

## **Meeting of the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee**

**Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2023 at 6.00pm  
At Saltwells Education Development Centre,  
Bowling Green Road, Netherton**

### **Agenda – Public Session (Meeting open to the public and press)**

1. Apologies for absence
2. To report the appointment of any substitute members serving for this meeting of the Committee
3. To receive any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct
4. Public Forum
5. Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/24 (Pages 4 – 8)
6. Developing the Neighbourhood Approach (Pages 9 – 13)
7. To consider any questions from Members to the Chair where two clear days notice has been given to the Monitoring Officer (Council Procedure Rule 11.8)

## **Distribution:**

Councillor E Lawrence (Chair)

Councillor P Miller (Vice-Chair)

Councillors D Borley, K Casey, K Denning, P Dobb, I Kettle, A Lees, J Martin, S Mughal and Vacancy.



**Chief Executive**

**Dated: 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2023**

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## **Submitting Apologies for Absence**

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**Meeting of the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee –  
Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2023**

**Report of the Lead for Law and Governance**

**Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/24**

**Purpose**

1. To consider the programme of meetings and potential items of business for this Select Committee during 2023/24.

**Recommendations**

2. It is recommended:-
  - That the programme of meetings for 2023/24 be noted.
  - That Members consider potential business items, as referred to in paragraph 4 of this report, subject to the need for flexibility during the municipal year.
  - That the Lead for Law and Governance, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, be authorised to make all the necessary arrangements to enable this Committee to undertake its work during the 2023/24 municipal year.
  - That the draft terms of reference for the Select Committee, as set out in the Appendix, be noted.

**Background**

3. As agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2023, meetings of this Select Committee have been programmed during the 2023/24 municipal year to undertake its work and consider any relevant items of business during the municipal year. The draft terms of reference of this Committee are set out in the Appendix.

4. Following initial consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, the items listed below are recommended for consideration at programmed meetings of this Select Committee during 2023/24:

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2023**

- Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023-24
- Developing the Neighbourhood Approach

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2023**

- Transport Fleet Services
- Dudley Borough Parking

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2023**

- Highways Maintenance and Repair
- Directorates Investment and Spending Programme

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2024**

- Dudley Transport Plan

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2024**

- Annual Report 2023/24 and potential items of business for 2024/25

5. Action Tracker reports will also be included as a standing item on each agenda to ensure that any outstanding actions agreed by the Committee are progressed and monitored.
6. The Committee is requested to consider the outline programme of business as outlined above taking account of the need for considerable flexibility due to changing circumstances and any issues that might arise during the municipal year.
7. Subject to the views of the Committee at this meeting, the Lead for Law and Governance, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, will make the necessary practical arrangements for the Committee to conduct its work during 2023/24.
8. The Council's scrutiny arrangements are set out in Article 6 of the Constitution and the associated Procedure Rules within Part 4 of the Constitution. At the Annual Meeting of the Council on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2023, approval was given to the establishment of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, together with seven Select Committees, for the 2023/24 municipal year.

A report was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2023 proposing consequential updates to the Council's Overview

and Scrutiny arrangements arising from decisions made at the Annual Meeting of the Council. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has resolved that the report be deferred. A further report will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course. This will include clarification of the arrangements for the scrutiny of any decisions that are 'called-in' in line with the Procedure Rules.

9. A "Scrutiny Essentials" Training Session was provided to Members by the Local Government Association on 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2023, with emphasis on the importance of the Members role and essential scrutiny techniques to assist in the development of scrutiny work for the 2023/24 municipal year.

### **Finance**

10. The Council's scrutiny arrangements for 2023/24 will cause an initial pressure of £30,180 on the budget for Members' Allowances and will also require additional unbudgeted resource for officer support. The Director of Finance and Legal will seek in year to contain this pressure from reserves. However, arrangements for future years will need to be considered as part of the budget process for 2024/25 onwards.

### **Law**

11. 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.

### **Risk Management**

12. Reports to Select Committees will include a paragraph to ensure proper consideration of any ongoing material risks as part of the Council's Risk Management Framework.

### **Equality Impact**

13. Provision exists within the Council's scrutiny arrangements for overview and scrutiny to be undertaken of the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

### **Human Resources/Organisational Development**

14. The issues referred to in this report are administered within the resources available to the Democratic Services Team with support from Directorates and other Officers as required.

## **Commercial/Procurement**

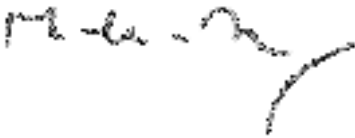
15. Individual items may have commercial or procurement implications, which will be reported to relevant Select Committees.

## **Environment/Climate Change**

16. The Council requires that all reports should include an assessment of the impact on the environment. The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and reports on individual proposals should address the impact on the Council's work to address Climate Change and achieve the Net Zero target by 2041. In addition, individual reports should consider how the proposals support the [United Nations sustainable development goals](#)

## **Council Priorities and Projects**

17. Work undertaken by Select Committees will contribute to the delivery of key Council priorities including the Borough Vision, Council Plan and Future Council Programme. Reports to meetings will include details of how proposals impact on key Council priorities.



**Mohammed Farooq**  
**Lead for Law and Governance**

Report Author: Karen Taylor  
Telephone No. 01384 818116  
Email – [karen.taylor@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:karen.taylor@dudley.gov.uk)

## **Appendix**

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

## **List of Background Documents**

The Council's Constitution

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE**

**Membership**

11 Councillors

**Terms of Reference**

In accordance with any agreed programme of business and any statutory requirements:

- (a) To undertake scrutiny and contribute to policy development relating to matters falling within the portfolio responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services.
- (b) To undertake scrutiny investigations/inquiries as required.
- (c) To submit reports and recommendations to the relevant decision taker(s).



**Meeting of the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee –  
2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023**

**Report of the Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery**

**Developing the Neighbourhood Approach**

**Purpose of report**

1. To provide an update on developing the neighbourhood approach in the Environment directorate.

**Recommendations**

2. It is recommended:-
  - That the Highways and Environmental Services Select Committee note the content of the report
  - That the committee provide any views on the way Officers and Members can work together to ensure a neighbourhood delivery model is a future success.

**Background**

3. On 1st January 2023, the phase 1 restructuring of the former Public Realm Directorate was implemented. This phase 1 implemented a number of significant changes, including:
  - A change in name from the Public Realm Directorate to the Environment Directorate to better reflect the role the Directorate has in both the strategic environmental stewardship of the borough, as well as its responsibilities for the operational delivery of neighbourhood services

- A new senior management structure, which saw the creation of four distinct divisions, namely:
    - o Neighbourhood Services
    - o Transport and Highways
    - o Waste and Fleet
    - o Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change
4. Alongside a change in the senior management structure, the directorate also set about delivering:
- A refreshed approach to service planning, with accountabilities clearly set out in the Directorate Plan
  - A leadership development programme to encourage the upskilling of managers
  - Greater financial transparency and accountability
  - Modernised working practices
  - A recruitment exercise to introduce the required skills into the directorate
5. It was always intended that a 'Phase 2' would follow on from this senior management restructure and this report provides an update on progress with developing the neighbourhood approach.
6. On 7<sup>th</sup> July, staff were informed that consultation on Phase 2 of the restructure of the Environment directorate would begin. Staff were informed that those affected by the change proposals would be invited to an individual or group consultation meeting to discuss the proposals and to obtain their feedback. Following the consultation period, a final decision would then be made on the structural arrangements.

### A Neighbourhood Approach

7. As part of Phase 2 of the restructure of the Environment directorate, the Neighbourhood Services division aims to provide *'Modern, value for money and customer-focussed services for all of our residents, that support the Council's ambitious carbon reduction aims'*.
8. The neighbourhood approach aims to provide customer focused services that are tailored to specific neighbourhoods and deliver value for money. Through the restructure of the division, it is intended to create increased capacity to work closely with communities and partners to create thriving neighbourhoods and improve the quality of life for the people living in them.

9. Through the neighbourhood approach Officers will work to ensure the right services are delivered to suit each neighbourhood, as well as making these services more accessible to our residents. In delivering services, best use will be made of the buildings and depots accommodating staff and fleet vehicles, to ensure efficiencies and help us to reduce carbon emissions.
10. One of the most significant changes proposed as part of Phase 2 of the restructure is through the amalgamation of the operational teams of Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing to form a Street Scene team. As part of the proposal, no longer would these services be seen as separate, but instead be integrated around neighbourhood priorities, which inevitably vary in different parts of the Borough.
11. Whilst subject to the outcome of the current consultation, the Street Scene team will be responsible for ensuring the Borough is clean and tidy on a day to day basis. Amongst other things, this includes the sweeping of channels and footways, clearing graffiti, picking up dead animals, the emptying of 3,000 bins, the mowing of grass and cutting back of vegetation on highway verges, housing sites and parks and open spaces, treatment and removal of weeds, planting of trees, the maintenance of playing pitches from football through to bowls.
12. It is intended that the teams be aligned to the Council's Community Forum areas, with clear accountability and responsibility for the leadership and management of defined geographical areas of the Borough. These areas will align with those of partners such as Housing and the Police to ensure clear lines of communication and to allow a better and more joined up response to activity.
13. Through the restructure it is proposed to:
  - Create five Street Scene Neighbourhood Manager posts, aligned to the Council's Community Forum areas, with each area containing two Street Scene Neighbourhood Supervisor posts.
  - Create ten teams of 16 frontline operatives. As part of the creation of these teams, generic job descriptions will be introduced, replacing some 25 job titles that currently exist and which limits what duties staff can be deployed to undertake. The opportunity will also be taken to review shift patterns and working hours to enable a 7 day a week service.

## **Finance**

14. The current budget for the Neighbourhood Services Division is £10.495m.

The proposed structure is £10.387m resulting in a saving of £108k.

This saving will be used to fund the additional posts within the Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change team.

No redundancy costs have been built in, and until the consultation process is concluded these will not be known.

## **Law**

15. The Council may appoint staff as it considers necessary for the discharge of its functions under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **Risk Management**

16. There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

## **Equality Impact**

17. Equality Impact Assessments will be completed as required throughout the restructure and service redesign.

## **Human Resources/Organisational Development**

18. Human Resources and Organisational Development have been part of the proposals for the restructure and we have the Directorate Human Resources and Organisational Development Business Partner supporting the process.

## **Commercial/Procurement**

19. There are no direct commercial or procurement implications arising from this report.

## **Environment/Climate Change**

20. The restructure of the Environment Directorate has seen the creation of a dedicated Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change division to deliver the Council's ambitions in this area.

## **Council Priorities and Projects**

21. The restructure of the Environment Directorate will support key Council priorities

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N.M.P.' followed by a small flourish.

### **Acting Service Director – Neighbourhood Delivery**

Report Author: Edward Bradford  
Telephone: 01384 815550  
Email: [edward.bradford@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:edward.bradford@dudley.gov.uk)