pending a site visit.
 - (6) That the Lead Member for Transport be recommended to declare the land in front of 111 Cot Lane, Kingswinford, as shown on the plan attached to the report submitted, surplus to requirements for highway purposes and for subsequent sale to the applicant on terms and conditions to be negotiated and agreed by the Director of Law and Property.
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A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted on written responses made to questions asked at previous meetings.

Councillors Mrs Wilson and Ms Harris requested that they be notified of the name of the new owners of the Moore Centre.

RESOLVED

- (1) That a representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment notify Councillors Mrs Wilson and Ms Harris of the name of the owners of the Moore Centre.
 - (2) That the contents of the report be noted.
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PUBLIC FORUM

The following questions were raised and responded to:

1. Mr S Waltho raised concerns over the safety of the derelict toilet block in King George VI Park in Wordsley and requested information regarding the opening and closing of the Park.

It was confirmed that a representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment would respond in writing to Mr S Waltho with information on the proposed demolition of the toilet block and the new procedures in place regarding the opening and closing of the King George VI Park.

2. Mr J Dyer raised concerns over the number of trees in Leys Crescent damaging property and 'leaf-fall' causing a hazard to pedestrians. He also commented on the apparent lack of street cleansing in Leys Crescent.

It was confirmed that a representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment would look into the issue of felling the trees and the request street cleansing in Leys Crescent and respond in writing to Mr J Dyer.

3. Members of the public and users of the Brierley Hill Leisure facilities raised concerns over the proposed closure of the baths as recommended by the Executive at its meeting on the 8th September 2004 - Min. No.

After a lengthy discussion it was

RESOLVED

That the Committee express its opposition to the recommendation of the Executive to the Council to propose the closure of the Brierley Hill Leisure Facilities.

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BRIERLEY HILL HIGH STREET – DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the progress of the Brierley Hill High Street Development and Investment Framework.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted be noted and that the Committee support the work of officers and the Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnerships in developing the Brierley Hill High Street Development and Investment Framework.

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CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A verbal report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on an application received from “Support Group for Pain Relief” for an allocation of £1,200 for supplies and equipment.

Upon consideration of the recommendation of the Capital Allocations Working Group it was

RESOLVED

That an allocation of £1,000 for equipment for “Pain Care” be approved.

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HAWBUSH URBAN FARM

A verbal report was given by a representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment on the current situation in relation to Hawbush Urban Farm.

It was stated that the decision to allocate further funding for this year to Hawbush Urban Farm was being considered the Lead Member of Culture and Recreation.

Councillor Ms Harris informed the Committee that since the last meeting of the Committee the farm had closed and that the animals had been re-homed. However, there were now concerns over the future usage of the land.

RESOLVED

That the comments made be noted.

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BRIERLEY HILL SUSTAINABLE ACCESS NETWORK

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the progress of the Brierley Hill Sustainable Access Scheme.

Members raised concerns that they had not received advance notification, before the Area Committee meeting, of the proposed plans for the new parallel road.

RESOLVED

- (1) That a representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment distribute copies of the planning proposals to Committee members.
- (2) That members comments on the plans for the parallel road be made to the Director of the Urban Environment.

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PROPOSALS FOR DISABLED PARKING PLACES PROGRAMME F

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on requests to be included in Programme F of the On-Street Disabled Parking Places Scheme.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Committee advise the Lead Member of Transportation that the sites shown in Appendix A to the report submitted should be included in Programme F of the On-Street Disabled Parking Places Scheme.
- (2) That the Lead Member for Transportation be advised that the site in Appendix B to the report submitted should not be included in Programme F of the On-Street Disabled Parking Places Scheme.

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PROPOSED POST OFFICE CLOSURE

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on proposed Post Office closures within the Area Committee's boundary.

The Post Office proposed for closure within the Brierley Hill Area Committee was Bromley Branch Post Office at 266 Bromley Lane, Kingswinford on the grounds that the premises were poorly used and suffered from under investment.

Following a lengthy discussion it was

RESOLVED

That the Post Office be informed that the Brierley Hill Area Committee unanimously object to the closure of the Post Office at 266 Bromley Lane, Kingswinford.

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INCLUSION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

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.

Following a lengthy discussion, Members raised concerns and objections to certain elements of the report.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted be noted.

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ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

- (1) Councillor Mrs Jordan raised concerns over road safety at Bank Street, High Street and Brockmoor Road and the provision of antiskid surfacing.

A representative of the Directorate of the Urban Environment agreed to look into the issue and respond in writing to Councillor Mrs Jordan.

- (2) Councillor Burt requested that the Police and Highways Agency be written to with regard to the personal accident statistics for the A449 and Doctors Lane.

A representative of the Director of the Urban Environment agreed to follow up the request and respond to Councillor Burt in writing.

- (3) Councillor Ms Foster requested that the litter problem along the Stourbridge Road in front of several properties be looked at.

A representative of the Director of the Urban Environment agreed to look into the issue and respond in writing to Councillor Ms Foster.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

That the remaining schedule and dates of meetings for the ensuing municipal year, as follows, be noted:-

Tuesday, 9th November, 2004 at Brockmoor Primary School
Thursday, 3rd February, 2005 at the Wordsley School
Tuesday, 5th April, 2005 at Wall Heath Community Centre

The meeting ended at 9.20 pm.

CHAIRMAN