

**Central Dudley Area Committee – 5<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

**Report Of The Director Of The Urban Environment**

**Urban Environment - Matters Raised At The  
Central Dudley Area Committee - 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

**Purpose Of Report**

1. To update Committee on a number of issues raised at the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006 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. There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

**Law**

6. Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 empowers the Council to provide recreational facilities in its area.
7. 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.

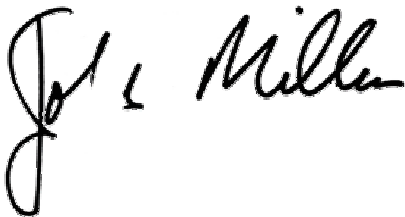
8. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 authorises the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the exercise of any of its functions.
9. Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 places a duty on the Council as Waste Disposal Authority for its area to provide places where its residents may deposit their household waste free of charge.
10. Traffic Regulation Orders are made under Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
11. 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.

### **Equality Impact**

12. 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**

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



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**John Millar**  
**Director of the Urban Environment**

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### **Background documents used in the preparation of this report:-**

Action Notes from 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006 Committee.

**DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT - MATTERS RAISED AT THE CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE HELD 13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2006**

**1. MULBERRY GREEN**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr Mrs Aston submitted petitions on behalf of local residents requesting: the lowering of kerbs around the footpath on Mulberry Green, Dudley. The removal of the kerb around the grassed area to allow for the widening of the road on Mulberry Green, Dudley. The removal of the green and conversion of it into parking bays for residents and visitors of residents only.

**Comments:**

The grassed area in question falls within the jurisdiction of DACHS. Officers from DUE and DACHS are now looking at the feasibility of the proposal which will be dependant on the necessary funding being available.

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

**2. REMOVAL OF TRAFFIC CHICANES - RUSSELLS HALL ESTATE**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr M Davis submitted a petition on behalf of local residents requesting the removal of the traffic chicanes from the Russells Hall Estate and the introduction of alternative traffic calming measures.

**Comments:**

Having reviewed the accident records earlier this year for those streets on the Russells Hall Estate where chicanes were introduced, the number of personal injury accidents recorded since their introduction has reduced when compared to a corresponding period prior to their installation.

A number of options may be considered in the future, dependant on funding being made available, including the introduction of speed cushions within the chicane areas as a complimentary measure to encourage reduced speeds.

Traffic engineers will continue to work with local residents in an attempt to resolve this matter to everyone's mutual satisfaction.

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

3. **ROAD RESURFACING - TRINITY ROAD, WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD, RUSSELL STREET, SWANCOTE ROAD, CORBYN ROAD AND WALTERS ROW**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr M Davis expressed the need for the resurfacing of Trinity Road, Wolverhampton Road, Russell Street, Swancote Road, Corbyn Road and Walters Row which have not been included on the current year's Highway Maintenance Programme.

**Comments:**

The provisional Highway Maintenance Programme for 2007/08 indicates that Trinity Road and Wolverhampton Street are included in the programme. In addition, Russell Street and Corbyn Road are included in the 2008/09 programme. Swancote Road is not included in any programme in the foreseeable future and Walters Row is unadopted.

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

4. **ROAD WORKS INFORMATION SIGNAGE - HALESOWEN ROAD/RAYBOLDS FOLD**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr Rahman said that the notice at the road works at the intersection of Halesowen Road and Raybolds Fold, Netherton states work will be completed in March despite the work still ongoing in June. He asked for the sign to be replaced with one showing a more accurate estimate for completion.

**Comments:**

The works in question have now been completed and all signage removed.

The delays that arose were due to utility problems and the discovery of a cable that had not been identified as part of the original feasibility works.

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

5. **SPEED LIMIT SIGNAGE - DUDLEY ROAD/STOURBRIDGE ROAD, BRIERLEY HILL**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr Bradney again requested signage to indicate the speed limit on the road from Brierley Hill Police Station to Dudley.

**Comments:**

The location of speed signs along the A4036 conforms to the appropriate legislation and advice contained in the Highway Code. Traffic Officers in DUE will be happy to investigate areas of particular concern along this length of highway in liaison with Cllr Bradney if he can pass on a specific location.

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

6. **ZEBRA CROSSING BETWEEN HOLLY HALL AND BRIERLEY HILL**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr Bradney requested the installation of a zebra crossing somewhere between Holly Hall and Brierley Hill.

**Comments:**

The length of highway between Holly Hall and Brierley Hill has been added to this year's pedestrian crossing assessment list to be included in the 2006/07 programme should it be successful when considered against other requests and the results of accident investigations measures.

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

7. **KENILWORTH COURT - REMOVAL OF TOURING CARAVAN**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr M Davis submitted a petition on behalf of local residents requesting the removal of a touring caravan parked on the main roadway, causing an obstruction and eye-sore at Kenilworth Court, Dudley.

**Comments:** A Notice was served to the owner of the caravan which has been complied with and the caravan is now off the highway.

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

8. **OVERGROWN SHRUBBERY/TREES - CORBYN ROAD, KETLEY HILL ROAD AND HAWKESLEY ROAD, DUDLEY**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr M Davis submitted a petition on behalf of local residents requesting the removal of overgrown shrubbery and trees at the rear of properties on Corbyn Road, Ketley Hill Road and Hawkesley Road, Dudley to help combat anti-social behaviour. The Councillor said the shrubbery had previously been pruned but required further pruning to stop youths hiding in it.

**Comments:** A visit has been made to the site involving DUE Officers and Cllr Davis and there was a general consensus that there was little evidence to suggest anti social behaviour. It was agreed to carry out a safety inspection of the trees over the next 2 months following which works to remove dead or dangerous trees will be prioritised. The trees and shrubs at the rear of the properties in Hawksley Road will be cut and the fly-tipped material removed.

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

## 9. GRASS/HEDGE CUTTING - SYCAMORE GREEN

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr Johnston raised concerns regarding the state of the green at Sycamore Green, stating that the grass is in urgent need of mowing and the hedges need attention. Cllr Johnson asked for the grass to be collected when it is cut to prevent drains becoming blocked.

**Comments:** All grass cutting in this area has been carried out. The hedges will be attended to by the 23<sup>rd</sup> July as part of the routine maintenance schedule.

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

## 10. REMOVAL OF TREES - BLOWERS GREEN TIMBER ESTATE, HALESOWEN ROAD

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Councillor Bradney read out a letter on behalf of a local resident, expressing concerns that despite the original planning agreement for the trees on the former Blowers Timber Estate, Halesowen Road, at the rear of Cole Street, Dudley, Property Developer had been given planning permission which had allowed them to remove trees despite two Tree Preservation Orders, and without consultation with residents or consideration to nesting birds, bats and other wild life in the bank area. The removal of the trees had taken away existing residents' privacy. Councillor Ali commented that there had been similar incidents in his Ward, where Developers had been allowed to carry out work, which individuals would not have received permission to do.

### **Comments:**

The trees in question on the site are located on an embankment that runs from the southern side of the site down to the backs of the properties of 57 to 81 Cole Street.

When the Planning Application was determined, it was approved subject to a number of conditions, one of which being that the permission does not authorise the felling of any of the preserved trees on the embankment unless agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

The developers of the site approached the Planning Section as following a period of detailed assessments of the bank, their consulting engineers had strong concerns about its safety. In their professional opinion the stability of the bank could not be guaranteed and additional stabilisation works were required. The additional works involved the installation of sheet piling, retaining walls and the regrading of the bank where appropriate. Due to the installation of piling and retaining walls and the regrading of the bank, the majority of the trees on the bank needed to be removed.

Following detailed advice, the case officer was of the opinion that as the works to the bank were required as part of a stabilisation scheme, they were acceptable in terms of the planning application.

Following negotiations with the developer, plans were submitted giving details of some 7,021 trees and shrubs to be planted on the embankment to compensate for those

removed. Consequently, the case officer wrote to the developers confirming that the works were acceptable and that they could proceed.

Throughout the process the developers and the tree contractors that they employed were fully aware of the legislation relating to birds and an ecologist had carried out a survey of the embankment and identified a number of trees that should be removed until the end of the nesting season.

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

## 11. **FUNFAIR ISSUES - BUFFERY PARK AND QUARRY BANK**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr J Davies expressed concern at the state of the ground at Buffery Park following the recent fair. He questioned whether there was a need for such a facility in a local park.

Cllr Sparks also requested that the land at Quarry Bank be reinstated following the recent fair. Cllr Sparks stated that fair operators should be charged the full cost of reinstating parks when damage occurs and requested a detailed report on this matter.

**Comments:** Torrential rain has proved the catalyst for deteriorating ground conditions whilst these funfairs were on site and it seems the operators did make every effort to prevent damage by putting down boards under both the rides and under lorries leaving the site.

Every funfair operator signs a set of terms and conditions whereby they have to reinstate any damage and this policy continues to serve us well. Most of our funfair operators are extremely responsible, to the point that in the past they have refused to go on parks if they think they are going to do damage. Therefore, our recent problems do seem the exception and not the rule.

Funfairs are charged £340.00 per day and currently, generate in the region of £10,000 of income for the Council. As the relationship with the fairground operators is very professional and there have been no problems with them paying for any damage caused, it seems appropriate that the practice of giving funfair operators access to our parks should continue.

In addition, on sites that have been used for funfairs for a very long time, fairground operators may have certain rights to continue to use them, and the Showman's Guild have been known to challenge any decision to restrict access to a site on legal grounds.

We will continue to monitor the situation and should matters deteriorate, take action in the future.

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

## 12. **SPORTS PITCH - GREEN PARK**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr J Davies expressed concern that a car park immediately next to an all-weather sports pitch at Green Park had been resurfaced with small stones, which are spoiling the pitch and requested a sweeper to clear the area.

**Comments:** Officers from DUE, working on behalf of Dudley Property Consultancy, have now undertaken extensive works to the car park and the area surrounding the all-weather sports pitch. A binder has been applied to the new surface that should prevent stones being unearthed and used as projectiles.

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

## 13. **FLY-TIPPING - DALSTON CLOSE/KILBURN PLACE**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr J Davies expressed concern at the rubbish dumped on the railway embankment at Dalston Close and Kilburn Place.

**Comments:**

An extensive clean up has been programmed for the area.

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

## 14. **DERELICT SHOPS AND LAND - HALL STREET, DUDLEY**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr J Davies expressed concern at the unkempt state of the derelict shops and land on Hall Street which is being used as a rubbish dump.

**Comments:**

A legal notice is to be served on the owners of the land under the Prevention and Damage by Pests Act as there is evidence of vermin on the site. The notice will require the owners to take remedial action to deal with the problem.

Regarding the derelict shops, officers from Structures have inspected the two buildings in question which have been deemed unsafe and have confirmed that the buildings will be demolished as a matter of urgency.

Arrangements will be made to fence off the whole site as a preventative measure against fly-tipping once the land is vacant.

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



**15. DERELICT PUBLIC HOUSE - SELBOURNE ROAD**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr Waltho raised concerns regarding the derelict and vandalised public house site in Selbourne Road. He requested that Selbourne Homes be written to requesting information on their plans for the site, on account of the building having been derelict for over 5 years.

**Comments:** Following investigation, the developers have confirmed that the demolition of the public house has been completed due to continued vandalism problems and the building falling into disrepair. Working drawings and other technical information is nearing completion and being approved by various bodies. It is hoped that a forthcoming new development will resolve this matter to everyone's satisfaction.

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

**16. FENCE REPAIR - WOODLAND AVENUE AND ANN ROAD**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2006, Cllr Sparks requested partial fencing at Woodland Avenue and Ann Road be repaired to prevent the numerous amounts of fly-tipping on the site.

**Comments:**

Officers from DUE have removed any identified fly-tipping and will liaise with officers from DACHS in an attempt to address any fencing problems.

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