

Central Dudley Area Committee – 12th June 2007

Report Of The Director Of The Urban Environment

**Urban Environment - Matters Raised At The
Central Dudley Area Committee - 13th March 2007**

Purpose Of Report

1. To update Committee on a number of issues raised at the 13th March 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.

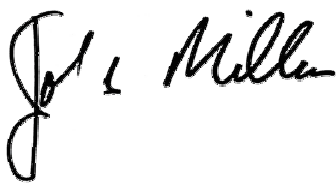
9. Traffic signs are provided under powers contained in Section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to regulations made by the Secretary of State for Transport.
10. Guardrails may be provided under Section 66 of the Highways Act 1990.
11. Pedestrian crossing facilities are provided under 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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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 13th March 2007 Committee

Appendix 1

DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT - MATTERS RAISED AT THE CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE HELD 13TH MARCH 2007

1. DUNCAN EDWARDS PUBLIC HOUSE

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, a member of the public raised concerns regarding the Duncan Edwards Public House and its perimeter fencing which was reported to be insecure and repeatedly being pulled down. The Assistant Director, Environmental Management undertook to write to the developer once again to request that the fence be made more secure.

Comments: As the site is now privately owned, the Council has no powers to intervene in its maintenance unless a public hazard is posed. However, in order to address the concerns of the public, the Assistant Director, Environmental Management, wrote to Gravitas Consultancy Ltd, who are acting on behalf of the owners, requesting that their contractor secure the fence more firmly or construct a more permanent fixture. Consequently, the fence has now been moved back away from the footpath.

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

2. PRIORY ESTATE - ELECTRICITY SUB-STATIONS

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, a member of the public raised concern regarding a recent spate of vandalism to electricity sub-stations on the Priory Estate, resulting in power cuts and requested that the Council contact the electricity supplier to improve security to the stations to prevent further inconvenience or danger to residents.

Comments: A letter was sent from the Assistant Director, Environmental Management to Central Networks in order to attempt to establish measures Central Networks are putting in place to catch the perpetrators to prevent similar occurrences taking place in the future. Central Networks have confirmed that they are constantly reviewing security measures and will continue to work closely with the Council in an effort to prevent any reoccurrence.

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

3. BLUEBELL ROADS - REMOVAL OF TREES

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, a member of the public requested that trees on the pavement in Bluebell Road be removed as they are causing an obstruction to pedestrians.

Comments: DUE Officers have proposed several schemes to assist pedestrian access in this area without success, as whilst many residents wanted the trees removed, an

equal number wished to retain them. Consideration is ongoing to find a solution which will satisfy as many people as possible.

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

4. **MEADOW ROAD - REMOVAL OF SKIP**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, a member of the public raised the issue of the Council's protocol regarding skips, in view of the fact that a full, open skip had been left in Meadow Road for 7 days without any hazard lights or protective barriers being put up.

Comments: All sites are assessed prior to a skip licence being granted. Strict conditions are applied and if not adhered to, Highway Inspectors will issue instructions for the offending skip to be removed. The Meadow Road skip has now been removed.

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

5. **WATERLOO STREET - 'H' BARS**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr M Davies requested that 'H bars' be put down in front of houses in Waterloo Street, as parked cars were blocking people in on their drives.

Comments: DUE Traffic Engineers have now informed Councillor Davies that white "H" carriageway lines could only be laid in front of dropped kerb driveways where the householder has personally requested them.

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

6. **BOWER LANE - ACCUMULATED LITTER**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Sparks requested that accumulated litter at the bottom of Bower Lane be cleaned up.

Comments: The litter has now been cleared.

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

7. **BELLE VUE ROAD - TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Cotterill requested traffic calming measures be taken in Belle Vue Road to prevent youths from using it as a race track.

Comments: This issue has been considered by DUE officers on a number of occasions. It would not be justifiable to introduce measures on a section of public highway which leads to a private road. The need at all times for access to a nearby electricity sub-station indicates that action to prevent traffic movements cannot be taken.

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

8. **BOWLING GREEN ROAD - SPEED CAMERA**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Male requested clarification as to whether or not a speed camera, which had been installed on Bowling Green Road was fully operational.

Comments: The mobile speed camera is not yet operational. However, speed 'visors' in Bowling Green Road are in place and working.

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

9. **HONISTER CLOSE - REMEDIAL TREE WORK**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Male requested a start date for remedial work on trees in Honister Close.

Comments: These trees have been assessed and are scheduled for removal by the end of August 2007.

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

10. **SECTION 106 FUNDING**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Waltho requested that the Council investigate the possibility of pooling monies obtained from property developers via Section 106 funding, in order that Councillors could work with community groups in their areas to assist in financing projects.

Comments: This process already takes place. The spend of section 106 funds is often more effective when pooled rather than spent individually. Examples within the Central Dudley area where this has been done, and has gained added value from combining section 106 funds with either the Council's own funding or other sources of external funding include:

- Liveability: Grange Park, Netherton Park, Buffery Park, Stevens Park Quarry Bank & Priory Park
- Russells Hall Skatepark

Pooling may however only take place where the spend proposed is compliant with the terms of the original section 106, ie in geographical area and type of facilities.

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

11. **KING STREET - TRAFFIC SIGNAL SEQUENCING**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Waltho requested that officers visit the traffic lights at the junction between King Street and the Southern Bypass to investigate reports from residents that the sequencing of the lights and of the pedestrian crossing was inappropriate and causing both pedestrians and motorists to wait for long periods.

Comments: DUE Traffic Engineers will investigate and take appropriate action.

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

12. **BANKLANDS ROAD - RESURFACING**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr J Davies, requested that the footpath at the bottom of Banklands Road be resurfaced as the shale which had been put down previously had now grown muddy.

Comments: Instructions have been issued to have the footpath inspected to assess remedial works.

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

13. **BUFFERY ROAD - SPEED CAMERA**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr J Davies requested a speed camera on Buffery Road.

Comments: DUE Traffic Engineers will consider this request along with all similar requests for possible inclusion in a future year's programme.

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

14. **NEW ROAD - POTHOLE**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr J Davies requested that a pothole which had re-appeared in New Road be filled in again.

Comments: Instructions have been issued to carry out remedial works.

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

15. **BEAN ROAD - REMOVAL OF SKIP**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr J Davies requested that a skip which had been left on Bean Road be removed, as it is currently blocking up one side of the road causing congestion.

Comments: All sites are assessed prior to a skip licence being granted. Strict conditions are applied and if not adhered to, Highway Inspectors will issue instructions for the offending skip to be removed. The Bean Road skip has now been removed.

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

16. **ASTON ROAD - LITTER REMOVAL/CUT BACK SHRUBS**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr J Davies requested that the shrubs on the embankment in Aston Road be cut back and the litter in the area be removed.

Comments: The litter has been cleared and the shrubs pruned.

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

17. **NORTHFIELD ROAD/HALESOWEN ROAD - ROAD SAFETY**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Rahman expressed concern regarding road safety at the junction between Northfield Road and Halesowen Road. He requested that officers investigate measures which could be taken to make this area less dangerous both for pedestrians and motorists.

Comments: Officers in DUE are working on a Borough-wide transport strategy that will set out the Council's major objectives for the future. Road safety is a key policy theme.

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

18. **MARIOTT ROAD/CHURCH ROAD - STREET LIGHT REPAIR**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Rahman requested that officers arrange for repairs to be undertaken to the street light at the junction of Marriott and Church Road.

Comments: This street light has now been repaired.

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

19. ARCH HILL STREET, NETHERTON - ACCESS ONLY SIGNAGE

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Rahman requested that a more prominent 'Access Only' sign be erected in Arch Hill Street, Netherton, in order to deter parents from parking their cars there and blocking up residents' drives when collecting their children from the nearby Children's Centre.

Comments: Whilst this matter can be investigated, it should be noted that the Police have been very active in issuing warnings to motorists. Parents are aware of the Traffic Regulation Order and make their own decisions regarding parking. However, more prominent "access only" signing can be considered later in the current financial year.

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

20. QUENTIN DRIVE - NEWLY INSTALLED LIGHTING COLUMNS

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Craigie requested an update as to when the newly installed street lighting columns in Quentin Drive would be switched on.

Comments: DUE Street Lighting engineers have confirmed that all new columns in Quentin Drive are now connected. Instructions have been issued to decommission old columns.

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

21. SPRING PARKLANDS - LIGHTS OUT

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Craigie requested that officers investigate reports that street lights in Spring Parklands are not working properly.

Comments: Several repairs have been undertaken in Spring Parklands, all lamps should now be working.

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

22. RUSSELLS HALL SCHOOL - PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Craigie requested that a new pedestrian crossing be installed outside Russells Hall School.

Comments: Cllr Craigie's request for a pedestrian crossing is being investigated together with a number of other requests for similar facilities. The final 'shortlist' will be included in a future minor improvement programme.

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

23. **TRINITY ROAD AND CORNCRAKE ROAD - POTHOLES**

Background: At the Central Dudley Area Committee on the 13th March 2007, Cllr Craigie requested that potholes on Trinity Road and Corncrake Road be filled in.

Comments: Instructions have now been issued to carry out remedial works.

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