

# **URBAN ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY, 2014**

**AT 6:00PM  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2  
THE COUNCIL HOUSE  
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**

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## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

### **MEETINGS IN DUDLEY COUNCIL HOUSE**

Welcome to Dudley Council House

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.

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

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Your ref:

Our ref:

Please ask for:  
Miss H Shepherd

Telephone No.  
(01384) 815271

15<sup>th</sup> January, 2014

Dear Councillor

**Urban Environment Scrutiny Committee**  
**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2014 – 6.00pm**

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Urban Environment Scrutiny Committee to be held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2014 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley to consider the business set out in the agenda below.

The agenda and public reports are available on the Council's Website [www.dudley.gov.uk](http://www.dudley.gov.uk) and follow the links to 'Councillors in Dudley' and the Committee Management Information System.

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. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

To report the appointment of any substitute members serving for this meeting of the Committee.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

4. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2013.

5. PUBLIC FORUM

To receive questions from members of the public.

6. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS – THE PROCESS (PAGES 1 - 5)

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

7. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE 11.8 (IF ANY).

**To: All Members of the Urban Environment Scrutiny Committee:**

Councillors Ali, Duckworth, Hale, Hanif, Harley, J Jones, Jordan, Kettle, Sykes, Tyler and Mrs Westwood.

## **URBAN ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2013 at 6.00 p.m.  
in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley

### **PRESENT:-**

Councillor Tyler (Chair)  
Councillor Hale (Vice Chair)  
Councillors Ali, Duckworth, Hanif, Harley, J Martin, Sykes and Mrs Westwood

### **Officers**

Assistant Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services (Housing Strategy and Private Sector) (Lead Officer to the Committee); Head Of Construction (Both Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services); Assistant Director of the Urban Environment (Economic Regeneration & Transportation); Economic Development Manager; Principal Executive Support Officer (All Directorate of the Urban Environment); Divisional Lead – Asset Management (Directorate of Children’s Services); HR Policy and Workforce Development Officer, Operations Unit Manager and the Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Directorate of Corporate Resources).

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### 27 **APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Jordan.

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### 28 **APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBER**

It was reported that Councillor J Martin had been appointed as a substitute member for Councillor Jordan for this meeting of the Committee only.

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### 29 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No member declared an interest in any matter to be considered at this meeting.

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### 30 **MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed.

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31 PUBLIC FORUM

No matters were raised under this Agenda Item.

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32 SUPPORT TO LOCAL BUSINESSES (AREA 2 – BUSINESS TO BUSINESS)

A report was submitted to the meeting and a presentation was given in relation to the findings of the TORCh Group in support of the scrutiny of the Support to Local Businesses (Area 2 – Business to Business).

The presentation from the TORCh representatives consisted of an outline of the TORCh initiative; the Scrutiny remit; findings from the Business Survey; Dudley's current position in relation to Black Country benchmarking; identification of best practise; feedback from local businesses; corporate contracts; role of schools; recommendations and further considerations for the Scrutiny Committee to consider.

Following a detailed presentation, the TORCh representatives referred to their proposed recommendations for the Scrutiny Committee to consider:-

- A 'Dudley Directory for Buyers' – aligned to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- Explore Funding opportunities (internal & external) to deliver Business 2 Business (B2B) activities
- Develop a robust marketing strategy to include Social Media and promote existing support to local businesses, increase brand awareness, promote guidance for suppliers and buyers
- Research on how we encourage & reduce resistance to intercompany trading
- Promote 'buying local' to all categories of schools, with particular reference to Academies
- Review of the Procurement Strategy to include:
  - To reflect all procurement is via B2B Portal
  - To reflect linkages with our partners
  - Ensure a local social value focus
  - Use of a Local 'Buyers Directory'
  - Engagement Protocols with major investment delivery partners
- Facilitate 'Meet the Supplier' events to promote sourcing in Dudley

Other considerations identified and presented to the Scrutiny Committee were as follows:-

- What is the Council's definition of 'Local'?
- What is the 'family' of Dudley Buyers (Council, Health etc):
- Establish level of commitment and identify dedicated resources to develop, maintain and promote B2B initiative
- How do we meet businesses needs by also promoting non-trading, in addition to a local focus?
- Consider sector specific Directories – replicate of BC Bullet which provides a Directory for automotive companies

The Assistant Director of the Urban Environment (Economic Regeneration & Transportation) gave a brief update in relation to the Black Country City Deal that had been approved and stated that the four Black Country authorities would work collaboratively to address issues that were currently stifling the economy and would invest in economic growth. Two common issues highlighted as a concern for the Black Country were in relation to the lack of readily available development sites and the availability of a skilled workforce.

Following the detailed presentation, Members commended Officers on the excellent report and presentation and asked questions and made comments as follows:-

- Members welcomed, applauded and endorsed the news of the Black Country City Deal and requested that this be incorporated into the work achieved by the TORCh group.
- Members were concerned that local businesses were unaware of the support and information that was available from the Council and considered that the promotion of the Dudley Business First portal, to advantage local businesses, should be made a priority.
- It was considered that the Council needed to be more pro-active with town regeneration plans and when resolving problems that arise from these developments.
- A review of Dudley's Procurement strategy was welcomed and contracts with local suppliers was encouraged.
- It was recommended that the number of websites and business portals be reduced and linked together to prevent confusion to users and the need for multiple registrations.
- A Member raised concerns in relation to the practicality of small businesses being refused funding through Dudley Business First as they were not requesting large enough amounts of funding.
- The need to promote and advertise industrial skilled work in Schools.

The Scrutiny Committee reiterated their support for the Black Country City Deal and expressed their commitment to bringing businesses and employment back into the borough.

RESOLVED

That the contents and recommendations presented by the TORCh Group, in relation to Support to Local Businesses (Area 2 – Business to Business), be noted.

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33 UPDATE ON THE VIRTUAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS PROCESS

A verbal update was provided by the Lead Officer of the Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Virtual Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) Process. He referred to a briefing note that would be circulated to all members by the Principal Executive Support Officer in relation to the current virtual TRO process and areas that required improvement, scoring criteria and the proposal for a cross-party working group.

The Lead Officer reiterated that Members feedback was crucial in order to support the scrutiny review in this area and all comments would be welcomed.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the verbal update provided by the Lead Officer in relation to the Virtual Traffic Regulation Orders Process, be noted.
  - (2) That the Principal Executive Support Officer circulate to members of the Scrutiny Committee a briefing note in relation to Improving the Traffic Regulation Order process.
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The meeting ended at 7.20pm.

CHAIR



**Urban Environment Scrutiny Committee - Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014**

**Report of the Director of the Urban Environment**

**Traffic Regulation Orders – The Process**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Scrutiny Committee Members with an overview of the findings of the ‘virtual’ review of the Traffic Regulation Order process.

**Background**

2. On the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013, Members of the Scrutiny Committee endorsed the scoping of the review which it was suggested would include an approved policy on delivering the service, a robust selection criteria and annual programme of works.

It should be noted that the programme would not include development related, temporary, emergency/urgent or experimental orders that are dealt with by separate processes.

3. There have been three mail outs of information as part of the virtual scrutiny process:-

17<sup>th</sup> October 2013 – Introduction to scoring requests which includes an outline of the scoring process, explanation of the elements and criteria within the scoring sheets and examples of how the scoring system is applied.

Member feedback suggested more points should be given to vulnerable road users and sustainable modes of transport. In these cases, it should be noted that the maximum score will apply so should not be an issue.

16<sup>th</sup> December 2013 – Improving the Traffic Regulation Order process which includes; an outline of the current TRO process, advantages of the current process, areas for improvement and proposed improvements to Member Consultation stages through the introduction of a Cross Party Members Working Group.

Member feedback suggested using local free newspapers rather than the regional commercial newspapers and possibly including proposals within Community Forum Agenda.

It should be noted that advertisement is a statutory requirement and must be made in a purchasable newspaper, potentially available to the whole of the community; local free papers do not satisfy this requirement. However, there is no reason why the issues could or should not be discussed at Community Forum meetings, but this would only be by way of informing the Members and receiving comments for consideration by the Members Working Group.

13<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – Improving the Traffic Regulation Order process continued, which includes initial sift, expectations of applicants, summary of trial programme and indicative timescales for implementation.

At the time of writing the report no feedback had been received, subsequent feedback will be verbally reported at the Final Report Scrutiny Committee meeting on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014.

#### 4. Annual Programme

It is proposed each year to develop an annual programme of Traffic Regulation Orders for implementation within the budget allocations provided from the Integrated Transport Block. This programme would include an initial prioritised list of proposed Traffic Regulation Orders and a further list of prioritised reserve proposals for inclusion should any of the initial proposals prove to be undeliverable.

#### 5. Scoring Criteria

Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders to be included in the programme should be prioritised by an agreed scoring criteria; which identifies a number of key criteria. These criteria include:-

##### Physical

- Road type
- Width of carriageway
- Whether the road is used by public transport

##### Environmental

- Issues relating to visibility such as obstructive parking
- How long the problem exists during the day
- Who is affected by the problem

##### Community

- How the request has been made
- Impact on vulnerable users

It is anticipated that requests that fail to achieve one-third of the maximum potential points (i.e. 17 out of 51 points), would be deemed outside the scoring range and would not be subject to any further consideration.

## 6. Enhancements to Member Consultation

Ward Members do not have a formal opportunity to comment on the proposals following public consultation or at which point the views of the electorate are known. It is therefore suggested that a cross party working group of Members be created to agree the content of any future programme. It is anticipated that this group would meet to consider the outcome of the initial consultations at the latter end of the second quarter of the financial year. Consideration of reserved proposals that have been brought forward for inclusion in the programme will take place during the third quarter of the financial year.

## 7. Initial Sift

On receipt, requests will be subject to a technical check to determine their feasibility. Requests that are considered impractical or would compromise safety, will be rejected and the applicant informed of this. If the request is considered feasible, the applicant will be informed that the request will be considered in more detail for possible inclusion in the following annual programme.

## 8. Customer Expectations and Timescales

It is anticipated the applicant will be contacted within 2 weeks of their request, with the outcome of the initial sift and that if successfully included in the programme, further consultation will be undertaken as part of delivery of the annual programme and in accordance with any statutory requirements.

It is suggested that improving information available online, such as the public facing steps within the Traffic Regulation Order process and indicative timescales, would provide a greater level of transparency on what customers can reasonably expect.

## 9. Implementation of an Annual Programme

It is anticipated that requests having satisfied the initial sift will be considered on block during the third quarter of the financial year. The outcome of the budget allocations will then be used to inform the scale of the programme that will then be subject to consideration by the Cabinet Member and Shadow Cabinet Member for Transportation. The programme will then be subject to a decision of the Cabinet Member for Transportation for implementation in the following financial year.

## 10. Small scale changes / proposals held in reserve

In the event of a programmed Traffic Regulation Order proving to be undeliverable, the proposal will be deleted from the programme and a reserve proposal brought forward for inclusion in the programme.

### **Finance**

11. The cost of operating the revised scrutiny arrangements will be contained within the existing budget allocations.

Traffic Regulation Orders are delivered using capital funds from the Integrated Transport Block.

### **Law**

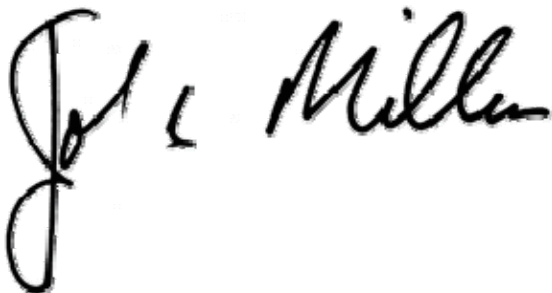
12. Scrutiny Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and the requirements of the Council's Constitution, which was adopted under the Local Government Act 2000, subsequent legislation and associated regulations and guidance.
13. Traffic Regulation Orders are made under powers contained in Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 subject to regulations laid down by the Secretary of State.

### **Equality Impact**

14. Provision exists within the recommended scrutiny arrangements for overview and scrutiny to be undertaken of the Council's policies on equality and diversity. The DUE Equality Action Plan includes a priority to ensure the Traffic Regulation Order process is accessible from protected groups, representative of the Borough's population.
15. The control of obstructive parking, and the prevention of intrusive lorry movements in residential areas, assists vulnerable road users, including children, older people and disabled people.

## **Recommendations**

16. That the DUE Scrutiny Committee recommend the following scrutiny outcomes to the Cabinet Member for Transportation:-
- a) All new requests for Traffic Regulation Orders be directed through an Annual Programme, with the exception of developmental, temporary, emergency/urgent or experimental orders which are dealt with by separate processes;
  - b) All new requests be subject to an initial sift to review feasibility resulting in a response being issued to the applicant;
  - c) A pre-defined scoring criteria be used to prioritise requests;
  - d) A Cross Party Members Working Group be set-up in order to consider proposals following public consultation.
  - e) Requests that fail to achieve one-third of the maximum potential points (i.e. 17 out of 51 points), would be deemed outside the scoring range and would not be subject to any further consideration;
  - f) Web Site contents be updated to reflect revised working arrangements.



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John Millar  
Director of the Urban Environment

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