

NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE GROUNDS MAINTENANCE TASK GROUP  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 7TH JANUARY 2004, IN THE TRAINING ROOM,  
THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE, AT 11.00 A.M.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors D. McGrath (Chairman), Mrs. J. M. Boswell, Mrs. K. M. Gall and S. R. Peters.

Mark Dainter, Head of Depot Services.  
Bernard Edwards, Grounds Maintenance Foreman.  
Terry Godwin, Maintenance Manager, Highways Partnership Unit.  
Rob Heard, Parks and Recreational Development Manager.

1. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A. N. Blagg.

2. **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members were reminded that, at the last meeting of the Health and Leisure Scrutiny Committee, a request was made for this Group to "firm-up" the summary of findings from their last meeting, held on 1st December 2003, and, accordingly, further consideration was given thereto, together with a brief note prepared and circulated by the Chairman in this regard. Whereupon it was

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Health and Leisure Scrutiny Committee be recommended to note and/or approve and adopt the following:-

(a) **Open Spaces on New Residential Developments**

Following consideration of an earlier report on this matter, the Group were of the opinion that, following the recent publication of supplementary planning guidance, the Housing and Planning Policy Scrutiny Committee should be asked to consider the inclusion of this issue as a future item in their work programme.

Further points to be stressed to that Committee are (i) that appropriate Officers of the Council should be involved at the early planning stages of new residential developments in order to attempt to maximise the efficiency of future maintenance of open space sites; (ii) that developers should be encouraged to give as much notice as possible of proposed "transfer" dates of such sites to the Council; and (iii) as more open spaces were transferring into Council ownership every year without any increase in revenue provision, consideration should be given to a review of the budget in this regard.

(b) **Dog Fouling**

This was considered to be an issue which the Health and Leisure Scrutiny Committee might wish to include in their work programme at some future date.

(c) **Litter**

This was considered to be a topic (generally) which the Health and Leisure Scrutiny Committee might wish to include in their work programme at some future date, although particular reference was made to the problems experienced at roadside waiting areas where food and drinks were dispensed.

(d) Cutting Frequencies

Due to the confusion by tenants in some areas of the District over the number of cuts (due to the land being under the control of either Leisure or Housing), it was suggested that the Head of Depot Services in conjunction with the Senior Estates Officer (Estates Management), should prepare an information leaflet which could be displayed at the various Sheltered Housing Schemes (via the Wardens), distributed to tenants' representatives, Parish Councils (Notice Boards) or at future 'Spotlight' meetings.

(e) Council Chat

In line with earlier discussions, the Group wished to reiterate their previous recommendations that articles be included in future editions of 'Council Chat' on:-

- (i) highlighting the dangers and problems associated with the roadside weed Ragwort;
- (ii) advising the public of the constraints placed on local authorities concerning the cutting back of hedgerows during certain months of the year; and
- (iii) educating the public over conservation and wildlife issues.

(f) General

It was generally agreed that Members would find it useful to be aware of what ground maintenance works were planned and when such work was due to be undertaken within their Ward boundary area and, in this regard Mark Dainter, Head of Depot Services, circulated a 'draft' programme of works, and subject to their being no comments/amendments thereto, would arrange for its wider distribution to Members in due course.

The Meeting closed at 12.45 p.m.