

**Central Dudley Area Committee – 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007**

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

**Urban Environment - Matters Raised At The  
Central Dudley Area Committee - 11<sup>th</sup> September 2007**

**Purpose Of Report**

1. To update Committee on a number of issues raised at the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2007 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. 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.

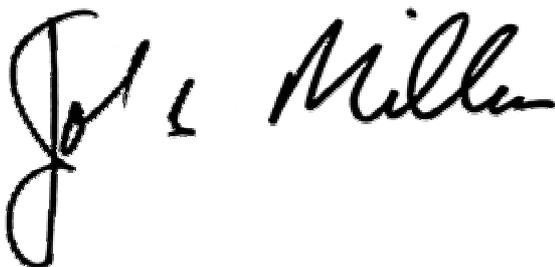
9. Traffic signs are provided under powers contained in Section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to regulations made by the Secretary of State for Transport.
10. Guardrails may be provided under Section 66 of the Highways Act 1990.
11. Pedestrian crossing facilities are provided under 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 11<sup>th</sup> September 2007 Committee

## Appendix 1

### DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT - MATTERS RAISED AT THE CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE HELD 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007

#### 1. PETITION - WRENS NEST ROAD AND SURROUNDING ROADS

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Mrs Aston submitted a petition on behalf of residents of Wrens Nest Road and surrounding roads, requesting that speed humps be installed along the length of Meadow Road, up to the junction where that road meets the Broadway.

**Comments:** Traffic calming measures exist along Wrens Nest Road between its junctions with Meadow Road and Maple Green and more recent works have been carried out as part of a planning condition associated with the new housing development scheme between its junctions with Maple Green and Parkes Hall Road.

The Council does not currently introduce any new traffic calming measures unless they form part of a local safety scheme where the emphasis is very much related to a reduction in the number of personal injury accidents and that, in this respect, an annual review of the accident records is undertaken in order to identify potentially suitable schemes for possible inclusion in a future programme of works.

DUE Officers have reviewed accident records for the remaining length of Wrens Nest Road and there have been no recorded personal injury accidents along that stretch in the last 3 year review period. It would therefore be difficult to justify or recommend a local safety scheme be carried out and at this time.

Being mindful of the request made by the residents, Wrens Nest Road will be added to the list of sites to be assessed as part of the next annual review when the matter can again be considered and any changes in the current circumstances taken into account.

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

#### 2. PETITION - BUNNS LANE, KATES HILL

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Ali submitted a petition on behalf of local residents, requesting the installation of speed deterrents in Bunns Lane, Kates Hill.

**Comments:** As reported at the last area committee meeting, correspondence has taken place between Members and DUE Officers regarding Bunns Lane and consideration is being given to future actions. A meeting will be arranged involving Members and DUE Officers following receipt and analysis of the results of the Coroner's inquiry into the recent fatal injury accident which is still awaited.

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

### 3. **CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA - FLOODING**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Finch commented that he had received several reports of flooding from constituents and commented that blockages existed prior to the rain which had caused the flooding. He commented that the Council needs to be proactive in keeping drains clear, rather than responding to problems when they emerge.

**Comments:** The majority of flooding which took place in the Borough was a consequence of underground drains being full to capacity and unable to accommodate the extreme quantities of water from heavy rainfall and was not as a result of the Council's inability to maintain and clear road drains. The drainage systems in areas of the Borough where flooding was experienced were generally found to be free-flowing.

It is accepted that there are blocked gullies in the Borough, however, the teams are progressing a cyclical programme of maintenance for cleaning all of the Council's gullies. Unfortunately, the heavy rainfall has resulted in extensive reactive works in several locations, compromising and impacting on programmed schedules of cleaning.

During the extreme weather, gully cleansing teams and Council officers worked tirelessly throughout the day and night attending areas of flooding in the Borough and delivering thousands of sandbags.

In recognition of increased incidents of extreme rainfall, a reduction in natural soakaways as a result of development in the Borough and a requirement for increased maintenance regimes, officers continue to work closely with Elected Members in an attempt to identify additional resources needed to deal with the effects of climate change and provide a more robust service in the future.

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

### 4. **WRENS NEST/PRIORY ESTATE - SPEEDING**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, concerns were expressed by members of the public regarding the speed of traffic on the Wrens Nest and Priory estates, particularly in Meadow Road, Paganel Drive and the surrounding areas up to Dudley College, and it was suggested that a 20 mph speed limit be introduced in these areas in order to make them safer.

**Comments:** Consideration will be given to this request at the same time as the investigation into traffic concerns in Wrens Nest Road.

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

### 5. **MULBERRY GREEN - KERB REMOVAL**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007,

Councillor Mrs Aston expressed concern that she had not yet received a response to an issue she had raised at a previous CDAC. The issue related to a petition submitted by residents requesting the removal of the kerb around the grassed area at Mulberry Green to allow for the widening of the road which would then enable parking bays to be provided.

**Comments:** DUE Traffic Officers wrote to Cllr Aston on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2007 to the effect that the grassed land does not form part of the public highway, but is controlled by the Council's Directorate of Adult Community & Housing Services (DACHS)

Initial observations indicate that the costs of creating parking bays in this attractive open space might be considerable, bearing in mind that there could be utility service equipment under the grass that might require relocating to a greater depth.

A copy of the letter will be sent to the Director of Adult Community & Housing Services with a request that consideration be given, should finance be available, to the issue of parking provision for cars belonging to Council tenants living in Mulberry Green.

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

## 6. **WRENS NEST ESTATE - ROAD SURFACES**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Finch raised concern regarding the condition of the road surfaces on the Wrens Nest Estate, particularly Summer Road, and the accumulation of litter on those roads. He requested that action be taken to improve the condition of the roads and the litter situation

**Comments:** Wrens Nest Road and Summer Road have been cleansed.

Officers have inspected Summer Road and agree that the surface needs attention. Consequently, Summer road is on next year's Highways Maintenance Programme.

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

## 7. **CORONATION GARDENS - LITTER**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Finch raised concern regarding the accumulation of litter, particularly the number of empty bottles and cans on Coronation Gardens. He requested that action be taken immediately to clear up the gardens.

**Comments:** Coronation Gardens is always busy, but it is apparent that the late summer and anti-smoking ban seems to have driven more people out into the open which compounded the issue. The Gardens have now been litter-picked and all the bins have been emptied. As an ongoing measure the resources currently at our disposal are being managed to incorporate this area.

DUE Enforcement Officers will be sent in, not only to issue Fixed Penalty Notices, but also to help educate the local school children and college students.

The DUE Pest Control Team regularly bait Coronation Gardens, but they have been asked to re-visit the site.

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

#### **8. ST PETER'S ROAD AND COLE STREET - SPEEDING**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor J Martin raised concern regarding the speed of traffic on St Peter's Road and Cole Street. He stated that residents had contacted him to request that traffic calming measures, like improved signage and reduced speed limits, be implemented in the area.

**Comments:** Consideration will be given to introducing warning signs in a small number of appropriate sections of St. Peter's Road and Cole Street. The streets have a 30 mph speed limit, which is appropriate for these important local distributor routes.

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

#### **9. JUNCTION OF WATERLOO STREET AND WELLINGTON ROAD - COLLAPSED DRAINS**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Ahmed raised concern regarding drains at the junction of Waterloo Street and Wellington Road, which he believed had collapsed. He requested that action be taken as quickly as possible to repair the drains.

**Comments:** Officers are aware of the problem and work is being programmed. Unfortunately a road closure may be required.

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

#### **10. SWANCOTE ROAD AND HOLLAND STREET - TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**

**Background:** Councillor Mrs Craigie raised concern regarding traffic management in Swancote Road and Holland Street. She stated that due to a large number of cars parking on these narrow streets, a number of residents had been unable to get off their drives. She requested that immediate action be taken to improve the situation.

**Comments:** An instruction has been issued for white "H" lines to be laid in front of each dropped kerb driveway in Swancote Road and Holland Street. It is anticipated that this work will be carried out by the Council's white lining contractor towards the end of the year. Swancote Road and Holland Street will be added to a list from which future annual Traffic Regulation Order programmes will be considered.

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

**11. HIMLEY ROAD - RUBBISH DUMPING**

At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Mrs Roberts raised concern regarding the dumping of rubbish on the Himley Road. She stated that residents of a number of town houses and flats towards the top of that road had started leaving black bin bags to the side of their building, resulting in a number of rats being spotted in the vicinity. She commented that this was a particular concern as the road is used daily by parents and children walking to school and requested that action be taken to remove the rubbish and prevent it building up again.

**Comments:** This is an ongoing situation which DUE Officers are trying to resolve. Residents are repeatedly placing out items which is not constituted household waste and it is therefore not removed by the collection teams. Enforcement Officers are currently carrying out investigations.

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

**12. FLOOD STREET/KING STREET GAP**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Ali again raised concern regarding the opening in the road at the junction between Flood Street and King Street behind Beatties. He reiterated a previous request that this opening be closed off in order to prevent drivers crossing lanes, as a number of accidents had already occurred.

**Comments:** There is no new information to add to the report that was presented to the former Engineering and Transportation Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2000 and the letter that was sent to Councillor Ali on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

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

**13. BANKLANDS ROAD - INSUFFICIENT PARKING**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Ali expressed concern regarding the lack of parking for residents of Banklands Road. He commented that there were between 10 and 20 houses in this street with no parking facilities at all and requested that the Council investigate a possible means of addressing this problem.

**Comments:** No funds are currently available, or are likely to become available in the foreseeable future, for the construction of the required parking places.

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

**14. ST. THOMAS'S AREA - GREEN WHEELIE BIN DISTRIBUTION**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Ali requested clarification in respect of the timescales for the distribution of green waste bins in the St Thomas's area. He stated that residents of his ward had not yet received their bins and asked that the Council confirm their delivery dates.

**Comments:** The residents of St Thomas's have received a monthly loose waste collection for their green waste since June which will continue to November - a total of 6 collections. These collections are completed on a Saturday and have proved to be very popular. There are approximately 8,000 properties still to receive a green bin in the Borough. The implementation of the bins is being completed over a 3 year period and has been running for 2 years, to date we are servicing 108,000 properties.

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

#### 15. **DALVINE ROAD - OVER-SIZED TREE**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Cotterill expressed concern regarding a tree on Dalvine Road. He stated that the tree was grossly oversized for the area, with the result that it was causing large cracks in the pavement and blocking light from nearby properties. He requested that action be taken preferably to remove the tree or, failing that, to prune it.

**Comments:** DUE Tree Inspectors met with Councillor Cotterill on site in September to look at this issue. It was decided that the tree requires no work and the request is being resisted. The allegation that the footway is dangerous was referred to Street Maintenance Officers and their view is that it is not actionable at this time. The resident concerned alleged damage to his wall/drive but has now replaced both with new and therefore there is no evidence to support the allegation. Cllr Cotterill advised him to write to the Council's Risk Management Section to pursue a claim but it is highly likely that this will be refuted.

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

#### 16. **NETHERBROOK SCHOOL - MULTI-USE GAMES AREA**

**Background:** At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 11th September 2007, Councillor Cotterill requested that work on the Multi-Use Games Area at Netherbrook School be sped up, as the current 12 month timetable for the completion of the project was too slow given the need for the facility.

**Comments:** The programme for this work is on target for completion on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2008, which is swift as the go ahead to commence design work was only given at the end of August.

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