

**Central Dudley Area Committee - 12<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

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

**Urban Environment - Matters raised at the Central Dudley Area Committee - 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012**

**Purpose Of Report**

1. To update Committee on a number of issues raised at the 31<sup>st</sup> January 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. 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.



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

Contact Officer: Matt Williams  
Telephone: 01384 814510  
Email: [Matt.Williams@Dudley.gov.uk](mailto:Matt.Williams@Dudley.gov.uk)

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

1. Action Notes from 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012 Committee.

## Appendix 1

### **DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT - MATTERS RAISED AT THE CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2012**

#### 1. **WHITE LION PUBLIC HOUSE**

**Background:** Cllr Ali referred to the site at the White Lion Public House and indicated that it had been derelict for a while and is currently attracting gangs of young people causing anti-social behaviour. He suggested that the owners be contacted with a view to bringing the building back into use.

**Comments:** The Council's Food & Occupational Safety Team contacted the then owners of the site in April, requesting additional site security. Although agreeing to the request, they informed us that the site was about to be sold. The property has now changed hands and the new owners are being pursued in an attempt to keep the site in an acceptable condition.

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

#### 2. **PETITION - REQUEST FOR THE PROVISION OF A PEDESTRIAN PHASE AT THE RED LION PUBLIC HOUSE CROSS ROADS**

**Background:** A petition was received from residents requesting the provision of a pedestrian phase in the existing signals at the cross roads by the Red Lion public house, Netherton, or provide an alternative form of pedestrian crossing at that point for safety reasons. It was noted that the petition would be referred to the Petitions Officer for consideration in the first instance and then to DUE for a report to a future Area Committee.

**Comments:** The junction of Cole Street, Northfield Road St. Peter's Road and Withymoor Road will be investigated during 2012, with consideration being given to the possible inclusion of the signals in a future year's annual Safer Routes to School Scheme.

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

#### 3. **PETITION - REQUEST FOR THE CLOSURE OF THE ACCESS STEPS BETWEEN ROBIN HOOD ROAD LEADING TO MARION CLOSE**

**Background:** A petition was received from residents requesting that the access steps between Robin Hood Road leading to Marion Close be closed. It was noted that the petition would be referred to the Petitions Officer for consideration in the first instance and then to DUE for a report to a future Area Committee.

**Comments:** A number of productive meetings have taken place between Council officers, the Police and residents. The Police have discretely discussed the issues with the complainant. The Police will consider increasing their surveillance on the footpath, with a view to developing the necessary evidence base required for the closure of the

path to be considered. If the issue of anti social behaviour on this path persists and is not an isolated incident, it is hoped that closure procedures might commence in the future.

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

#### 4. **BLACKACRE ROAD - CONTROLLED CROSSING FACILITIES**

**Background:** A member of the public expressed gratitude to Peter Vangeersdaele and Cllr Ali for attending a meeting with residents to discuss the traffic problems affecting Oakham Road and possible solutions and requested an update on the issues discussed.

It was indicated that a number of locations along Oakham Road have been investigated for the introduction of controlled crossing facilities. Unfortunately, none of the locations could be progressed as they either did not meet the criteria for usage as set out in the Council's pedestrian crossing policy or were otherwise technically not feasible. The route had been added to a list of requests for consideration in next year's local safety scheme programme and the outcome of the investigations would be reported to a future Area Committee.

**Comments:** It is intended that a report regarding the proposed Local Safety Schemes, Safer Routes to School Schemes and Pedestrian Crossings Schemes for 2012-13 should be presented to the June 2012 meeting of the Central Dudley Area Committee.

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

#### 5. **BURNT TREE JUNCTION - LOOSE MANHOLE COVERS**

**Background:** A member of the public drew attention to the number of new manhole covers on the approach and exit roads at Burnt Tree junction that had become loose and requested that an engineer investigate the matter.

**Comments:** There are six manhole covers/frames that need replacing together with some other defects in the area. Work will commence on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2012 for three to four days depending on progress. There will be some Sunday (27<sup>th</sup> May) work due to access difficulties at the Tesco entrance and night working on 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> May around the difficult junction at Tividale Road (noise restrictions will apply).

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

#### 6. **OVERFIELD PARK, RUSSELLS HALL ESTATE - LITTER & ANTI- SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

**Background:** A member of the public drew attention to the litter on the Russells Hall Estate, with particular mention to Overfield Park. The same member of the public also drew attention to joy riders using Overfield Park during the night time.

**Comments:** The DUE Green Care Team have installed an extra bin in Overfield Park to help alleviate the litter problem. In addition, our Enforcement Officers will step up their patrols, sending out a very clear message to those who continue to drop litter.

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

## 7. **WOODSIDE PARK - REQUEST FOR FENCING AND REPAIR TO FOOTPATHS**

**Background:** A member of the public expressed gratitude for the work carried out on the Woodside Estate and requested that a fence be erected around Woodside Park and that the paths be repaired.

**Comments:** Unfortunately, there is insufficient funding to address all the issues associated with the perimeter and paths in Woodside Park. However, our Green Spaces Team will continue to identify funding when available. In the interim, any major hazards associated with the paths will be addressed on a priority basis.

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

## 8. **ABBOTSFORD DRIVE - CAR PARKING NUISANCE**

**Background:** A member of the public submitted a lengthy question and related enclosure on behalf of the residents of the Russells Hall Estate and requested a date when signs would be erected in the area to stop car parking nuisance in Abbotsford Drive. Cllr Roberts also raised this issue. It was indicated that the question submitted would be answered following a verbal presentation to be given on the Russells Hall Traffic Working Group later on in the agenda.

**Comments:** The installation of the “No Entry Except for Access to Premises” signs has now commenced in Russells Hall.

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

## 9. **REVIVAL FIRES - HOARDINGS**

**Background:** Cllr M Davis drew attention to the condition of the hoardings and the derelict building opposite Revival Fires and requested that the area be cleaned up.

**Comments:** The derelict building opposite to Revival Fires in Wolverhampton Street is a long standing issue. The building appears to be secure, but the temporary building located in the rear yard is not and there is access via a damaged fence panel to the rear yard. DUE Environmental Health Officers are chasing up the owners/agents to undertake the necessary repairs to prevent further unauthorised access.

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

10. **WOODLAND AVENUE, QUARRY BANK - GRASS VERGES**

**Background:** Cllr Cotterill referred to the condition of grass verges on Woodland Avenue, Quarry Bank and requested that the matter be investigated.

**Comments:** Engineers from the Directorate of the Urban Environment met on site and agreed that once the adjacent development had been completed then some reinstatement work could be undertaken to the grass verge. However, it was acknowledged that something more substantial would be needed in order to rectify over-running problems in the future as the width of the road is restricted and residents have difficulty parking vehicles. We will endeavour to identify necessary funding and continue to monitor the site in the interim period.

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

11. **REQUEST FOR SPEED SIGNS ON ELM GREEN AND BEECH GREEN**

**Background:** Cllr A Finch requested that signs be erected on Elm Green and Beech Green to deter speeding vehicles.

**Comments:** Temporary "Drive Slowly, Kill your Speed" signs will be erected in Elm Green and Beech Green as part of the regular four-monthly road safety campaigns for this sign type.

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

12. **PUBLIC TOILETS - NETHERTON**

**Background:** Cllr Zada raised concern that the public toilets in Netherton remained closed and requested the matter to be reassessed.

**Comments:** Following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation, it has been agreed to review the closure of public toilets throughout the Borough.

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

13. **YELLOW GRIT BINS - CRITERIA FOR PROVISION**

**Background:** Cllr Zada requested confirmation as to whether Dudley Council required a petition to be drawn up prior to address the issue of yellow grit bins.

**Comments:** Any local residents' requiring the installation of a grit bin should contact Dudley Council Plus (0300 555 2345) who will send out a standard application form. In order to be located, each road should meet the necessary criteria and those living adjacent to the intended site should indicate that they are happy with the proposals by signing and returning the form.

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

14. **ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL - UNAUTHORISED PARKING**

**Background:** Cllr Miss Arshad drew attention to unauthorised parking outside St Joseph's Catholic School and to drivers using mobile phones whilst driving and requested that serious action be taken.

**Comments:** The Civil Enforcement Officers visit all the schools in the Borough where there are enforceable restrictions, as resources allow. From 1st January to 30th April, Hillcrest Road has been visited 5 times and Beechwood Road 3 times at either the start or end of the school day. These roads cover both St Josephs and St Edmund and St John primary schools. During this period , one vehicle has received a Penalty Charge Notice for being in contravention of parking restrictions and two vehicles have driven away before a notice could be completed and served.

Using phones whilst driving is a police matter and I understand that they also attend these locations as resources allow.

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

15. **KING STREET**

**Background:** In referring to the proposed new food store development, Cllr Ali requested that King Street be re-opened.

**Comments:** Consideration will be given to Cllr Ali's request during 2012-13 for a possible redesign of King Street during future years.

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