

## Notice of Motion (Full Council)

Title of Motion: **Streamlining Working-from-Home and Street-Trading Consents in Sandwell**

Date of Council meeting the motion is to be submitted to: 4 November 2025

**Proposer: Councillor Les Trumpeter**

**Seconder: Councillor Justyna Kordala**

### **Motion:**

“Council notes that sole traders, home-based businesses and street traders are vital to Sandwell and its local economy and to regenerating our high streets.

Council further notes that the current street trading and running business from home consent processes are complex, paper-based, and can take three months or longer, deterring many new entrants and small enterprises. Other councils have adopted clearer, faster systems which balance small business support with public safety and community protections.

Council believes that delivering on the Sandwell Business Growth Plan pledge to support businesses with skills, knowledge, resources and partner engagement, requires breaking down unnecessary barriers for small traders and home-based entrepreneurs. Sandwell must make it simpler and quicker for residents to start small, test ideas legally, and grow locally, while ensuring fairness, safety, compliance and accessibility. Clear published guidance, proportionate safeguards and defined timelines reduce confusion for residents and officers, and a modern, transparent system would encourage innovation, diversify our high streets and demonstrate that Sandwell is supporting small local businesses.

Council therefore calls on the Licensing Committee and Licensing Officers to -

1. Draft a modernised Street Trading Consent Policy with clear eligibility criteria and standard operating conditions. Introduce options for short-term and temporary consents (1-day, 7-day, 28-day, and up to 6 months) to allow pilots, seasonal trading and pop-ups. Develop a transparent system with published fees, maps of designated/prohibited zones and the ability for applicants to find FAQ online. Carry out regular reviews and monitoring, with data reported annually to the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board.
2. Draft clear Home-Based Business Guidance. In plain English, aligned with national planning policy, setting out when planning permission is required and when it is not. Provide a simple triage checklist to help residents self-assess whether their activity counts as a material change of use. Ensure guidance covers permitted development rights for garden offices, tenancy or landlord consent, and other permissions such as food registration where relevant. Include access to free early advice so residents are not unnecessarily directed to the Valuation Office Agency or formal planning applications. Review the guidance regularly and report outcomes, including resident feedback annually to the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board.
3. Consult with small business representatives, market traders, town centre partnerships, and residents to ensure the policy is both supportive of innovation and business growth and proportionate.”