



Petitions Committee

26 June 2015

Time 10.00 am **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** n/a
Venue Committee Room 2 - Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SH

Membership

Chair Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Lab)
Vice-chair Cllr Val Evans (Lab)

Labour

Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Judith Rowley
Cllr Daniel Warren

Conservative

Cllr Arun Photay

Quorum for this meeting is two Councillors.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic support team:

Contact Laura Gilyead
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Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting** (Pages 3 - 8)
[To approve the minutes of the meeting on 24 April 2015 as a correct record.]
- 4 **Matters arising**
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes.]
- 5 **Schedule of outstanding petitions** (Pages 9 - 16)
[To review the outstanding petitions.]

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 6 **Fencing off Woodcross open space** (Pages 17 - 32)
[To consider the issues raised in the Woodcross Park Extension of Railings petition.]



Petitions Committee

Minutes - 24 April 2015

Attendance

Members of the Petitions Committee

Cllr Val Evans (Chair)
Cllr Alan Bolshaw
Cllr Arun Photay (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Judith Rowley
Cllr Daniel Warren

Councillors in attendance

Cllr Val Gibson
Cllr Elias Mattu
Cllr Stephen Simkins

Employees

Nick Broomhall
Laura Gilyead
Gwyn James
Karen Samuels
John Wright

Service Lead, Traffic and Road Safety
Graduate Management Trainee
Transportation Manager
Head of Community Safety
Democratic Support Manager

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
Apologies were received from Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal.

- 2 **Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest.

- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting**
Resolved:
 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2015 as a true record.

- 4 **Matters arising**
There were no matters arising.

- 5 **Schedule of Petitions**
Resolved:
 That the schedule be noted.

- 6 **Fencing off Woodcross open space**
Consideration of this item was deferred until the next meeting of the Petitions Committee.

7 Various issues from Householders Lanesfield mainly Mount Road

Cllr Rowley commented that she felt the petition was an overarching petition raising issues beyond the Council's control. She noted that there were far too many issues within one petition for the Petitions Committee to deal with. She suggested that the amount of issues within a petition should be limited and made clear to petitioners.

The Chair explained that the lead petitioner has been informed of the issues that would be addressed at the meeting and asked employees to look into the amount of issues to be raised in a petition.

The petitioner was not present at the meeting and the committee heard the report in his absence.

Nick Broomhall, Service Lead, Traffic and Road Safety, presented the report. He noted that data on the speed of traffic on Mount Road was being assessed from 23 April 2015 for a week. He reported that an extra cleansing of the road drains on Mount Road would be arranged.

Resolved:

That the proposed action to investigate the need for a possible road safety scheme in the Mount Road area be endorsed.

8 Remove the Park from the Dukes Park Estate

Matthew Williams, the lead petitioner, explained that the petition had been submitted following 12 months of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and criminality on the Dukes Park Estate. He explained that residents had been told by the Council that the park was unadopted land and so not within the Council's power to make changes. He commented that Barratts Homes, owners of the land, stated that the park was a Council planning requirement. Residents were informed by Barratts that the play area would only feature toddler equipment. The lead petitioner explained that since the park had been installed, a car was stolen and set on fire metres away from family homes. He commented that criminal behaviour and ASB would go on to 2am and residents were beginning to move away from the area. He noted after 12 months, the swing was removed. He reported that empty alcohol containers were found at the site. He noted that the language used by youths was awful and not acceptable with children living so close. He commented that residents felt the park should have been dealt with a long time ago and the only way to deal with the ASB and criminality was if the park was removed.

Cllr Mattu sympathised with the residents. He commented that the park had only been there for 12 months and it was too soon to make decision to close it down. He noted that a similar issue had taken place at St Christopher's Park a few years before which had been closed because of ASB. More recently, St Christopher's park had been reopened and was working well. He commented that the ASB needs to be monitored. He noted that this is not an issue to be rushed and timescales should be set to improve the park.

PC Philip Upton, Police Officer on the estate, sympathised with residents but also understood the views of the Council. He commented that something needed to be done to rectify this long term issue. He noted difficulty as the ASB was taking place in the early hours. He commented that there are sustainability issues in keeping officers

in the area as shift patterns would need to be changed. He noted that a domehawk camera had been put in but it was difficult to identify individuals from the footage and so there were no opportunities to put in Place ASB enforcement measures. He commented on difficulties in dealing with the issue because of a lack of communication within the Council and Barratt Homes. He noted that Barratt Homes had removed a large swing and adjusted fencing to stop cars going on to the site. He explained that the size of the estate made it difficult to cover escape routes when chasing offenders. He commented that Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council had also been contacted with regard to this issue. He commented that it had been difficult identifying perpetrators but the Police would support the decisions made by the Petitions Committee.

Karen Samuels, Head of Community Safety, presented the report. She noted that Planning and Public Realm had also been consulted. She stated that the site was owned by Barratt Homes and so any outcome would need to be passed to Barratt Homes to deal with. She explained that the scale and nature of ASB claims made by the lead petitioner had been recorded in police logs. The Head of Community Safety stressed that any decision regarding the future of the park should be resolved before adoption of the play area by the Council moves ahead. She explained that data to establish levels of use would be sought. She explained that all households on estate would need to be consulted and all options exhausted before decisions were made. Public Health would also need to be consulted.

Cllr Gibson sympathised with residents and explained that it would be a shame to lose the facility as outside, open play is important for children. She recognised the difficulty that Police had in recognising the perpetrators and suggested that lighting was invested in area so that the camera could work better. She suggested that the Council commit to put youth workers in the area. She explained that this would not be permanent but would assist with making contact with youths on the estate to attempt to resolve the issues.

Cllr Simkins commented that the park had been substituted as the issue rather than the ASB. He noted that the park was just the meeting place of the perpetrators and that the ASB being experienced is unacceptable. He recommended that a 12 month probationary period be undertaken to resolve issues with developers and that the Planning process should be improved to design out ASB in future. He noted that in the probationary period, the community should come together to report every incident on the park. He suggested more resources be put in to lighting the park. He explained that it cannot be guaranteed that perpetrators would not congregate without the park on the site or the youths would not move to a different community in the City. He recommended that all agencies and authorities come together every two or three months to work out the issues identified. He suggested that in 12 months, if there are still issues on the site, the park be removed. He suggested that local off licenses be checked for underage sales of alcohol.

The lead petitioner explained that the additional features took over 12 months to address. He commented that those people who seemed keen to keep park were not residents of the estate. He commented that removing the park would solve the ASB as offenders would not congregate at the site, affecting the residents. He noted that it had taken 12 months for anything to happen and so he did not feel that a multi-agency approach would not resolve the issues. He explained that pornographic

graffiti remained on the park even though it had been reported to the Council and Barratt Homes in the previous summer. He explained that criminal offences were taking place on the site, not solely ASB. This included arson, criminal damage and dangerous driving. He noted that there was not capacity or resources for the Police to patrol the area and there had not been consultation with the Police before the park was put in. The park was not what residents' expected as it had been suggested that it would be equipment suitable for toddlers. He asked if it was acceptable to install equipment different to what had been consulted on.

The lead petitioner suggested that the park was the issue and the cause of the ASB. He explained that, as a resident and police officer, he could verify that there was not a problem before the park was installed. He explained that a bin had been set on fire on a pathway to the park the previous day. He commented that it was unacceptable to recommend that residents should put up with this issue for another 12 months. He explained that lighting had been put at the park but had been pulled down by youths. He explained that residents feel they had been batted off by the Council and Barratt Homes. He noted that 85 residents did not want the park on the estate as they signed the petition. He stated that ignoring a request of residents should not be an option to the Council. He explained that there would be no problem having a grassed area for children to play on but there was a problem with foul and abusive language and fires in the early hours of the morning. He explained that residents did not use the park as it had been damaged and ruined with graffiti and litter. He noted that there was not a representative from Barratt Homes at the meeting. He commented that outcome three of the report, to remove park equipment and undertake remedial works to grass the area, was the only option.

Cllr Simkins explained that he understood the frustration of residents. He noted that the bureaucracy taken place should be reviewed. He asked that residents allow either six or 12 months for improvements to be made.

The lead petitioner asked councillors to understand the distress caused to residents as they felt that they had been lied to. He noted that ASB, lighting and criminal behaviour should be dealt with by the Council. He anticipated all the same bureaucracy issues in 12 months' time.

Cllr Simkins explained that, if the park was removed, another amenity would be lost in the area. He noted that a case review should take place to outline where areas of mistrust had arisen.

Cllr Photay was concerned about the pornographic images in area. He requested that this be removed as soon as possible with the invoice sent to Barratt Homes. He explained that he was from an area in need of play areas. He noted that it was likely that residents asked for a play area and so this request was met. He commented that if the park is not being used, it should be removed to save on costs. He noted that youths would know of the open space even if park is removed and would still sit on grass. He noted that the ASB should be addressed, with or without the park. He noted that if the park was working, it would be a nice place for children to use.

Cllr Warren commented that if the park was removed, there may not be resources in the future to replace it if requested by residents. He noted that there are similar

issues in other wards and a case review needed to take place. He asked if a consultation of residents would need to take place to remove the park.

The Head of Community Safety explained that as the site is owned by Barratt Homes, the Council would have to request Barratt to undertake any work. Barratt Homes could undertake a consultation while the park is in their ownership but this would not be required to remove the park. Once the park is adopted by the Council, the Council would be required to undertake a consultation to make any changes and incur the considerable cost (estimated approx. £30,000).

Cllr Warren requested that a report from Licencing be included in a future report to the Petitions Committee.

Cllr Rowley sympathised with the residents. She explained that it was not usual for a section 106 agreement to be attached to planning permission. She was concerned that Barratt Homes had not been straight with residents. She noted that the Council needed to respond to residents' concerns. She recommended that six months be given to investigate and make improvements, urging employees to progress with the work.

Cllr Bolshaw also recommended six months as a more reasonable timescale to make improvements. He commented that parks are desirable facilities however data collected would identify if the park is used during the day time.

The Head of Community Safety note that the Planning team would consult residents on the proposals and she would urge Planning to progress this at the earliest opportunity.

Resolved:

1. That the following outcomes be supported:
 - a. The level usage of the play equipment during the day be clarified.
 - b. All households on the new estate and local ward councillors are asked by letter to state their preference for one of the three outcomes: The play equipment is retained in its current state and any reports of crime or ASB are responded to and managed via Partners and Communities Together, Barratt Homes to be asked to remove large play equipment which is replaced with toddler equipment to encourage family use and make it less appealing for youths to gather or Barratt Homes to be asked to remove park equipment and undertake remedial works to grass the area.
 - c. Public Health be consulted on the possible outcomes.
 - d. Neighbourhood Tasking be asked to consider any additional action that can be taken to identify perpetrators of ASB to ensure all options for multi-agency enforcement action have been exhausted.
 - e. A further report is prepared for Petitions Committee in three months.
 - f. Adoption of the play area does not take place until the above has been clarified.
2. That test purchasing be carried out by licensing at the local off-licences.
3. That the park be cleaned including the removal of graffiti as soon as possible.
4. That a plan for multi-agency working group be developed with residents.

9 **Update on Prosser Street**

Gwyn James, Transportation Manager, presented the update report. He reported that according to the records, there had been no applications or permissions given for any footway crossovers to the rear of properties in Swinford Road accessed from Prosser Street. He noted that a second crossover to houses across the whole city were very carefully considered and unlikely to be approved as it would reduce space for parking on the street.

The petitioners, Mrs Beddows and Mrs Yates, explained that the dropped curb at the rear of the houses had always been in place. The issue had been when residents had then opened access to gardens to allow for extra parking.

The Transportation Manager explained that the Council did not have power to deal with this situation as the dropped curb is already installed. Residents wishing to build a garage to the rear of their house would need to apply for planning permission but removing the fences and parking on the garden area was allowed without permission.

Cllr Rowley commented that having heard the highways employees perspective there was not a lot the Council could do to the street.

The Transportation Manager explained that Prosser Street was on the list for funding to improve parking on the street when it became available.

Resolved:

That the outcome of the investigation into footway crossovers in Prosser Street be noted.

The Chair thanked the members of the Petitions Committee for their work throughout the year and the committee thanked the Chair for conducting the meetings.

Schedule of Petitions

Agenda Item No: **5**

Date Petition received	Issue Raised		Petition No.
15 July 2013	Prohibit Parking of Caravans and Large Vans on Broome Road and Hawksford Crescent		121-13
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer
Education and Enterprise	Bushbury South and Low Hill	Councillors Bilson, Findlay, O'Neill and Sweet	Andy Jervis, 01902 551261
Action Taken/Outcomes			
<p>The Service Group has been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.</p> <p>The Lead Petitioner attended the Committee on 18 October 2013.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to adjourn consideration of the petition in order for consideration to be given to the wider issues raised including anti-social behaviour and enforcement of tenancy conditions.</p> <p>The Committee revisited the petition at their next meeting on 22 November 2013 when both representatives from the Police and Wolverhampton Homes were in attendance to try to resolve the problems encountered.</p> <p>21.03.14 The Committee supported the actions proposed for Wolverhampton Homes, the Police and the City Council in consultation with the Legal Officer to work together to draw up a protocol about encroachment of the highway and enforcement actions to be taken to address this with report back to the Committee on progress in September 2014.</p> <p>12.12.14 The Committee was informed about a Public Space Protection Order which will be put in place on Broome Road.</p> <p>An update report will be presented on 11 September 2015.</p>			

Date Petition received	Issue Raised		Petition No.
25 October 2012	Blockage of Turning Circle at Dunkley Street		107-12
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer
Education and Enterprise	St Peter's	Councillors Bilson, NA Patten, Lawrence, Moran, T Singh	Gwyn James, 01902 555755
Action Taken/Outcomes			
<p>The Service Group has been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.</p> <p>The Lead Petitioner attended the Committee on 15 February 2013.</p> <p>The Committee supported the actions proposed to provide a No Waiting at Any Time</p>			

Restriction at Dunkley Street. The proposal would be considered by the Transportation and Highways Management Board and if approved the restrictions would be formally advertised.

The proposed "No Waiting at any Time" restrictions were approved for statutory consultation on 19 March 2012 and consultation was currently programmed to commence on 27 June 2013.

Following the consultation period objections had been received from the shopkeepers to the proposed lines. A meeting would be held with the Refuse Vehicle Operatives to talk through the turning heads.

12.12.13 Meeting with refuse collection vehicle to be undertaken early January.

18.03.14 Further consultation required with both the refuse collectors and the shop owners in the vicinity. Exploring the possible reduction of parking to allow for easier access to the site.

An update report will be presented on 11 September 2015.

Date Petition received	Issue Raised			Petition No.
30 September 2014	Safety Barrier on Wobaston Road			133-14
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer	
Education and Enterprise	Bushbury North	Councillors Bilson, Angus, Warren and Dehar	Ian Hipkiss, 01902 554241	
Action Taken/Outcomes				
The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.				
The lead petitioner attended the committee meeting on 24 October 2014.				
24.10.14 The committee supported the design of a bund at Wobaston Road. It was noted that the junction with Patshull Avenue would be controlled by signal controlled crossing.				
An update report will be presented in 12 months' time (October 2015 meeting)				

Date Petition received	Issue Raised			Petition No.
8 October 2014	Prosser Street Cul-de-Sac Parking			134-14
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer	
Education and Enterprise	Bushbury South and Low Hill	Councillors Bilson, O'Neill and Sweet	Gwyn James, 01902 555755	
Action Taken/Outcomes				
The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.				

The lead petitioner attended the committee meeting on 30 January 2015.

30.01.15 The Committee supported the consideration of a parking scheme within Prosser Street for inclusion in future works programmes, should funding for this type of facility be identified.

24.04.15 The Committee noted the outcome of the investigations and noted that no further action could be taken.

It is recommended that this petition be closed.

Date Petition received	Issue Raised		Petition No.
17 October 2014	Opposing Increase in Standard Number at Manor Primary School		135-14
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer
Education and Enterprise	Spring Vale	Councillors Page, Gwinnett, Kaur and Whitehouse	Tom Knott, 01902 551469
Action Taken/Outcomes			
The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.			
12.12.14 The Committee supported the undertaking of identified actions to mitigate the impact of the expansion on Manor Primary School and the local community.			
An update report will be presented on 11 September 2015.			

Date Petition received	Issue Raised		Petition No.
23 October 2014	Pedestrian Crossing on Rushall Road		136-14
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer
Education and Enterprise	Bushbury North	Councillors Bilson, Angus, Warren and Dehar	Gwyn James, 01902 555755
Action Taken/Outcomes			
The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.			
12.12.14 The Committee supported the inclusion of a new pedestrian crossing facility in Rushall Road in future works programmes, should this type of facility be shown to be justified in accordance with the approved criteria.			
An update report will be presented on 11 September 2015.			

Date Petition received	Issue Raised		Petition No.
4 November 2014	Lollipop Person on Ettingshall Road		E14 – 14-

			15A
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer
Education and Enterprise	Spring Vale	Councillors Bilson, Gwinnett, Kaur and Whitehouse	Denise Eccleston, 01902 550301
Action Taken/Outcomes			
<p>The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.</p> <p>12.12.14 The Committee supported the action taken in regard to the School Crossing on Ettingshall Road at Foster Avenue.</p> <p>An update report will be presented on 11 September 2015.</p>			

Date Petition received	Issue Raised		Petition No.
25 November 2014	Closure of Old Tree Nursery for Adults with Learning Disabilities		137-14
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer
Community	n/a	Councillor S Evans	Kathy Roper, 01902 550975
Action Taken/Outcomes			
<p>The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.</p> <p>The lead petitioner attended the committee meeting on 30 January 2015.</p> <p>30.01.15 The Committee approved the proposal to proceed with further discussion with Heantun Housing Association/The Accord Group in relation to their expression of interest of Old Tree Nursery.</p> <p>It is recommended that this petition be closed.</p>			

Date Petition received	Issue Raised		Petition No.
9 December 2014	Open Ground Rear of 36-62 Inkerman Street, Heath Town		138-14
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer
Education and Enterprise	Heath Town	Councillors Bilson, J Jaspal, M Jaspal, Siarkiewicz	Sangita Kaur, 01902 553362
Action Taken/Outcomes			
<p>The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.</p> <p>The lead petitioner attended the committee meeting on 13 March 2015.</p> <p>13.03.15 The committee supported the on-going discussions regarding the improvements to the existing Multi Use Games Area on the Heath Town estate. They supported the inclusion</p>			

of the ground to the rear of 36-62 Inkerman Street for redevelopment in the Heath Town Regeneration Project subject to the outcome of site surveys and further consultation.

An update report will be presented on 11 September 2015.

Date Petition received	Issue Raised			Petition No.
12 December 2014	Various Issues from Householders Lanesfield mainly Mount Road			139-14
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer	
Education and Enterprise	Spring Vale	Councillors Bilson, Gwinnett, Kaur and Whitehouse	Gwyn James, 01902 555755	
Action Taken/Outcomes				
<p>The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.</p> <p>24.04.15 The Committee endorsed the proposed action to investigate the need for a possible road safety scheme in the Mount Road area.</p> <p>It is recommended that this petition be closed.</p>				

Date Petition received	Issue Raised			Petition No.
30 January 2015	Remove the Park from Dukes Park Estate			140-15
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer	
Place	Bilston East	Councillors Mattu, Gibson, Simpkins and Turner	Karen Samuels, 01902 551341	
Action Taken/Outcomes				
<p>The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.</p> <p>24.04.15 The committee supported the recommendations in the report and asked that test purchasing be carried out at the local off-licences. They asked that the park be cleaned including removal of graffiti and a plan be developed for a multi-agency working group with residents.</p> <p>An update report will be presented on 11 September 2015.</p>				

Date Petition received	Issue Raised			Petition No.
3 February 2015	Woodcross Park Extension of Railings			141-15
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer	
Place	Spring Vale	Councillors S Evans, Gwinnett, Kaur and Whitehouse	Steve Woodward, 01902 554260	
Action Taken/Outcomes				

The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.

A report will be presented on 26 June 2015.

Date Petition received	Issue Raised			Petition No.
27 March 2015	Fair Stall Rents 2015			143-15
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer	
Place	n/a	Councillor Reynolds	Chris Huddart, 01902 556788	
Action Taken/Outcomes				
The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.				
The lead petitioner has requested that this petition be put on hold.				

Date Petition received	Issue Raised			Petition No.
31 March 2015	Curzon Street Parking Issues			144-15
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer	
Place	Blakenhall	Councillors Bilson, John Rowley, Judith Rowley and Bagri	Nick Broomhall, 01902 555723	
Action Taken/Outcomes				
The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.				
A report will be presented on 11 September 2015.				

Date Petition received	Issue Raised			Petition No.
31 March 2015	Parking restrictions relating to Malins Road and Greenly Road			145-15
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer	
Place	Blakenhall	Councillors Bilson, John Rowley, Judith Rowley and Bagri	Nick Broomhall, 01902 555723	
Action Taken/Outcomes				
The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.				
A report will be presented on 11 September 2015.				

Date Petition received	Issue Raised			Petition No.
16 June 2015	Removal of Gym and Benches on Lincoln Green Island			146-15
Service Group	Area of City (Ward)	Councillors notified	Contact Officer	

Place	Bushbury North	Councillors Bilson, Angus, Warren and Dehar	Richard Macvicar, 01902 551087
Action Taken/Outcomes			
The Service Group had been advised of the petition and asked to undertake preliminary investigations.			

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Petitions Committee

24 April 2015

Report title	Fencing off Woodcross open space	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Steve Evans City Economy	
Wards affected	Springvale	
Accountable director	Nick Alderman, City Environment	
Originating service	Public Realm	
Accountable employee(s)	Steve Woodward	Head of Service 01902 554260 Steve.woodward@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	n/a	

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Committee is recommended:

1. To consider the issues raised in the petition in respect of fencing off Woodcross open space.
2. To support the decision not to extend the fencing around the perimeter of Woodcross open space.
3. Advise concerned residents that they make contact with the Police and Wolverhampton's Anti-social Behaviour Team to report any issues raised or identified on Woodcross open space and, if appropriate, the Police and Wolverhampton's Anti-social Behaviour Team to exercise their powers to obtain identities of and disperse groups of individuals that are causing nuisance or offending behaviour.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the petition received regarding the request to fence off the perimeter of Woodcross open space.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 13 January 2014, Mr Tom Stokes contacted City Direct and raised concerns about vandalism, including health and safety concerns of the public relating to vehicles on Woodcross open space. The request was to fence off the perimeter of Woodcross open space which came through City Direct to Public Realm.
- 2.2 It was communicated to Mr Stokes by a representative from Public Realm on 14 January 2014, that fencing could not be provided to Woodcross open space (see appendix 1) for the following reasons:-
- Wolverhampton City Council does not fence off many of its open spaces only some of the formal parks in the City;
 - Wolverhampton City Council does not have the available financial resources to be able to fence off such large open space areas. This includes Woodcross open space.
- 2.3 Woodcross open space is approximately 4.5 hectares with the perimeter being around 655 linear meters of which the majority is accessible from the roadside. The open space is maintained by the Council (Public Realm) and services provided include grass cutting, litter picking, playground inspections and waste bin emptying.
- 2.4 Play provision on Woodcross open space includes a trim trail, natural play area, traditional play area and green space for ball games.
- 2.5 There is currently some barrier type fencing on the open space that was fitted many years ago as part of a Parks and Open Spaces initiative to deter vehicle access. The sites identified were deemed the most vulnerable and funding was then available.
- 2.6 Joanne Mason, Anti-Social Behaviour Team (ASB) Manager, has confirmed that there are no reports (either recent or historic) to the ASB Team about Woodcross open space. Similarly, Lisa Parmar, Neighbourhood Safety Co-ordinator, has confirmed that the last complaint raised about the open space was at a Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meeting a number of years ago. The issue raised was regarding young people gathering in the park. There have been no reports since then either at PACT, through Tasking or from the Neighbourhood Wardens. Consequently, there has been no liaison with the Police on this matter.
- 2.7 The ASB Team Manager has corresponded to Sergeant Simon Bott, who is the neighbourhood Sergeant for the Woodcross area regarding reports to the Police about ASB. No feedback has been received.

- 2.8 Historically, open spaces such as at Woodcross Lane are not considered for fencing because they are open spaces and not formal parks areas. There are many open spaces across the City that do not have fences around them.
- 2.9 There is no dedicated budget set aside each year to be able to deal with large scale improvements such as fencing and gating. In addition the revenue resources for maintaining the Council's parks and open spaces are constantly under pressure with increases in repairs and maintenance to land holdings (including open spaces) demands on the service. The cost attributed to the fitting of fencing, including on-going maintenance liabilities (repair/painting), cannot be accommodated within Public Realm's current revenue budgets which are used for repairs and maintenance of parks and open spaces.
- 2.10 Therefore any capital works and associated revenue implications for improvements to these sites would need to be fully thought through and additional funds secured. The cost of fencing off an additional 559 linear meters using the same type of barrier system that is partly in place on the open space is estimated to be in region of £35,000.
- 2.11 Should any Section 106 public open space contributions derived from future developments in the area become available this could provide for some fencing of Woodcross open space together with improvements to the open space itself which would have added value for local people. In this instance the Council would engage with the local community on how best to use externally funded monies as part of formal consultation.

3.0 Details of the petition

- 3.1 On 3 February 2015, a 132 signature petition was received from local residents requesting the installation of fencing around Woodcross Park to prevent vehicle access.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 Due to the Council's current financial position and the amount of savings required within the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the provision of additional fencing around Woodcross Open Space cannot be met from existing revenue budgets. [CH/27032015/C]

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. [TS/25032015/P]

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 Environmental implications

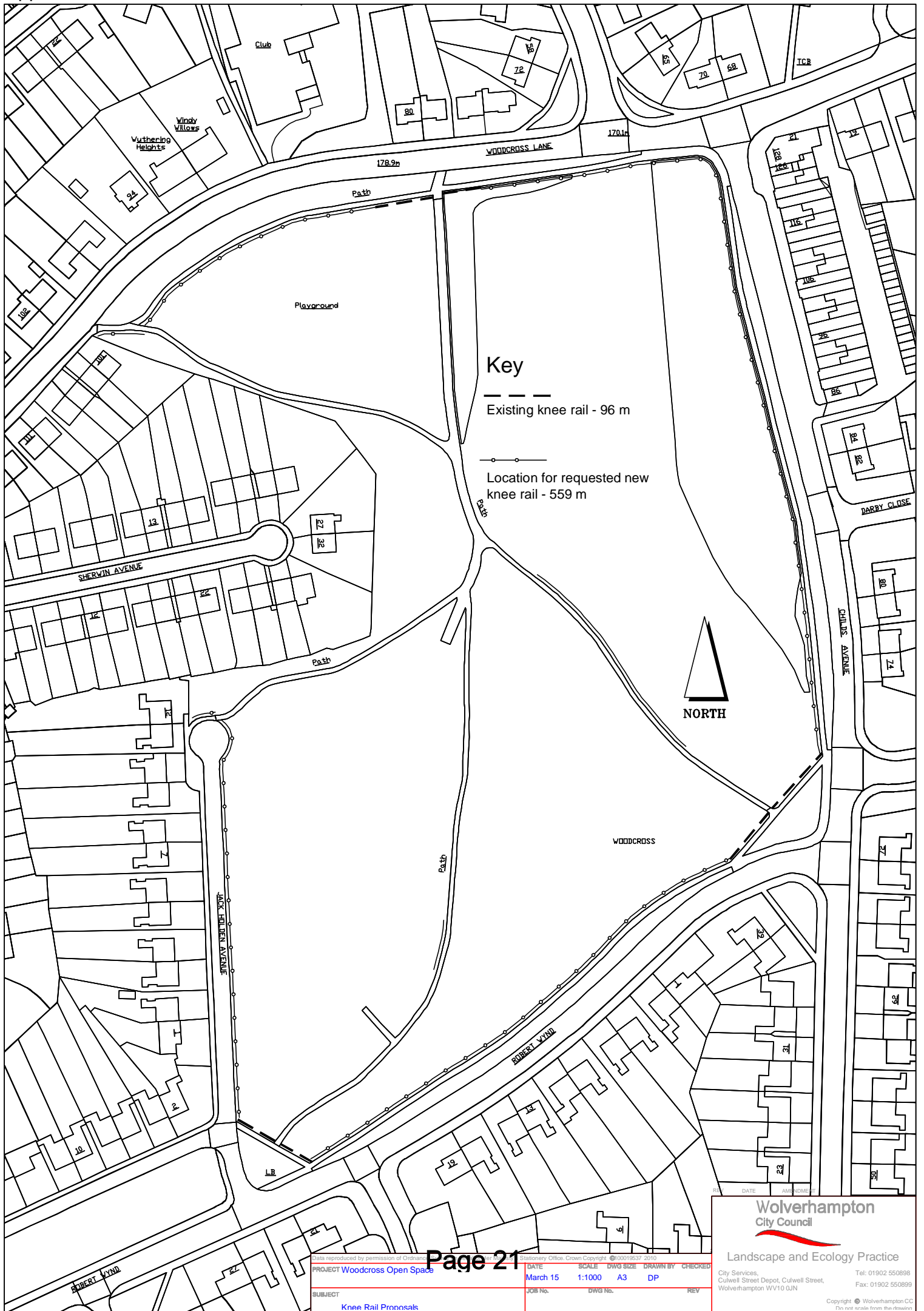
- 7.1 There would be environmental implications to consider with the erection of any type of fencing around the open space therefore an Environmental Impact Assessment would need to be undertaken should fencing be erected around this site in future.

8.0 Corporate landlord implications

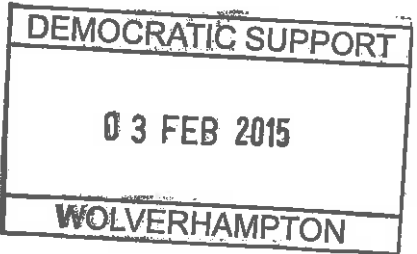
- 8.1 As stated above open spaces such as Woodcross Lane have not historically been considered for fencing programmes due to the extent and financial cost of fencing and gating required on large open space areas.
- 8.2 In the event of an incident, residents to be advised to make contact with the Police and Wolverhampton's ASB Team.

9.0 Schedule of background papers

None



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PUBLIC PETITION

(For official use only) PUBLIC PETITION NO.	141 - 15
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Should you wish to submit a public petition for consideration by the Petitions Committee please refer to the guidance leaflet Petitions and E-Petitions Scheme and the Guidance Notes at the back of this form.

1. NAME OF PRINCIPAL PETITIONER (If applicable, please specify the name of the organisation on whose behalf the petition is raised)
TOM STOKES
2. PETITION TITLE
WOODCROSS PARK-EXTENSION OF RAILINGS
3. PETITION TEXT
TO EXTEND THE CURRENT RAILINGS AROUND WOODCROSS PARK TO COVER WHOLE BOUNDARY TO PREVENT VEHICLE ACCESS.
4. ACTION TAKEN TO RESOLVE ISSUES OF CONCERN BEFORE SUBMITTING THE PETITION
HIGH LIGHTED ISSUE SEVERAL TIMES WITH LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM BUT AS ACTIVITY IS AT NIGHT THERE ARE NO VEHICLE DETAILS AVAILABLE.
5. PETITION BACKGROUND INFORMATION
PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PHOTOS SHOWING DAMAGE MADE TO FOOTBALL FIELD ON WOODCROSS PARK.

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

6. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (NOT FOR PUBLICATION)	
Name	TOM STOKES
Address	15 ARD HOUNN GROVE MUNMORE URANIE WOLVERHAMPTON WV4 6DZ
Telephone nos.	Home: Mobile:
E-mail address	
No. of petition signatures	132
STATEMENT TO THE COMMITTEE: Should the Committee consider it necessary, in order to broaden its understanding of the petition, it may invite a petitioner to appear before and give an oral presentation and answer question. Would you wish, if invited, to appear?	
YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL PETITIONER: When satisfied that your petition meets all the criteria outlined in the Petitions and E-Petitions Scheme, the principal petitioner should sign and date below.	
Signature	
Date 31/1/2015	
Completed forms should be returned to— Democratic Support Governance Services Delivery Directorate Wolverhampton City Council St Peter's Square Wolverhampton WV1 1SH Email: democratic.support@wolverhampton.gov.uk Tel: 01902 550181	

Liberal Democrat Office
Wolverhampton City Council
3rd Floor
Civic Centre
St Peter's Square
Wolverhampton
WV1 1RL

27th January 2015

Wolverhampton City Council
Petitions Committee
C/O Democratic Support
2nd floor
Civic Centre
St Peter' Square
Wolverhampton
WV1 1SH

Dear Petitions Committee Members,

I write in support of my constituents who are petitioning the City Council to install fencing around Woodcross Park. This, I believe, is the only park not fenced off in the City. Residents are constantly suffering from "joy riders" on both motorcycles and in cars using the park at night and sometimes in daylight hours; as their personal playground. Regardless of the obvious noise nuisance and the damage to the park it may not be long until there is a serious accident!

Residents do appreciate that funds are at a premium but I believe this would be classed as capital expenditure and moreover, City Council Officers could seek external funding for such a scheme. Again, on behalf of my residents, I give the petition my fullest support.

Yours truly,

Cllr. R.F. Whitehouse
Member Springvale Ward
Wolverhampton City Council







CURRENT RAILINGS



Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Imagery © Mapbox

Jack Holden Ave
Boston, England
Street View - Oct 2012

1





Woodcross Ln
Hilkaly, England
Street View - Oct 2012



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