

URBAN ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday 22nd January, 2014 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 Jones, Jordan, Kettle, Sykes and Westwood

Officers

Assistant Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services (Housing Strategy and Private Sector) (Lead Officer to the Committee); Head of Traffic and Transportation, Principal Executive Support Officer (Both Directorate of the Urban Environment) and the Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Directorate of Corporate Resources).

34 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

35 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12th December, 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed.

36 **PUBLIC FORUM**

No matters were raised under this Agenda Item.

37 **TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS – THE PROCESS**

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on an overview of the findings of the 'virtual' review of the Traffic Regulation Order process.

The Head of Traffic and Transportation presented the report and gave a short presentation relating to what a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was; the reasons for the establishment of the virtual scrutiny process; initial sift of requests received and the scoring criteria process; the proposed member consultation and the development of an annual programme and how this would be implemented.

Arising from the presentation of the report submitted, members asked questions and made comments and the Head of Traffic and Transportation responded as follows:-

- Creating none fee paying car parks would not necessarily alleviate all car parking problems, particularly in town centres, as these car parks could become popular and would deter people from parking on paid car parks. All free car parking spaces could be taken up by people who worked within that town and shoppers visiting would not then see any benefit.
- The scoring of TRO requests would be carried out by Transportation Officers against agreed criteria, prior to being circulated to Ward Members and the public, for consultation.
- A Member suggested that consideration be given to providing car parking permits to local residents that live within close proximity to a car park that is under-used to try and alleviate some of the on-street parking issues in these areas.
- It was hoped that the new process would speed up the implementation of orders and it was suggested that if Members were aware of a change in circumstances at a proposed TRO site, that Officers be informed.
- TRO requests would be accepted from the public by phone, in writing or via a Ward Member. All requests would be subject to a technical check and if determined feasible, would be put forward for further consideration.
- Members emphasised the importance of Ward Member involvement in the process and requested that they be notified following the scoring criteria process and before public consultation. All Members agreed that early intervention was necessary.
- Alternative ways of advertising future TRO's were discussed and it was suggested that a possible option would be for inclusion on Community Forum agenda's, when applicable, and to explore utilising social media.
- It was confirmed that TRO enforcement staff move around the whole borough and focus on active areas such as town centres. However if a particular issue is raised and needed to be addressed, enforcement officers would be flexible and move to that particular area to help resolve an issue.

- It was stated that a review of all TRO's had taken place in 2007 when the Council undertook the responsibility of the enforcement of all on-street parking restrictions in the borough. Additional orders had since been implemented, but there was no pro-active way to review these orders other than upon request.
- Excessive signage within the Borough was in the process of being reviewed. It was confirmed that there is a statutory requirement for signage to be displayed and if not displayed correctly the order may not be enforced.
- Council officers, due to legal restrictions, are unable to question people that park on-street, so officers have difficulty in ascertaining the identify and reason why people parked within a residential street and rely upon the person who submitted the TRO request to provide as much detail as possible.

The Chair on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee commended Officers on an excellent report and for all the hard work that had been put into the virtual scrutiny process which was considered to have worked well.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the information contained in the report submitted and presented at the meeting, in relation to the virtual review of the Traffic Regulation Order Process be noted.
- (ii) That the following outcomes, as updated in relation to notification of Ward Members, in the light of comments made at the meeting, be recommended to the Cabinet Member for Transport following the scrutiny of the Traffic Regulation Order process:-
 - (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) That pre-defined scoring criteria be used to prioritise requests and that Ward Members be notified following the scoring criteria process and before public consultation.

- (d) That a Cross Party Members Working Group be appointed to consider proposals following public consultation, with the membership to be on the basis of political proportionality, to be determined in due course.
 - (e) That requests that fail to achieve one-third of the maximum potential points (ie 17 out of 51 points), be deemed outside the scoring range and would not be subject to any further consideration.
 - (f) That website contents be updated to reflect revised working arrangements.
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The meeting ended at 7.00pm.

CHAIR