

**REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ADULT EDUCATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE 15TH January 2013**

Report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services

Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning Division budget update

Purpose of Report

1. This report has been brought to update the scrutiny committee on the proposals in place to achieve the £347,000 saving in the divisional budget as requested at the last meeting of the committee on the 6th November 2012.

Background

2. The intention had been to deliver these efficiencies as part of the Black Country Library Project, but that is no longer possible due to the withdrawal of the other Black Country Local Authorities at a late stage of development.
3. The budget report of the 6th November stated *'that a management restructure to deliver £75,000 efficiency savings'* would be implemented. It also stated that the *'method of achieving the balance of the savings target is currently being developed. The proposals to date will not impact on the service delivered to the public'*.
4. To meet the identified savings there will be a requirement to reduce staffing level, however, it is not possible to state at this stage exactly how that will be achieved as we are currently in the process of consulting with employees over a number of options. To minimise the need for compulsory redundancies we will be working with employees, their representatives and HR colleagues to explore opportunities for voluntary redundancy, voluntary reduction in hours/flexible retirement, redeployment and redundancy bumping in line with corporate policies and procedures.
5. Further proposals to meet the balance of £272,000 are being developed for consultation later in 2013 once outline political approval has been received.

Finance

6. Currently the Directorate have identified £75k of the required savings of £347k for 2013/14. Any deficit in savings being delivered during 2013/14 will be picked up through the medium term financial strategy as part of the overall DACHS strategy.

Law

7. Under the terms of the 1964 Public Library and Museums Act, public library services are statutory services with Dudley MBC acting as a designated Library Authority which must provide *'a comprehensive and efficient library service that is available to all who wish to use it'*.
8. It meets these requirements when it provides a library service which: serves both adults & children; is available to everyone & meets any special needs required by members of the community; encourages participation &

full use of the service; provides materials sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general & specific requirements of those in the community; provides value for money, working in partnership with other authorities & agencies.

9. Recent Judicial Reviews of changes to library services have indicated that they need to be done in the context of full and effective consultation with local communities. They also need to have full Equality Impact Assessments completed showing how the consultation has had an impact on the decisions made.
10. *'Public records, as defined by the Public Records Act 1958 and subsequent amendments to the schedules of such records attached to it, are subject to statutory controls and are placed under the supervision of the Keeper of Public Records (the Chief Executive of The National Archives), and the Lord Chancellor (the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs). '(Taken from the Standard for Record Repositories). Dudley Archives have currently been approved by the Keeper to be a place of deposit as defined by the Act. This status is monitored by periodic inspections and, if lost, would mean that records of national importance would no longer be deposited in Dudley.*
11. The Council is under a duty to secure the provision of adequate facilities for further education under Section 15 of the education act 1996. The Adult and Community Learning (ACL) Team manages a subsidised programme of adult and community learning on behalf of the Council. The ACL team acts as the informal Lead Accountable Body by facilitating the Post 19 Learning and Skills Partnership.

Equality Impact

12. All of the staff involved in the redundancy process are female which is consistent with the balance of staff as females make up the largest proportion of the staff in the division - Male 64 (19.7%) Female 261 (80.3%). The majority are in the upper quartile of age for staff which is also the largest group of staff within the division.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended that:
 - The committee note the report
 - Contribute to the consultation process when proposals are more fully developed



Andrea Pope-Smith
Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services
Contact Officer: Kate Millin
Telephone: 01384 814745
Email: kate.millin@dudley.gov.uk