

Central Dudley Area Committee – 18th January 2011

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Urban Environment - Matters raised at the Central Dudley Area Committee - 16th November 2010

Purpose Of Report

1. To update Committee on a number of issues raised at the 16th November 2010 Central Dudley Area Committee that relate to services provided by the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

Background

2. The Directorate of the Urban Environment provides a number of services that have considerable impact on local communities. This diverse range of technical services focus on regenerating the Borough, maintaining our environment to high standards, protecting our communities and promoting leisure and other community services for all.
3. Requests for service and information are received at Area Committee on a regular basis from both Members and the general public, relating to matters such as traffic management, leisure and recreation, regeneration and new development. 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, progress reports are included as an appendix and the proposal resulting from the update is set out at the end of each paragraph.

Finance

5. Where there are financial implications of the actions listed below that impact on Council responsibilities, these will be financed from existing Council resources.

Law

6. Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 empowers the Council to provide recreational facilities in its area.
7. The Council is empowered to improve highways under Section 62 of the Highways Act 1980.

8. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, enables the Council to do anything that is likely to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Borough.
9. Traffic signs are provided under powers contained in Section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to regulations made by the Secretary of State for Transport.
10. Guardrails may be provided under Section 66 of the Highways Act 1990.
11. Pedestrian crossing facilities are provided under powers contained in Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to Regulations made by the Secretary of State.
12. Traffic Regulation Orders are made under Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. Part IX of the Highways Act 1980 contains provisions relating to the planting, care and control of trees in or on land adjoining the highways.
16. In the care and maintenance of its trees, the Council will owe the normal duty of care under the common law principles of nuisance and negligence.
17. 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

18. The proposals take into account the Council's equal opportunities policies. The Directorate of the Urban Environment provides a diverse range of services that affect all sections of the community.

Recommendation

19. That the proposals contained in Appendix 1 attached be approved.



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Director of the Urban Environment

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Background documents used in the preparation of this report:-

1. Action Notes from 16th November 2010 Committee.

Appendix 1

DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT - MATTERS RAISED AT THE CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE HELD 16th NOVEMBER 2010

1. PETITION - BAPTIST END ROAD - SPEEDING TRAFFIC

Background: A petition was received from residents of Baptist End Road requesting that action be taken to control speeding vehicles along Baptist End Road. The petition was referred to the Petitions Officer for consideration.

Comments: An investigation into the possibility of including Baptist End Road in a future year's annual Local Safety Scheme has been completed. The street was ranked less highly than other streets in the Borough and no further action will be taken.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

2. PETITION - STEPPINGSTONE STREET/PITFIELD STREET/GREYSTONE PASSAGE, DUDLEY - WAITING RESTRICTIONS

Background: A petition was received from residents requesting waiting restrictions in Steppingstone Street, Pitfield Street and Greystone Passage, Dudley. The petition was referred to the Petitions Officer for consideration in the first instance and then to the Directorate of the Urban Environment for a report to a future Area Committee.

Comments: Steppingstone Street, Pitfield Street and Greystone Passage have been added to a list from which future annual Traffic Regulation Order programmes will be drawn.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

3. PETITION - SELBOURNE ROAD - OBJECTION TO BUFFERY PARK BENCHES

Background: A petition was received from residents of Selbourne Road and the surrounding area objecting to the proposed benches on Buffery Park, Netherton. The Petitions Officer for consideration and the outcome would be reported back to a future Area Committee.

Comments: DUE Officers met with Cllrs Ali and Waltho on the 14th December and are currently costing up a number of options which will be presented to the ward Councillors in the New Year.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

4. **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT**

Background: A member of the public drew attention to the current Environmental Protection Act and suggested the Council is acting unlawfully by restricting the number of bin bags collected to three; failing to collect bin bags from positions that were not inaccessible or were likely to incur high collection costs and implicitly charging for the collection of household waste through Council Tax. In continuing, he expressed the view that the actions of the Local Authority would be likely to incur substantial financial penalties by failing to meet its contractual targets regarding the quantities of waste to be delivered to external agencies and that these costs might exceed any savings derived from the new bin collection service.

Comments: A written response was sent to the questioner on the 23rd November with a copy for Cllr Ahmed.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

5. **GRIFFIN STREET - TRAFFIC VOLUME**

Background: Cllr Ms Wood drew attention to the volume of traffic using Griffin Street as a rat-run and requested that this matter be investigated.

Comments: Griffin Street has not been identified as being an obvious through-route. Motorists could more conveniently use Hockley Lane and Church Road. However, the situation will be monitored during 2011-12.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

6. **SCOTTS GREEN CLOSE - SPEEDING VEHICLES**

Background: Cllr M Davis drew attention to the speed of vehicles using Scotts Green Close and requested that this matter be investigated.

Comments: A number of Local Safety Schemes have been introduced in Scotts Green Close over the years. The local community does not wholeheartedly support any measures that would inconvenience residents. Scotts Green Close will be revisited as part of the ongoing work of the Russells Hall Traffic Working Group.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

7. **SHEFFIELD ROAD, QUARRY BANK - PARKING PROBLEMS**

Background: A member of the Committee submitted a letter on behalf of the Chairman of the Quarry Bank Community Association, expressing parking concerns associated with Sheffield Road, outside the Quarry Bank Community Centre. It was noted that the letter would be passed on to an appropriate officer in the Directorate of the Urban Environment for consideration and the outcome would be reported back to a future Area Committee.

Comments: Outcome to be reported to a future Area Committee as stated above.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

8. **SLEDMERE SCHOOL - PARKING PROBLEMS**

Background: Cllr Waltho conveyed his thanks to officers responsible for carrying out road safety improvements at the rear end of Sledmere School, however he drew attention to the parking problems still occurring and requested that this matter be investigated.

Comments: Resources are committed for the current financial year. Further monitoring will take place during 2011-12.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

9. **RUSSELLS HALL ROAD - PARKING**

Background: Cllr M Davis requested an urgent update on the parking situation at Russells Hall Road.

Comments: Central Dudley Area Committee has introduced a Russells Hall Traffic Working group composed of Members which will look at this issue. The working group is staffed by appropriate officers.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

10. **HILLCREST SCHOOL/COMMUNITY COLLEGE - OBSTRUCTIVE PARKING**

Background: Cllr Ms Wood drew attention to the safety issues involved in obstructive parking at Hillcrest School and Community College and requested that this matter be looked at.

Comments: An attempt was recently made to introduce yellow lines in streets adjacent to Hillcrest School and Community College. The proposals were not supported by the local community and were not pursued.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

11. **PARK ROAD, QUARRY BANK - OBSTRUCTIVE PARKING**

Background: Cllr Sparks drew attention to the obstructive parking by the mini market in Park Road, Quarry Bank and requested an increase in the number of bollards along the grass verges to help alleviate the problem.

Comments: Regrettably, funds are committed for the current financial year. However, this matter will be considered during 2011-12 should finance prove available.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

12. **DIBDALE ROAD - OBSTRUCTIVE PARKING**

Background: Cllr Mrs Roberts drew attention to the obstructive parking on both kerbs in Dibdale Road and requested that this matter be investigated.

Comments: Dibdale Road will be assessed then considered for possible inclusion in a future year's annual Traffic Regulation Order programme.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

13. **CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT**

Background: Cllr J Martin requested details of enforcement action taken by the Police and the Council's parking enforcement officers against speeding traffic and obstructive parking. He also requested details from the GATSO cameras.

Comments: Enforcement of vehicle speeds is a Police responsibility. The Police will be requested to contact Councillor Waltho.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

14. **CINDER BANK AND HALESOWEN ROAD - NETHERTON TO OLD HILL - TRAFFIC STATISTICS**

Background: Cllr J Martin asked to be supplied with road traffic statistics for Cinder Bank and Halesowen Road through Netherton to Old Hill, specifically, in relation to the number of road traffic accidents, traffic flows and the volume of traffic at different times of the day. He also requested statistics regarding the speed of traffic travelling along Cinder Bank through Netherton and Halesowen Road past Lidl Superstore.

Comments: Unfortunately, the Local Authority does not have direct access to all of the information requested and in relation to one of the traffic counts, the most recent available is now 2 years old.

However, some additional information relating to speed surveys has kindly been provided by the West Midlands Police Traffic Data Unit so, hopefully, the totality of information available will prove to be sufficient and has been forwarded by DUE Traffic Engineers to Cllr Martin via email.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

15. **PARKWAY ROAD - ONE-WAY SYSTEM UPDATE**

Background: Cllr Mrs Roberts requested an update on the new one-way system.

Comments: Parkway Road is now a one-way street. Warning signs have been installed to alert motorists until the new scheme has had an opportunity to bed in and the consequences of the one-way scheme have been accommodated.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

16. **PEARCE CLOSE AND ABBERTON ROAD - SIGNAGE**

Background: Cllr M Davis asked to be advised when signage would be installed.

Comments: Central Dudley Area Committee has introduced a Russells Hall Traffic Working group composed of Members. When the working group has made its recommendations to the Central Dudley Area Committee, consideration can be given to the installation of necessary signs.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

17. **MIDDLEPARK ROAD/ASHENHURST ROAD/ABBOTSFORD DRIVE - BOLLARDS**

Background: Cllr M Davis queried why the bollards had been taken away.

Comments: It was necessary for the red/white traffic cones to be removed for reasons of road safety.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

18. **RUSSELL STREET - VEHICLE RESTRICTION**

Background: Cllr Ahmed drew attention to the vehicles using Russell Street and requested that a restriction on heavy vehicles be introduced.

Comments: Russell Street will be investigated during 2011-12 for possible inclusion in a future year's annual Local Safety Scheme programme.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

19. **BURTON ROAD/THE BROADWAY - DAMAGED STEPS**

Background: Cllr Mrs Aston drew attention to the damaged steps between Burton Road and the Broadway and requested that this matter be investigated.

Comments: On inspection it was found that three of the bar faced slabs had been stolen and these have now been replaced.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

20. SALTWELLS ROAD RAILINGS

Background: Cllr Cotterill conveyed his thanks for the installation of a pedestrian crossing at Saltwells Road, however, he requested that railings be erected.

Comments: Specialist guardrail has been ordered, and will be installed following manufacture.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

21. ROSEWOOD ROAD/MAYFIELD ROAD - POTHOLES

Background: Cllr A Finch again drew attention to the potholes in these roads and requested that these be investigated.

Comments: These repairs will be undertaken week commencing 13th December 2010.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

22. RUSSELL STREET - POTHOLES

Background: Cllr Ahmed drew attention to the potholes in Russell Street and requested that this matter be investigated

Comments: All defects have been temporarily repaired until substantial works can be completed.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.

23. OVERGROWN TREES

Background: Cllr Cotterill drew attention to the overgrown trees in his ward, which were preventing natural light entering residents' houses and requested that this matter be investigated.

Comments: Green Care Officers have liaised with Cllr Cotterill and are in the process of finalising a tree decision sheet.

Proposal: That the Area Committee note the information contained in this paragraph.