

CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 2ND OCTOBER, 2012

**AT 6:30PM
AT SALTWELLS EDUCATION
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
BOWLING GREEN ROAD
NETHERTON
DUDLEY**

If you (or anyone you know) is attending the meeting and requires assistance to access the venue and/or its facilities, could you please contact Democratic Services in advance and we will do our best to help you

**KAREN FARRINGTON
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER**

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**You can view information about Dudley MBC on
www.dudley.gov.uk**



IMPORTANT NOTICE

MEETINGS AT SALTWELLS EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, NETHERTON

Welcome to Saltwells Education Development
Centre

In the event of the alarm sounding, please leave the building by the nearest exit. There are Officers who will assist you in the event of this happening, please follow their instructions.

There is to be no smoking on the premises in line with national legislation. It is an offence to smoke in or on these premises.

Please turn off your mobile phones and mobile communication devices during the meeting.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Directorate of Corporate Resources

Law and Governance, Council House, Priory Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 1HF
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www.dudley.gov.uk



Our Ref:
CDAC/KLF

Your Ref:

Please Ask For:
Ms K Farrington

Telephone No:
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REVISED AGENDA

18th September, 2012

Dear Member

CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE **TUESDAY 2ND OCTOBER, 2012 AT 6.30 PM**

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Central Dudley Area Committee on Tuesday 2nd October, 2012 at 6.30 pm, at Saltwells Education Development Centre, Bowling Green Road, Netherton, Dudley, to consider the business set out in the agenda below.

The agenda and reports for this meeting can be viewed on the Council's website www.dudley.gov.uk (Follow the links to Council Decisions and Committee Information).

Yours sincerely

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest from Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

3. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12th June, 2012 (copy attached herewith).

4. YOUTH ISSUES

The Committee to be updated verbally on Youth Issues in the Area.

5. POLICE ISSUES

To receive any issues the Police/public wish to raise.

6. FIRE SERVICE ISSUES

To consider any issues the West Midlands Fire Service/public wish to raise.

7. PETITIONS

To report the receipt of any petitions received since the last meeting and to receive any petitions submitted to this meeting for referral to the Petitions Officer.

8. PUBLIC FORUM

To respond to questions from members of the public.

9. WARD ISSUES

Ward Members to report.

10. REVIEW OF AREA COMMITTEES

To consider a consultation document

11. RUSSELLS HALL TRAFFIC WORKING GROUP UPDATE

The Committee to be updated verbally on matters relating to the Russells Hall Traffic Working Group.

12. AREA COMMITTEE GRANTS (PAGES 1 – 7)

To consider the report of the Area Liaison Officer.

13. MATTERS RAISED AT MEETING HELD ON 12TH JUNE, 2012 RELATING TO THE DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT (PAGES 8 – 16)

To consider the report of the Director of the Urban Environment.

14. MATTERS RAISED AT MEETING HELD ON 12TH JUNE, 2012 OTHER THAN THOSE RELATING TO DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT (PAGES 17 – 20)

To consider the report of the Area Liaison Officer.

15. QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11.8 (IF ANY)

16. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

As a way of giving additional publicity to meetings of the Council's Scrutiny Committees it has been agreed that the dates of future meetings of those committees be included on the agendas of meetings of Area Committees set out below is a list of all future meetings: –

<u>Scrutiny Committee</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Children's Services	14 th November 2012 23 rd January 2013 21 st March 2013
Community Safety and Community Services	1 st November 2012 17 th January 2013 14 th March 2013
Environment	5 th November 2012 22 nd January 2013 18 th March 2013
Health and Adult Social Care	12 th November 2012 24 th January 2013 26 th February 2013 27 th March 2013

All the above meetings will start at 6pm and be held at the Council House, Dudley.

Also, the agendas for meetings of some Scrutiny Committees include a public participation item at which point members of the public can speak to raise an item relating to the activities of the particular Scrutiny Committee. Please see below as to how this is dealt with.

Information about Scrutiny Committees can be found on the Council's Committee Management Information System (CMIS), which can be accessed via <http://cmis.dudley.gov.uk/cmisis/>

Details about speaking at a scrutiny committee meeting or about Scrutiny Committees can also be obtained by speaking to Joe Jablonski on 01384-815243; e-mail josef.jablonski@dudley.gov.uk or the person whose details appear on the cover of this agenda.

17. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THIS COMMITTEE

29th January, 2013 - TBC

To: All Members of the Central Dudley Area Committee:

Castle & Priory ward: Councillors Mrs Aston, A Finch, K Finch

Netherton, Woodside & St Andrews ward: Councillors Duckworth, Ms Wood and Mr Zada

St Thomas's ward: Councillors Miss Arshad, Ali, Waltho

St James's ward: Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, Mrs Roberts

Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood ward: Councillors Cotterill, Miss J Cowell, Sparks

CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 12th June, 2012 at 6.30 p.m.
In the Council Chamber at the Council House, Priory Road, Dudley

PRESENT: -

Councillors A Ahmed, Ali, Arshad, Aston, Cotterill, Cowell, W Duckworth, A Finch, K Finch, Mrs Roberts, Sparks, Waltho, Wood and Zada

OFFICERS:

Assistant Director (Environmental Management) (as Lead Officer to the Committee), the Group Engineer, the Green Spaces Team Leader – Directorate of the Urban Environment; the Assistant Director of Policy Performance and Resources, Policy Analyst for Communities and Resources, both Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services; Area Team Leader for Central and Safe Provision – Directorate of Children's Services, the Senior Solicitor and Ms K Farrington – both Directorate of Corporate Resources

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Inspector Gary Malpass and Sergeant Steve Gordon, West Midlands Police – for Agenda Item No. 8

Station Commander Chris Wood, West Midlands Fire Service – for Agenda Item No. 9

7 Members of the public

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED

That Councillor K Finch be elected Chair of the Committee for the 2012/13 Municipal Year.

(Councillor K Finch thereupon took the Chair).

2. OPENING REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

The Chair welcomed Members and members of the public to the first Committee of the 2012/13 municipal year. He indicated that he was committed to engaging the public in issues affecting the Central Dudley area and invited the public to raise any issues of concern throughout the year either with him or the Vice-Chair.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence from the meeting was received on behalf of Councillor K Ahmed.

A further apology for absence was also received on behalf of Ms Little, who was appointed as Co-opted Member for 2012/13 later in the meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

5. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED

That Councillor Zada be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2012/13 Municipal Year.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31st January, 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed.

7. CO-OPTED MEMBERS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the co-option of persons to serve as co-opted members of the Committee for the 2012/13 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED

That the following persons be re-appointed as co-opted members of the Committee for the 2012/13 Municipal Year, representing the organisations indicated:

Mr G Lawley, Dudley Association of Governing Bodies
Ms V Little, Dudley Primary Care Trust.
Mrs J Oakes, Dudley Town Centre Forum
Mr K Rodney, Dudley Centre for Equality and Diversity

8. YOUTH SERVICE

The Area Team Leader for Central and Safe Provision gave an oral update on new projects being undertaken by the Youth Service for young people to participate in, details of which were included in handouts circulated at the meeting.

She referred, in particular, to the projects Dudley Central Youth Services had been involved in over the past few months. She indicated that during the February and Easter half terms, young people had taken part in various activities, such as trips to Water World and the Snow Dome and had participated in a WOW event and an art event. A successful outdoor residential activity had also taken place in March with young people from St Thomas's Youth Club and these young people were now working towards an ASDAN accreditation.

During the presentation, the Area Team Leader for Central and Safe Provision indicated that Russells Hall Youth Centre had been successful in gaining some external funding to redecorate and also confirmed that new equipment had been positioned in the main hall. She stated that new projects for the summer for young people to participate in included choosing art designs and colours, new equipment and to decide on a new layout for the Centre, a cooking project, Disc Jockey taster sessions and nail art. She referred to issues relating to the behavioural problems, which had been experienced at Russells Hall Youth Centre, however, she confirmed that the situation had now improved.

The Area Team Leader for Central and Safe Provision then referred to the successful official opening of the Meadow Road Gym and Beauty room. She indicated that the event had been well supported by local Councillors, local secondary school representatives, young people and parents. In relation to the successful opening of the Gym and Beauty room, young people were now looking at other areas within the Centre, which they would like to develop. She stated that other activities were currently being explored such as starting a Members' Committee at the Centre for young people to have the opportunity to be involved in different aspects of the Youth Centre.

In referring to the Detached Team, the Area Team Leader for Central and Safe Provision indicated that, over the Easter period, young people had participated in a peer education course. The course had been well attended with the course attendees receiving an Open College Network (OCN) level 2 certificate making them eligible to deliver peer education to other young people. She referred to the success of the condom distribution scheme and stated that the detached staff were working towards introducing such a scheme at the Russells Hall Youth Club. She also referred to the success of a cricket project and indicated that young people had mentioned that they would like to attend an international cricket match at Edgbaston. The detached team were also working with older young people at Woodside Youth Club to enable them to become senior members to support the volunteers who ran the youth club and were also working in partnership with the Play Rangers at Netherton Park with a view to offering new activities for young people to access.

Reference was then made to the Youth Team working in partnership with Holly Hall Academy and Castle High School and the Visual Arts Centre, to expand links with the local young people and key partners.

In concluding, the Area Team Leader for Central and Safe Provision indicated that the list of programmed activities for Whitsun and the summer holiday had now been completed and that copies would be available to Members on request.

A Member of the Committee indicated that on speaking to young people walking around the streets of Wrens Nest he had been advised that there was no provision for young people to access in that area. In responding, the Area Team Leader for Central and Safe Provision indicated that she would liaise with the Detached Team with a view to improving youth provision in the area for young people to access and participate in.

In responding to a question from a Member in relation to the derelict White Lion public house and the anti-social behaviour it was attracting, the Area Team Leader for Central and Safe Provision suggested that the Member speak to her following the meeting to discuss the issue further.

In responding to a question from a Member in relation to Russells Hall Youth Centre, the Area Team Leader for Central and Safe Provision indicated that the Centre was working with local Police Community Support Officers and would be contacting the local Sergeant following his return to work to discuss the issues relating to anti-social behaviour with a view to securing an improvement. With regard to the youth participation rate, she confirmed that between seven and twenty young people accessed the Centre on a regular basis, this owing greatly to the new equipment and activities now being offered.

RESOLVED

That the information, as circulated at the meeting and reported orally, be noted.

Inspector Gary Malpass of West Midlands Police reported on current Police issues in the area of the Committee, with particular reference to crime figures. He indicated that on the whole the number of offences committed compared to this time last year had reduced, however he confirmed that metal thefts had increased. He also referred to an increase in reported thefts to unlocked sheds and garages and urged people to ensure they guarded against this.

The Inspector referred to an increase in the number of reports of anti-social behaviour on the Russells Hall Estate, however he stated that the Sergeant for that area would be liaising with the Youth Service to look at ways to improve the area.

Sergeant Steve Gordon then reported on police issues affecting the Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood Ward. He updated Members on the crime figures for that Ward and stated that on the whole, crime had reduced compared to this time last year. He indicated that a series of robberies involving knife crime had been committed in the Quarry Bank area, however he confirmed that the two people that had been involved had been caught and apprehended.

A Member of the Committee referred to problems affecting the Castle and Priory Ward, particularly Lilic Road and queried what measures had been taken to tackle anti-social behaviour in that area. In responding, Inspector Malpass indicated that reports had shown a reduction in crime in that particular area and although the area would continue to be monitored, resources had been deployed in other 'hot spot' areas. He confirmed that a new team had been set up in the Dudley North area comprising six officers, who had been positioned in areas where crime had increased, particularly the Russells Hall area. Inspector Malpass also indicated that monthly tactical meetings were held to discuss and decide on the location of police officers.

In responding to a further question by the same Member of the Committee, Inspector Malpass undertook to investigate crime figures in the Castle and Priory area and forward them to the Member direct.

The Chair suggested that in view of the issues raised regarding the Castle and Priory Ward, Inspector Malpass consider either submitting a report to the next meeting of the Committee or arrange a meeting on site to discuss the current concerns. In responding, Inspector Malpass welcomed a meeting onsite to discuss the issues raised by Members in relation to the Castle and Priory Ward.

Sergeant Gordon then referred to anti-social behaviour of youths congregating on the steps in Marian Close leading into Robin Hood Road. He indicated that residents had suffered anti-social behaviour and criminal damage to their property for some time and had arranged for a petition to be formed to request the closure of the steps. He confirmed that a petition had been handed in containing thirty signatures from residents of Marian Close and surrounding areas. He also confirmed that there were other walkways that were currently used to get to the Merry Hill Centre.

Sergeant Gordon indicated that on 16th February, 2012 a site visit had taken place with David Jacobs of the Directorate of the Urban Environment and Inspector Hodgetts to discuss a solution to the problems. In concluding, Sergeant Gordon confirmed that he fully supported the residents in the request to close off the steps in Marian Close.

A Member of the Committee expressed his gratitude to the Police and residents for all the work that had been done and confirmed that he also fully supported the closure of the steps in Marian Close and hoped that officers would now pursue the issue. In responding, the Assistant Director (Environmental Management) confirmed that officers were aware of the request of the residents and assured the Committee that the closure of the steps would be investigated.

RESOLVED

- (1) That Inspector Malpass be thanked for his presentation and that the information reported be received and noted.
- (2) That Inspector Malpass be requested to investigate current crime figures for the Castle and Priory Ward and forward them to the Member who raised the issue direct.
- (3) That Inspector Malpass arrange for a meeting to take place on the Castle and Priory Ward with Ward Members to discuss issues affecting that area.

10.

FIRE SERVICE ISSUES

Station Commander Chris Wood of West Midlands Fire Service reported on fire issues in the Central Dudley area. He indicated that the number of reported arson fires in dwellings, non-domestic accidental fires and arson rubbish fires had reduced compared to this time last year, although numbers of reported accidental fires in dwellings had increased slightly. He indicated that false automatic fire alarm calls had been a problem, however, he confirmed that this issue had now been rectified. In referring to derelict buildings, the Station Commander indicated that the Fire Service had been proactive in securing buildings or arranging the demolition of derelict buildings once these had been identified, to reduce the risk of arson.

The Station Commander then referred to various activities and projects undertaken by the Fire Service in the last three months, namely, working with Schools to educate young people to identify health and safety fire risks, road safety and on child obesity. The Fire Service was also working with young people to encourage them to participate in courses with a view to increasing self confidence.

A Member of the Committee queried the detection rate of perpetrators of arson fires. In responding Inspector Malpass indicated that he would investigate the issue and respond in writing to the Member direct.

RESOLVED

- (1) That Station Commander Wood be thanked for his presentation and that the information reported be received and noted.
- (2) That Inspector Malpass investigate the issue in relation to detection rates and respond in writing to the Member direct.

11.

APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the appointment of Working Groups of the Committee for the 2012/13 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Working Groups below be appointed for the 2012/13 Municipal Year with their existing terms of reference and the composition and membership indicated:

Area Committee Grants Working Group – the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee and one member of each of the five wards, the full membership being Councillors K Finch (Chair), Councillor Zada (Vice-Chair and Ward Member for Netherton, Woodside and St Andrew's), A Ahmed (St James's Ward), M Aston (Castle and Priory Ward), Cotterill (Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood Ward) and Waltho (St Thomas's Ward).

Russells Hall Traffic Working Group – the Chairman of the Committee, Councillor K Finch, together with Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed and Roberts (St James's Ward) and Councillors Duckworth, Wood and Zada (Netherton, Woodside and St Andrew's Ward) and that the members of the Council for the Brockmoor and Pensnett Ward continue to be invited to attend and speak at meetings of the Working Group.

- (2) That any member appointed above who does not wish to serve in 2012/13 contact Democratic Services in the Directorate of Corporate Resources and that the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to approve the appointment of an alternative member.
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12. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on the appointment of representatives to serve on outside organisations for the 2012/13 municipal year.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the following persons be appointed to serve on the organisations for the period indicated:

Social Inclusion

- | | | |
|-----|---|--------|
| (a) | Castle and Priory Regeneration Group – Councillor Mrs Aston | Annual |
| (b) | Wrens Nest Community Centre – Councillor Mrs Aston | Annual |
| (c) | Withymoor Island Trust – Councillor Zada | Annual |
| (d) | St Francis Parish Centre – Councillor A Finch | Annual |

Community Associations

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|--------|
| (a) | Sledmere – Councillor Waltho | Annual |
| (b) | Woodside – Councillor Zada | Annual |
| (c) | Priory – Councillor Mrs Aston | Annual |
| (d) | Quarry Bank – Councillor Cotterill | Annual |
-

13. PETITIONS

A Petition was received from residents of Netherton and surroundings areas requesting that the public toilets in Netherton be re-opened and asking to be advised of the consultation procedures that had been followed in the decision to close them. It was noted that the petition would be 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.

14. PUBLIC FORUM

- (a) A member of the public submitted a question in relation to traffic problems and air pollution affecting Cinder Bank and surrounding areas. In responding the Assistant Director (Environmental Management) undertook to investigate the issues raised and provide a written response to the questioner.
- (b) The same member of the public drew attention to the large number of potholes on Halesowen Road and Baptist End Road. In responding, the Assistant Director (Environmental Management) undertook to investigate the matter and provide a written response to the questioner.
- (c) A member of the public submitted correspondence in relation to the United Footwear building (the former Co-operative Society Store) located at the top of Dudley Town Centre to which he alleged that no responses had been received and queried the Council policy on response times. In responding, the Assistant Director (Environmental Management) submitted his apologies on behalf of the officers for their lack of response to written correspondence and gave assurances that he would investigate the issue and provide a comprehensive response to the questioner.
- (d) In referring to the concerns raised at the Central Dudley Area Committee on 31st January, 2012 in relation to people spitting when crossing King Street from the Cousins store to the Churchill Precinct, a Member of the Committee requested that the Council look into introducing a by-law prohibiting spitting and introducing fixed penalties. In responding, the Assistant Director (Environmental Management) indicated that he would arrange for the matter to be investigated and provide a written response to the questioner.

WARD ISSUES

- (a) Councillor Arshad expressed gratitude at the progress made in relation to unauthorised parking outside St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and requested that this matter be monitored regularly.
- (b) Councillor Arshad drew attention to the traffic concerns on Blackacre Road and surrounding roads and requested that Council Officers keep Ward Members up-to-date on any progress.
- (c) Councillor Arshad referred to the number of potholes on Fir Street and requested that this matter be investigated.
- (d) Councillor Ali referred to the poor state of repair of the three abandoned public houses in St Thomas's Ward and requested that arrangements be made to contact the owners and request that these be cleaned up.
- (e) Councillor Ali expressed concern with the signal timings of the lighting system on Burnt Tree Island. Although he acknowledged that the equipment to change the timings of the lighting system had not yet been purchased, he requested that investigations be carried out with a view to alleviating the issue.
- (f) Councillor Ali drew attention to the fact that there was no safe crossing facility along the New Rowley Road.
- (g) Councillor Ali stated that traffic issues affecting Oakham Road reported previously had remained unchanged.
- (h) Councillor Cotterill referred to the nail cutting service provided for elderly and disabled people in Quarry Bank in consequence of the closure of the Health Centre in Sheffield Street. He indicated that the alternative provision in Brierley Hill was too far and too difficult for disabled, frail and elderly people to travel to get their nails cut. He requested that consideration be given to providing a nail cutting service for elderly and disabled residents of Quarry Bank through the peripatetic service provided to wheelchair users at Woodhouse Court.
- (i) In referring to a petition raised previously, Councillor Cotterill requested that the bollards in Victoria Road be removed.
- (j) Councillor Aston drew attention to the blocked drains on Priory Road and at the bottom end of the Broadway and queried the number of vehicles that were used to clean drains.

In responding, the Assistant Director (Environmental Management) confirmed that two vehicles were used on a full time basis and one was used as a standby.

- (k) Councillor A Finch drew attention to the health and safety risks on the Broadway, particularly in the area by Bishop Milner Catholic School.
- (l) Councillor Duckworth drew attention to the poor state of the path to the rear of Woodside Park and requested that consideration be given to replacing the cracked slabs as he stated that wheelchair users and people with pushchairs regularly use the path.
- (m) In referring to Cinder Bank Island and the Southern By-pass, Councillor Duckworth requested that consideration be given to installing traffic light systems.
- (n) Councillor Duckworth requested that consideration to be given to introduce a pedestrian phase to the traffic system at the junction of Northfield Road, St Peters Road, Withymoor Road and Cole Street.
- (o) Councillor Wood drew attention to the potholes on the Halesowen Road and surrounding roads and requested that this matter be investigated.
- (p) Councillor Wood drew attention to the slabs outside a residential property in Knighton Road and requested that this matter be investigated.
- (q) Councillor Roberts referred to concerns mature established trees were causing in St James's Ward and requested that an assessment be carried out.
- (r) Councillor Roberts referred to anti-social behaviour on the park at the back of the school in Milking Bank and requested that this matter be investigate.
- (s) Councillor Roberts expressed gratitude to officers involved in arranging for the erection of signage in consequence of the new Traffic Regulation Orders affecting the Russells Hall Estate, however, she indicated that vehicle owners were disregarding the signs and requested that enforcement be pursued.
- (t) Councillor A Ahmed referred to the chemicals currently being to eradicate overgrown weeds on the Milking Bank Estate and indicated that residents had raised health concerns. In responding, the Assistant Director (Environmental Management) indicated that a weed spraying programme was currently being undertaken in the area, however he assured the Member that only approved chemicals were being used.

- (u) Mr Rodney drew attention to the health and safety risks on Stone Street, particularly when juggernauts attempted to turn into the Street and requested consideration to be given to restricting the times during the day these types of vehicles could access the Street.
- (v) Mr Rodney drew attention to the dropping manhole cover on Castlegate Island and requested that this matter be investigated.
- (w) Mr Lawley referred to the health and safety risks on Oakham Road/Turners Hill raised previously at the Area Committee and reported that no action had yet been taken to stop vehicles parking on the corner.
- (x) Mr Lawley queried whether consideration could be given to instigating a Building Schools for the Future initiative from the Government and receive funding to refurbish schools in the area.

In responding, Councillor Sparks confirmed that funding for Building Schools for the Future was no longer available, however, he stated that Dudley Council were looking at options to obtain extra funding for schools.

- (y) Councillor Zada drew attention to the poor state of repair Hockley Lane was currently in and requested that consideration be given to resurfacing the whole Lane.
- (z) Councillor Zada drew attention to the heating system currently used in homes on the Woodside Estate and requested that consideration be given to installing up-to-date heating systems in the area.
- (aa) Councillor Zada drew attention to the speeding problems on Cinder Bank and requested that this matter be investigated.
- (ab) Councillor Zada drew attention to the overgrown piece of land adjacent to Nethercrest Nursing Home and requested that officers liaise with Nethercrest Nursing Home to clean up the area.

DESIGNATION OF PLAYING FIELDS IN COMMEMORATION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH SECOND FOR THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on options to designate Playing Fields/Open Spaces as Queen Elizabeth II playing fields in commemoration of the Queens Diamond Jubilee and to consider proposals for the Central Dudley Area to be submitted for approval by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture.

The report also sought consideration of options to acquire Football Association/Landfill tax funding of sites in the Central Dudley area and to determine which options to submit for approval by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture for referral to the relevant funding bodies.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

17

PROPOSED REVOCATION OF PARKWAY ROAD, DUDLEY, ONE-WAY ORDER – PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF RIGHT TURN INTO HIMLEY ROAD FROM PARKWAY ROAD, DUDLEY

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the revocation of a one-way Traffic Regulation Order in Parkway Road and the introduction of a prohibited right turn onto Himley Road from Parkway Road, as shown in Appendix A to the report submitted to the meeting.

The Group Engineer indicated that Parkway Road, Dudley had been made into a one-way street in 2012, following the receipt of a petition from residents. However, since the introduction of the one-way street, a second petition requesting its removal had been received from members of the public.

Following receipt of the petition, the Group Engineer confirmed that new proposals for the removal of the one-way street had been advertised on 16th November, 2012. He also confirmed that a safety audit was conducted at Parkway Road's junction with Himley Road, which indicated that if Parkway Road returned to being a two-way street, the visibility for traffic turning right out of Parkway Road into Himley Road would be poor.

Members of the Committee expressed gratitude to the officers involved in investigating the issue and it was

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet Member for Transportation and Community Safety be recommended to approve the revocation of a one-way Traffic Regulation Order in Parkway Road and the introduction of a prohibited right turn onto Himley Road from Parkway Road.

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the proposed programmes of work for Local Safety Schemes, Safer Routes to School and Pedestrian Crossings within the Central Dudley area for the 2012/13 financial year.

The Group Engineer reported that a number of requests had been received and that the schemes, which had ranked most highly in the Central Dudley area were outlined in the Appendix to the report submitted to the meeting.

A Member of the Committee referred to the problems with the high volume of traffic using Oakham Road and indicated that measures needed to put in place to maximise the use of surrounding roads. It was suggested that improved signage be erected and safe crossing schemes be introduced.

In referring to the proposal to consider a mini roundabout at Tansley Hill Avenue, it was suggested that further investigations be carried out to check feasibility.

In relation to the proposal outlined in Appendix A for the Dudley Southern Bypass, Members acknowledged safety issues as being of paramount importance and requested that consideration be given to investigate remedy further as it was feared that moving poles would not alleviate the problem.

A Member then referred to the new estate on the Priory Road and indicated that traffic issues were a concern for old and new residents and requested that consideration be given to introducing a slip road for residents to use to access the new estate.

A Member referred to the issues on Cole Street previously raised with the Group Engineer and queried why proposals had not been included in the Local Safety Scheme for this year. In responding, the Group Engineer indicated that he would speak to the Member following the meeting.

RESOLVED

That, the proposed 2012/13 programme of work for Local Safety Schemes, Safer Routes to School and Pedestrian Crossings initiatives outlined in the Appendix of the report submitted to the meeting, be supported and referred to the Cabinet Member for Transportation and Community Safety for approval.

CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on proposals for the allocation of expenditure from the delegated Area Committee Grants budget for the 2012/13 municipal year.

The Policy Analyst for Communities and Resources referred briefly to the decision approved by Full Council on 5th March, 2012 that Area Committee allocations were to be met from revenue resources and no longer restricted to funding capital projects alone. He stated that new criteria had been drawn up to reflect the decision and that any Member who requested advice on the new guidelines, could either speak to him following the meeting or contact him at a later date. The new criteria was circulated to Members of the Committee for perusal.

The Policy Analyst for Communities and Resources informed the Committee that since the last Area Committee two applications had been approved under the urgency provisions.

Mr Rodney welcomed the change regarding revenue expenditure and indicated that this would enable groups to bid for funding that had been previously excluded because their activities were primarily of a revenue nature. However, he stated that Community Groups were not aware of the funding available to them and suggested arranging a meeting with the Policy Analyst for Communities and Resources to discuss options on promoting the funding available to Community Groups.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the process for dealing with Area Committee grants for 2012/13, as set out in the report submitted to the meeting, be noted.
- (2) That the action taken by the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, in approving the application in relation to the Enlight Projects in the sum of £2,500, to contribute towards equipment to support the work of the Group at Saltwells Youth Club, on the grounds of urgency, be noted.
- (3) That the action taken by the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, in approving the application in relation to St James's Road and Priory Close Neighbourhood Watch in the sum of £159.95, for the purchase of a printer, on the grounds of urgency, be noted.
- (4) That the Area Liaison Officer be authorised to administer the Area Committee grants process in accordance with any decisions made by the Committee.

20. MATTERS RAISED AT THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 31ST JANUARY, 2012 RELATING TO THE DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted updating the Committee on issues raised at the meeting of the Central Dudley Area Committee held on 31st January, 2012, with regard to services provided by the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

21. MATTERS RAISED AT THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 31ST JANUARY, 2012 OTHER THAN THOSE RELATING TO THE DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on progress on issues raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 31st January, 2012, other than those relating to the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

22. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

The dates of meetings of Scrutiny Committees for the remainder of the current municipal year were noted.

23. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THIS COMMITTEE

The dates of meetings of the Committee arranged for 2012/13 were noted, together with the venues arranged to date.

The meeting ended at 8.10pm

CHAIR

Consultation on the Review of Area Committees

Report of Scrutiny Chairs

Purpose

1. To outline proposals for a review of Area Committees. These proposals are subject to a consultation period from 1st October to 9th November 2012. Recommendations will then be submitted to the Cabinet and Council in November, 2012.

Background

2. Scrutiny Committee Chairs met on 18th July and 19th September 2012 to discuss the existing Area Committee arrangements and options for change. They were concerned to address three key questions:-
 - What should area/neighbourhood meetings achieve?
 - How should they operate?
 - How do we move forward to change Area Committees?

This report draws from Members' discussion on these questions and sets out a proposal for a preferred option.

3. The need to change Area Committee arrangements

There is a general consensus that while Area Committees were useful following their establishment in 2000, subsequently they have become less relevant and appropriate. Some of the concerns around Area Committees are set out below:-

- They are too bureaucratic and formal, which is off-putting for local people to become interested and involved in;
- There is insufficient time devoted to local issues, and for the public to have an opportunity to comment on, or raise items;
- Meetings are an unsatisfactory mix of community engagement and council decision making;
- As there are only three meetings a year, this makes the Area Committees insufficiently responsive to local issues. There needs to be more regular opportunities for local people to discuss issues and engage with Elected Members;
- The Area Committee boundaries are in general, too large, and smaller neighbourhood groupings would be preferable;

- They involve too much officer resource to attend each meeting;
- There is inconsistency in the links with other local events such as the PACT meetings, the Citizen First Panels etc.

4. **Purpose and Format**

It is proposed that in future, Community Forums should be centred around the democratic representational role of local ward Councillors, therefore all Directorates should ensure that ward Councillors are briefed about key issues affecting their wards. The principal focus of Community Forums should be the opportunity for local people to engage with Councillors to discuss local issues.

5. There are clear links to the Government's Localism agenda and the principles of the Localism Act 2011 in terms of effective community engagement. Therefore, while members would take a lead role in a meeting, there should be a clear focus on community engagement and members should encourage community participation.
6. To assist in developing that role, the Council will consider advice from Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (DCVS), drawing on their experience of managing community events and make use of a series of development sessions for Members before the launch of the new Community Forums.
7. In addition, information is available about recent work nationally and locally which considers the democratic role of elected members in the context of the Localism Act. This advice could be used in future Member development sessions.

8. **Geography**

The geographic coverage of the Community Forums ideally should be less than those of the Area Committees.

9. Various options have been considered, all based on existing ward geography and all returning a greater number of forum areas focussing on smaller, more local areas. The options put forward were based on 8, 9, 10 and 12 forum areas. Inevitably, some groupings are more naturally aligned than others and are easier to describe. However, any change to one boundary cannot fail to have knock-on consequences across the rest of the Borough.
10. The preferred option of Scrutiny Chairs is the 9 forum model in recognition of the need to keep to a manageable minimum the support resource required. This is shown as Appendix 1.

11. This proposal creates areas that vary between 25,044 and 47,899 in terms of whole population (2010 estimates). See Appendix 2 for details. In particular, the Scrutiny Chairs recognised that the largest Forum would be in Halesowen and noted that this represented the current Halesowen Area Committee with the exception of the Cradley and Wollescote ward. In putting forward this preferred option, Scrutiny Chairs acknowledged that consultation would be necessary with all ward Councillors and the public before a final decision is taken by the Council.
12. It is important to note that flexibility can be retained so that, for example, members and the public should be able to attend adjoining forums on matters that transcend boundaries, if they wish.
13. **Management and Resourcing**
Firstly, the new structure is to be funded from existing resources.
14. Meetings will be less bureaucratic and move away from stereotype “Council Committee” format:-
 - Forums to meet in locally accessible venues (5 meetings per year);
 - Focus on public forum/ward issues and area funding;
 - Standard times of all meetings to be 6.30pm – 8.30pm (making it easier to publicise across the Borough);
 - Removal of microphone/sound system;
 - No special meetings to be called in view of increased frequency;
 - Rooms to be set out informally;
 - Officer attendance to be only one Senior Officer and a Democratic Services Officer to take a note of issues requiring action/response (bullet point informal minutes);
 - No written committee reports;
 - No separate working groups/pre-meetings (except for discussing funding applications if necessary). However, local ward meetings can take place on specific issues should ward councillors wish to arrange these.
15. However, it is important to ensure that there is an audit trail of the business of meetings and what happens to issues raised at them, otherwise there is scope for community issues to be lost with no apparent action outcome. For example, an issue might have a number of “destinations” depending on its nature, including:-
 - Straightforward service response from the appropriate Directorate;
 - Report to a Scrutiny Committee; a Regulatory Committee; a Cabinet Member or the Cabinet and Full Council;
 - Referred to local partners such as police, fire, health;
 - Bullet point Forum minutes to be reported in White Book to full Council.

16. Communication and Media

Community Forums will be publicised through all available channels such as Council website, Twitter, Facebook, media releases. Other publicity to be more targeted depending on local issues identified by ward Councillors rather than a 'blanket' approach.

17. Dates to be programmed in the Council Calendar with all Community Forums meeting in the same week (i.e. from Monday – Thursday), but ensuring that neighbouring Forums are not on the same night. This makes it easier to publicise meetings during identified 'democracy weeks' and councillors to attend neighbouring Forums as necessary.

18. Agendas to be focussed on local issues, with input from partners when necessary to avoid duplication with other meetings.

19. Venue

The proposal is to use existing community centres or venues provided by local groups, although these may need to be augmented by other premises where appropriate. However, this is a matter that can be left to local discretion.

20. The Way Forward

The Scrutiny Chairs have considered how to take this forward as follows:-

- Approve a process of consultation with Members of the Council, partner organisations and the general public during October/early November 2012 (based on the preferred option);
 - Special meeting of the Cabinet to be held 13th November 2012 with a view to making recommendations to full Council on 26th November 2012.
21. A development programme for both members and supporting officers to be arranged between December 2012 and February 2013.
22. New Forums to be launched in February 2013 (the Area Committees previously programmed in 2013 will no longer take place).
23. Build in a process of ongoing review to ensure the new arrangements remain flexible. Community Forum Chairs, Vice Chairs and Lead Officers to meet regularly (i.e. after each cycle initially) with a full review after 12 months.
24. The Scrutiny Committee Chairs, at their meeting on 19th September 2012, recommended that the proposals in this report be accepted as the preferred option for consultation.

Finance

25. Costs will be met within existing budgetary allocations.
26. Area Grant allocations will remain as £10,000 per ward. Funding to be allocated by the Director of Corporate Resources on the recommendation of each Community Forum.
27. Members' allowances payments to be retained for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the new Community Forums but these will be contained within the existing budget allocation (pending a review of the Members Allowances Scheme in 2013).

Law

28. Area Committees are currently established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.

Equality Impact

29. The report takes into account the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

Recommendations

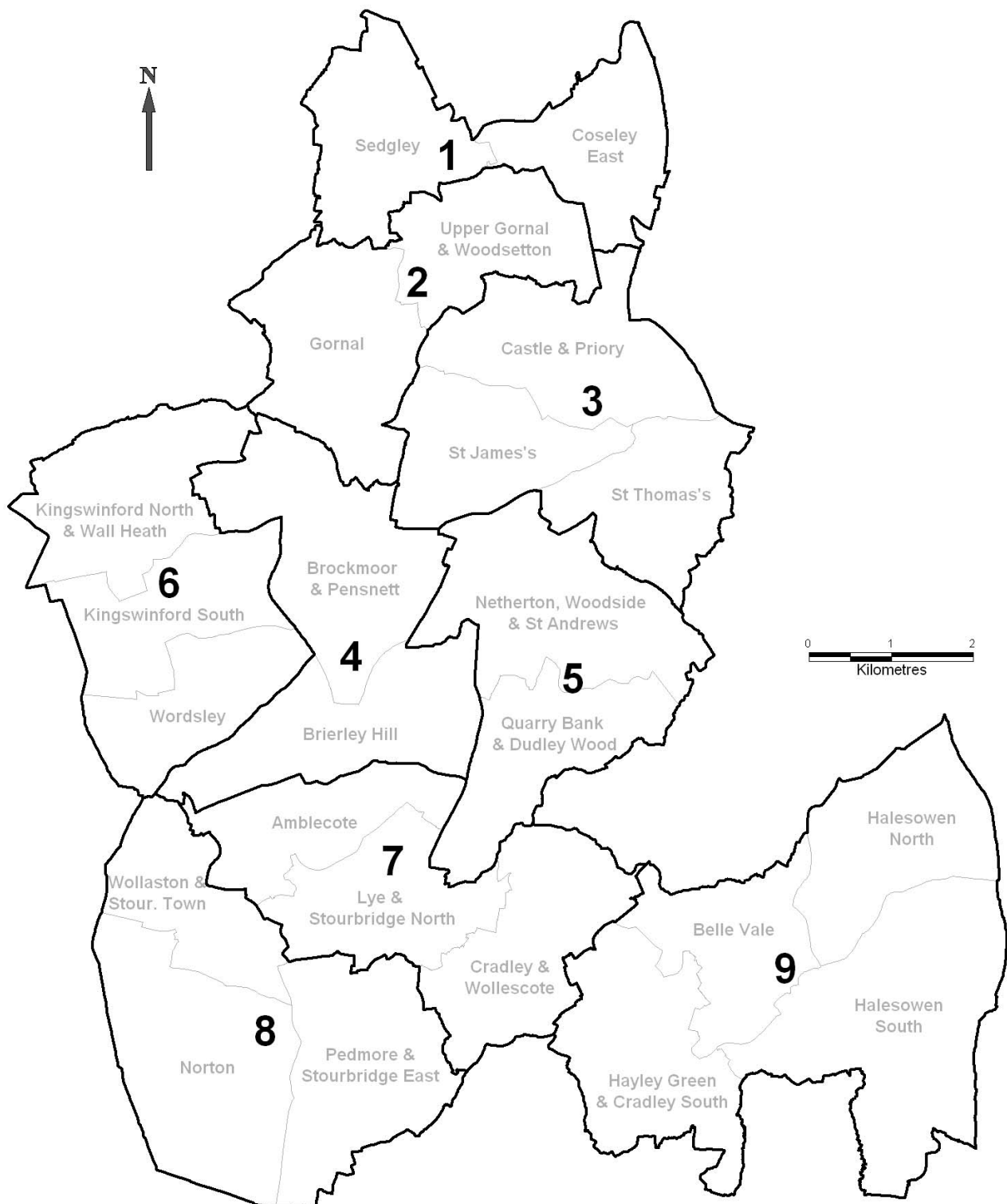
30. That comments on developing the proposals in this report be submitted to the Director of Corporate Resources by the deadline of 9th November, 2012.
31. That comments and views received during the consultation period be collated and considered by the Cabinet and Council during November, 2012.

Please submit comments to:

Philip Tart
Director of Corporate Resources
The Council House,
Priory Road,
Dudley
West Midlands DY1 1HF

Telephone: 01384 815300
Email: philip.tart@dudley.gov.uk

9 Forum Model In Relation To Electoral Ward Boundaries



Source: Corporate Policy & Research, Dudley M.B.C.
 Produced by: NL, 20/09/2012, Corporate Policy & Research Team, Dudley M.B.C.
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APPENDIX 2 : Indicative Population Figures For Community Areas: 9 Forum Model

Area No.	No. of Wards	Electoral Wards Covered	Population	Variance From Average Population
1	2	Coseley East / Sedgley	25,044	- 9,107
2	2	Gornal / Upper Gornal and Woodsetton	26,133	- 8,018
3	3	Castle and Priory / St. James's / St. Thomas's	41,848	+ 7,697
4	2	Brierley Hill / Brockmoor and Pensnett	26,483	- 7,668
5	2	Netherton, Woodside and St. Andrews / Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	27,462	- 6,689
6	3	Kingswinford North and Wall Heath / Kingswinford South / Wordsley	37,597	+ 3,446
7	3	Amblecote / Lye and Stourbridge North / Cradley and Wollescote	38,568	+ 4,417
8	3	Norton / Pedmore and Stourbridge East / Wollaston and Stourbridge Town	36,328	+ 2,177
9	4	Belle Vale / Halesowen North / Halesowen South / Hayley Green and Cradley South	47,899	+ 13,748
		<i>Average Population</i>	<i>34,151</i>	

Source: 2010 Mid-Year Population Estimates, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Notes:

1. The population figures are based on aggregations of Electoral Wards.
2. 2010 is the latest year for which Mid-Year Population Estimates are available. The scope of these Mid-Year estimates is limited to population figures by age and sex; other demographic and socio-economic data at the ward level is available but must be sourced from the 2001 Census.
3. Data from the 2011 Census at the Ward level is due to be published in the second phase of 2011 Census outputs scheduled for November 2012 - February 2013.
This will enable the data presented here to be updated to give a more accurate picture of the population.
4. The summed variance from average population may not equal the average population due to rounding.

Central Dudley Area Committee - 2nd October 2012

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Area Committee Grants

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the recommendations of the Capital Allocations Working Group with regard to allocations to organisations from the committee's delegated capital budget for this part of the 2011/12 financial year.

Background

2. The Central Dudley Area Committee Capital Allocations Working Group considered new applications to be heard at the October 2012 Area Committee at its meeting on the 3rd of September 2012.
3. Members representing Castle & Priory, Quarry Bank & Dudley Wood, St James's & St Thomas's Wards were present. The meeting was chaired by Cllr. K Finch - Chair of Central Dudley Area Committee.
4. The recommendations of the Working Group to Area Committee are detailed in Appendix 1.

Finance

5. The current balances for each of the 5 Wards are as follows :

Castle and Priory	£ 11,027.34*
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*Includes the sum of £3,311.98 approved under delegated authority subject to further information being provided for the file

Netherton Woodside and St Andrews	£12,234.28
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Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	£29,980.17
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St James's	£25,540.44
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St Thomas's	£15,902.50
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Total Available to be distributed	£94,490.05
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6. If the recommendations of the Working Group are agreed by Area Committee this would result a new commitments of £13,115.00 broken down as follows :

Castle and Priory	£ 0.00
Netherton Woodside and St Andrews	£ 740.00
Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	£ 6,000.00
St James's	£ 2,680.00
St Thomas's	£ 3,695.00
Total of New Commitments	£13,115.00

7. Depending on the decision of the Committee the balances outlined in section 5 for each ward will be reduced to the following for the remainder of the 2012/13 Civic Year

Castle and Priory	£14,034.28*
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This includes the sum of £1,800 which was awarded in 2010 to Castle High School which has not been claimed. The working group recommend that this offer be withdrawn.

Netherton Woodside and St Andrews	£ 11,494.28
Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood	£ 23,980.17
St James's	£ 22,860.44
St Thomas's	£ 12,207.50
Total Remaining	£ 84,576.67

Law

8. Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 enables the Council to do anything that it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the social, environmental, or economic well being of its area.
9. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to or incidental to, the discharge of its statutory functions.

Equality Impact

10. The awarding of capital grants to community and voluntary organisations, some of which represent minority groups, is specifically intended to assist in improving the well being, directly or indirectly, of all minority groups.

11. The awarding of capital grants also has the specific purpose of creating general benefits for the wider community and therefore fully meets the policy on Equality and Diversity of the Council
12. Many of the groups or communities helped by these capital grants will include beneficial help to children and young people. However, there has been no direct consultation with children and young people in developing these proposals

Recommendations

13 It is recommended that: -

- The Area Committee considers the recommendations of the Capital Allocations Working Group given in Appendix 1 and approves them for implementation.
- Area Committee notes grant offers made since the last Area Committee meeting in October under delegated authority as also detailed in appendix 1
- The Area Liaison Officer is authorised to carry out the recommended actions within the agreed control procedures.



Andrea Pope-Smith

**Director, Adult, Community and Housing Services Directorate &
Area Liaison Officer for Central Dudley Area Committee**

Contact Officer: Justin Haywood
Policy Analyst: Communities and Resources
Telephone: (01384) 815875
Email: justin.haywood@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

The application forms on which this report is based were made available to the Area Committee Grants Working Group, but are confidential documents under the terms of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Appendix 1

Central Dudley Area Committee - 2nd October 2012

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Area Committee Grants – Work Group Recommendations

Summary of New Applications By Ward

Castle & Priory

1. None at this meeting

Netherton Woodside & St Andrews Ward

2. **Age Concern Dudley (t/as Age UK Dudley)**

The Junction, 1 Cradley Road, Netherton, Dudley, DY2 9RA

Grant Value Requested - £740.00

Grant Value Recommended - £740.00

Purpose – Contribution towards replacement of IT equipment at the organisations Netherton Head office to support the administration of the Age UK service within the Borough.

A similar contribution is being requested from each of the other 4 area committees given the cross borough work of the applicant.

Quarry Bank & Dudley Wood Ward

3. **Friends of Stevens Park, Quarry Bank**

Park Walk, Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill

Grant Value Requested - £5,000.00

Grant Value Recommended - £5,000.00

Purpose – To support the installation of park benches to provide additional seating for users of the park.

The full projects costs are £6,600 of which the balance has been secured from Section 106 monies.

4. Friends of Quarry Bank Community Facilities

Maughan Street, Quarry Bank

Grant Value Requested - £1,000.00

Grant Value Recommended - £1,000.00

Purpose – Contribution towards the cost of putting up and taking down festive lighting on Quarry Bank high street for the festive period 2012/13.

St James's Ward

5. Centre for Equality and Diversity

16a Stone Street, Dudley

Grant Value Requested - £2,680.00

Grant Value Recommended - £2,680.00

Purpose – Contribution to support a project highlighting the experiences of migrants within the central area of Dudley including production of a documentary DVD, regular newsletter and migrant information event.

St Thomas's Ward

6. Friends and Residents of Buffery Park

Adshead Road, Dudley, West Midlands

Grant Value Requested - £3,695.00

Grant Value Recommended - £3,695.00

Purpose – Contribution towards the cost of installing security shutters and replacement windows within the Paradise Centre.

Total project costs are £7,390.00 of which the balance is to be found by the applicant.

Recommendations for Capital Allocations Offers To Be Closed Down and/or Withdrawn

Offers To Be Closed Down and/or Withdrawn By Ward

Castle & Priory Ward

7. Castle High School Out of Hours Gardening Club

St. James's Road

Grant Offer Amount - £1,800.00

Date of Offer – 15th September 2010

Despite several attempts at chasing the applicant no progress can be reported since the offer was made in September 2010.

The recommendation of the working group is to withdraw the offer and put the money back in to the pot for other good causes within the Castle and Priory Ward and that if the applicant wishes to continue with the project then a new application should be submitted and considered by members.

Capital Allocations Awards Made Under Delegated Authority Since June Area Committee Meeting – For Information Only

Offers Made By Ward

Castle & Priory Ward

8. North Priory Community Association

Priory Road, Dudley

Grant Value Requested - £5,000.00

Grant Value Approved - £5,000.00

Purpose – Contribution towards the costs of a part time project manager to help develop a business case and funding applications for a new community centre for the North Priory area.

9. Lunch on the Run - St. Francis Parish Centre and Church Community Café

St. Francis Parish Centre and Church Community Café

Grant Value Requested - £5,000.00

Grant Value Approved - £5,000.00

Purpose – Contribution towards the cost of rent at St. Francis Parish Centre and Church for the Community Café.

10. Wrens Nest Community Centre

Summer Road, Wrens Nest Estate, Dudley

Grant Value Requested - £3,311.98

Grant Value Approved - £3,311.98*

*This grant was approved subject to the applicant providing certain further information which we are currently working with the applicant to provide.

Purpose – Contribution towards the cost kitchen equipment to support the work of the community kitchen at the Wrens Nest Community Centre

St James's Ward

11. Revival Fires

Wolverhampton Street, Dudley

Grant Value Requested - £5,000

Grant Value Approved - £1,000

Purpose - contribution towards the applicants Family Transformation Centre refurbishment project.

Central Dudley Area Committee - 2nd October 2012

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Urban Environment - Matters raised at the Central Dudley Area Committee - 12th June 2012

Purpose Of Report

1. To update Committee on a number of issues raised at the 12th June 2012 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. 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.

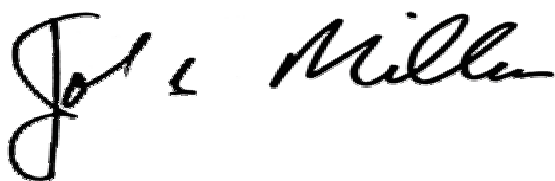
9. Guardrails may be provided under Section 66 of the Highways Act 1990.
10. Pedestrian crossing facilities are provided under powers contained in Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to Regulations made by the Secretary of State.
11. Traffic Regulation Orders are made under Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. 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

17. The proposals take into account the Council's policy on Equality and Diversity. The Directorate of the Urban Environment provides a diverse range of services that affect all sections of the community.

Recommendation

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



.....
John B Millar
Director of the Urban Environment

Contact Officer: Matt Williams
Telephone: 01384 814510
Email: Matt.Williams@Dudley.gov.uk

Background documents used in the preparation of this report:-

1. Action Notes from 12th June 2012 Committee.

Appendix 1

DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT - MATTERS RAISED AT THE CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON 12th JUNE 2012

1. PETITION - REQUEST FOR THE RE-OPENING OF NETHERTON TOILETS

Background: A petition was received from residents of Netherton and surrounding areas requesting that the public toilets in Netherton be re-opened and asking to be advised of the consultation procedures that had been followed in the decision to close them.

Comments: A letter has been sent to the first named petitioner giving details of the background and process associated with making the difficult decision to close public conveniences and achieve required Council savings. Many of the conveniences closed were in relatively poor condition, in need of repair and prone to regular acts of vandalism and levels of graffiti, increasing costs to maintain in reasonable order.

Whilst there is no provision within the current budget to replace or reopen public conveniences in locations across the Borough where closures have taken place, it has been decided that the provision of public conveniences in the Borough should be reviewed in addition to work taking place to promote new and/or revised provision as part of regeneration initiatives and new developments across the Borough.

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

2. CINDER BANK TRAFFIC AND AIR POLLUTION

Background: A member of the public submitted a question in relation to traffic problems and air pollution affecting Cinder Bank and surrounding areas.

Comments: A letter was sent to the questioner on the 8th August 2012 stating that the potholes will be investigated and appropriate action taken by Highways Maintenance. It was noted that traffic flows in Cinder Bank are regularly monitored and the questioner's observation concerning possible traffic pollution will be borne in mind as long-term highway and traffic proposals for Cinder Bank are reviewed.

DUE officers confirm that it is necessary to have collated 12 months data before air quality can be ascertained at the location and results can be compared to the National Air Quality Objectives. However, officers confirm that to date the measured nitrogen dioxide concentrations in Cinder Bank are projected to be below the National Objective should monitoring results continue to be received as expected.

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

3. HALESOWEN ROAD AND BAPTIST END ROAD - POTHOLES

Background: A member of the public drew attention to the large number of potholes on Halesowen Road and Baptist End Road.

Comments: Highway inspectors will visit the Halesowen Road area to ascertain the extent of carriageway damage and issue instructions to undertake appropriate remedial work.

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

4. UNITED FOOTWEAR BUILDING - DUDLEY TOWN CENTRE

Background: A member of the public submitted correspondence relating to the United Footwear building (the former Co-operative Society Store) at the top of Dudley Town Centre and alleged that no responses had been received and queried the Council policy on response times.

Comments: A letter was sent to the questioner dated, 5th July 2012 to the effect that grant funding for this work is now progressing again and it was anticipated that work could commence on site later on this year. It has since been confirmed that the deadline has been extended for submission of tenders to 21st September. It will then take three or four weeks for the tenders to be analysed and a grant application to be made, assessed and offered, before a contract can be awarded and work can start on site.

With regard to concerns over the scaffolding, that is the subject of a Highway Permit and those involved will be contacted to ensure that there is no danger to the public.

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

5. FIR STREET - POTHOLES

Background: Cllr Arshad referred to the number of potholes on Fir Street and requested that they be investigated and repaired.

Comments: Highway inspectors will visit Fir Street to ascertain the extent of carriageway damage and issue instructions to undertake appropriate remedial work.

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

6. ABANDONED PUBLIC HOUSES - ST THOMAS' WARD

Background: Cllr Ali referred to the poor state of repair of the three abandoned public houses in St Thomas's Ward and requested that arrangements be made to contact the owners and request that these be cleaned up.

Comments: An email was sent to Cllr Ali on the 11th July in relation to the Hill Tavern, Watsons Green Road and Freebodies Inn, St John's Road. They are both currently

secured with no refuse or sufficient dilapidation to require the owners to act. Both properties recently went up for sale by auction but unfortunately neither sold. The agents for both buildings are the same company and they have assured us that weekly checks will be made of both properties until they are sold so that any security issues which may arise can be dealt with. At the current time, there is no further action that we would be able to take with these properties.

The White Lion in St Peter's Road recently sold to new owners who are not yet registered with the land registry so we are currently unable to identify the owner, although further information has come to light in the last few days which may lead officers to the owner. The main issue on site is fly tipping. In the last week, offenders have been apprehended for the recent fly tipping on site and enforcement action has been started against these persons. It is hoped that we will be in a position to serve legal notices for the removal of refuse from the site very shortly. The building is reasonably secure in that all ground floor doors and windows are now boarded with the exception of one small window. Officers will continue to pursue this case until there is a satisfactory outcome.

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

7. BURNT TREE ISLAND - SIGNAL TIMINGS

Background: Cllr Ali expressed concern with the signal timings of the lighting system on Burnt Tree Island. Although he acknowledged that the equipment to change the timings of the lighting system had not yet been purchased, he requested that investigations be carried out to alleviate the issue.

Comments: All necessary equipment has been purchased, DUE engineers are awaiting BT to reinstate faulty ducting that will enable the BT line to link with the signal controller and consequently Urban Traffic Control.

A recent study has revealed that the current method operation still significantly outperforms the previous roundabout in terms of vehicular delay.

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

8. NEW ROWLEY ROAD

Background: Cllr Ali drew attention to the fact that there was no safe crossing facility along the New Rowley Road.

Comments: Investigations will be conducted during 2013-14 along the length of the most urban sections of New Rowley Road, with a view to assessing the possible introduction of a pedestrian crossing facility as part of a future year's annual Pedestrian Crossing Programme.

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

9. OAKHAM ROAD - TRAFFIC ISSUES

Background: Cllr Ali stated that previously reported traffic issues affecting Oakham Road have remained unchanged.

Comments: Proposals for a Local Safety Scheme have been submitted to Cllr Ali. A site meeting will take place with Cllr Ali in the near future.

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

10. VICTORIA ROAD - BOLLARDS

Background: In referring to a petition raised previously, Cllr Cotterill requested that the bollards in Victoria Road be removed.

Comments: Consideration will be given in a future year to the possible removal of large landscaped 'build outs' in the carriageway in Victoria Road, Quarry Bank.

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

11. WOODSIDE PARK - REAR PATH

Background: Cllr Duckworth drew attention to the poor state of the path to the rear of Woodside Park and requested that consideration be given to replacing the cracked slabs as he noted that wheelchair users and people with pushchairs regularly use the path.

Comments: Highways are costing up the repair using a new tarmac surface. Possible sources of funding for this work will be sought.

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

12. CINDER BANK ISLAND - DUDLEY SOUTHERN BYPASS - REQUEST FOR TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Background: In referring to Cinder Bank Island and the Southern By-pass, Cllr Duckworth requested that consideration be given to installing a traffic light system.

Comments: It is anticipated that this matter could be considered in a future year as part of major transportation amendments to the classified highway network.

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

13. NORTHFIELD ROAD/ST PETER'S ROAD/WITHYMOOR ROAD/COLE STREET - REQUEST FOR PEDESTRIAN PHASE

Background: Cllr Duckworth requested that consideration be given to introducing a pedestrian phase to the traffic system at the junction of Northfield Road, St Peter's Road, Withymoor Road and Cole Street.

Comments: The subject of this request is currently under investigation, in comparison will all other requests for this type of service.

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

14. HALESOWEN ROAD - POTHLES

Background: Cllr Wood drew attention to the potholes on Halesowen Road and surrounding roads and requested investigation/repair.

Comments: Highway inspectors will visit the Halesowen Road area and ascertain the extent of carriageway damage and issue instructions to undertake appropriate remedial work.

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

15. ST JAMES'S WARD - MATURE TREES

Background: Cllr Roberts referred to concerns that the mature established trees were causing in St James's Ward and requested that an assessment be carried out.

Comments: Green Care Officers have contacted Cllr Roberts to establish areas of particular concern following which epicormic growth has now been removed from the Lime trees in Himley Road

Five out of twelve trees located on the grassed area in the centre of The Oval, required work and have been lifted, reduced or cut away as required.

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

16. RUSSELLS HALL ESTATE TROs - REQUEST FOR ENFORCEMENT

Background: Cllr Roberts expressed gratitude to officers involved in arranging the erection of signage in consequence of the new TROs affecting the Russells Hall Estate, however, she indicated that vehicle owners are disregarding the signs and requested that enforcement be pursued.

Comments: The Council will work closely with Police partners in an attempt to improve local enforcement.

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

17. STONE STREET - REQUEST FOR RESTRICTED ACCESS FOR HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES

Background: Mr Rodney drew attention to the health and safety risks on Stone Street, particularly when juggernauts attempt to turn into the Street and requested consideration be given to restricting the times during the day that these types of vehicles can access the Street.

Comments: A 'lorry ban' cannot be considered for a street such as Stone Street, where lorries are visiting the area throughout the day and evening.

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

18. CASTLEGATE ISLAND - DROPPING MANHOLE

Background: Mr Rodney drew attention to the dropping manhole cover on Castlegate Island and requested that this matter be investigated.

Comments: The exact location of this manhole remains unclear. Officers will liaise with Mr Rodney for additional information.

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

19. OAKHAM ROAD/TURNERS HILL - UNSAFE PARKING

Background: Mr Lawley referred to the health and safety risks on Oakham Road/Turners Hill raised previously at the Area Committee and reported that no action had yet been taken to stop vehicles parking on the corner.

Comments: We will be completing work at this junction in the near future to widen the footway and install a higher kerb face, which should improve the situation (i.e. vehicles will not bump up the higher kerb face and the footway will allow more room for pedestrians). Officers have visited the site on numerous occasions and have witnessed no particular parking problems at the times of their visits. The situation will be monitored following the works and further action taken if necessary.

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

20. HOCKLEY LANE - REQUEST FOR RESURFACING

Background: Cllr Zada drew attention to the poor state of repair Hockley Lane is currently in and requested that consideration be given to resurfacing the whole Lane.

Comments: Highway Officers have inspected the area and substantial remedial works have consequently been undertaken.

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

21. CINDER BANK - SPEEDING PROBLEMS

Background: Cllr Zada drew attention to the speeding problems on Cinder Bank and requested that this matter be investigated.

Comments: This speeding matter will be referred to the Council's Police partners. A number of Local Safety Schemes have been introduced in Cinder Bank in recent years. Investigations regarding further possible future Local Safety Schemes in Cinder Bank will commence during 2013-14.

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

22. NETHERCREST NURSING HOME - ADJACENT OVERGROWN LAND

Background: Cllr Zada drew attention to the overgrown piece of land adjacent to Nethercrest Nursing Home and requested that officers liaise with Nethercrest Nursing Home to clean up the area.

Comments: Council officers are considering a number of options that may be available, in an attempt to improve the local environment, including enforcement action if appropriate.

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

Central Dudley Area Committee – 2nd October 2012

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Matters raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 12th June, 2012 other than those relating to the Directorate of the Urban Environment

Purpose of Report

1. To note progress on issues raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 12th June, 2012, other than those relating to the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

Background

2. The issues set out in paragraphs 3 to 6 (inclusive) below were raised at the meeting of the Committee held on 12th June, 2012, progress on which is as follows:

3. **Dudley MBC - Corporate Policy on response times**

A member of the public submitted correspondence in relation to the United Footwear building (the former Co-operative Society Store) located at the top of Dudley Town Centre to which he alleged that no responses had been received and queried the Council policy on response times.

In relation to the Council's policy on response times, the following response has been given:-

"The Council's corporate policy on response times, this is to reply to letters within ten working days where a response is appropriate. It is not always possible to provide a substantive response, however, in which case a holding response should be issued within ten workings days."

4. **Closure of Quarry Bank Health Centre and Relocation of Podiatry Service**

A Member of the Committee referred to the nail cutting service provided for elderly and disabled people in Quarry Bank in consequence of the closure of the Health Centre in Sheffield Street. He indicated that the alternative provision in Brierley Hill was too far and too difficult for disabled, frail and elderly people to travel to get their nails cut. He requested that consideration be given to providing a nail cutting service for elderly and disabled residents of Quarry Bank through the peripatetic service provided to wheelchair users at Woodhouse Court.

Nail Cutting is not provided by the Council, and therefore the issue has been referred to the appropriate agencies for their consideration.

The Deputy Director of Community and Integrated Services, Dudley Group of Hospitals has responded as follows:-

“The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust Podiatry Service previously provided from the Quarry Bank Health Centre ceased to operate from the centre in May 2012 due to being served notice by NHS Dudley that the building was not fit for purpose. As a tenant in the building the service was obliged to comply with the request. The Podiatry Service was given a short notice period therefore only a small number of patients could be informed at the time of their appointment that they would need to move to another clinic/Health Centre. All the patients scheduled to receive their treatment after the date of the closure were written to offering them an alternate appointment at a different clinic (Halesowen Health Centre, The Limes, Stourbridge Health and Social Care Centre or Brierley Hill Health and Social Care Centre). The choice of clinic was initially indicated by the service based on the closest clinic to the individual’s home address. Patients were informed that if the date, time or location of the appointment was inconvenient they should contact the service to arrange a more convenient time or change the location if they wished. A small number of patients have contacted the service to ask for either a change of date/time or location. The service has not received any complaints during this process. Patients that would not be able to travel the short distance to an alternate clinic and who meet the access criteria can be offered transport using the Ambuline Service. All staff are aware of the use of Ambuline and are instructed where appropriate to use this service. It is always preferable for a patient to receive podiatry treatment in a clinic setting however domiciliary visits are offered if the travel to the clinic is detrimental to the health and well being of the individual.

The issue of patients being able to attend Woodhouse Court for their treatment was raised. The Podiatry Service does provide a domiciliary service to residents of Woodhouse Court that were unable to travel to the Quarry Bank Clinic providing the treatment in their own rooms. Woodhouse Court does not have a clinic facility from which to undertake podiatry treatment for non-residents.

It is unfortunate that the Podiatry Service is no longer able to provide treatment at Quarry Bank however the decision was outside of the service’s and Trust’s control.”

5. **Anti-social behaviour – Milking Bank**

A Member of the Committee referred to anti-social behaviour on the park at the back of the school in Milking Bank and requested that this matter be investigated. The matter has been referred to the local neighbourhood policing team with a view to resolving the issue.

6. **Woodside Estate – Heating System**

A Member of the Council drew attention to the heating system currently used in homes on the Woodside Estate and requested that consideration be given to installing up-to-date heating systems in the area.

The Construction Manager, Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services responded as follows:-

“The Woodside Estate includes 437 Council owned properties. Of these, 347 have gas central heating installed. 66 properties (15%) have electric night storage heaters installed. This percentage is comparable with the borough wide average of 16% (3663 properties), where properties use electric night heating.

In addition, 24 properties (5.5%) have no form of whole house heating. However, all of these customers have been offered a central heating installation on more than one occasion, but have exercised their right to refuse. Should any of these customers wish to have a new heating installation, they can contact our Repairs Management Centre where this will be arranged.

The Council does currently have a borough wide programme to replace electric storage heaters, where there is a live gas service. The programme deals with around 150 properties each year and current approved budgets will replace around 750 systems with a modern gas heating system over the next 5 years. We also seek to secure additional funding to increase this programme using various government initiatives such as CERT (Carbon Emission Reduction Target), CESP (Community Energy Savings Programme) and the forthcoming ECO programme (Energy Company Obligations) that flows from the Government's Green Deal initiative.

A criteria exists to prioritise these replacement installations which is based on the property's energy efficiency rating, age of the electric heating system and property type. Within the Woodside Estate 33 electrically heated properties, which are mainly bungalows, are currently identified to be replaced within the current 5 year programme.

Should you become aware of individual customers who may be experiencing any particular difficulty with the operation or effectiveness of their heating system, please encourage them to contact our Repairs Management Centre on 0300 555 8283, that is open 8am-8pm 7 days per week and they will arrange any necessary service calls or energy efficiency advice.”

Finance

7. This report has no direct financial implications.

Law

8. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council is empowered to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or conducive to, or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

9. This report complies with the policies of the Council on Equality and Diversity.
10. Children and young people have not been consulted on the preparation of this report, as report seeks only to note progress on issues raised at its previous meetings.

Recommendation

11. That the report be noted.



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ANDREA POPE-SMITH
AREA LIAISON OFFICER

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List of Background Papers Minutes of the meeting of the Central Dudley Area
Committee held on 12th June, 2012