

**Select Committee for Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education - Wednesday 5 March 2008**

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

**Dudley Borough Economic Strategy**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To consult with the Select Committee for Regeneration, Culture & Adult Education on the Council's Economic Strategy, which is being updated for 2008/09.

**Background**

2. The Dudley Borough Economic Strategy underpins the 'Regeneration Matters' theme of the Dudley Council Plan, and the 'Creating a Prosperous Borough' theme of the Dudley Community Strategy. It also acts as the business plan for the Dudley Economic Development and Regeneration Partnership which is a thematic partnership within the Dudley Community Partnership structure.
3. The Economic Strategy has five Strategic Aims that provide a long term vision for economic regeneration in the borough. The Aims are:
  1. To optimise the opportunities for local people – including the most vulnerable people and those from deprived areas - to obtain local jobs
  2. To support and develop new and existing businesses and to attract inward investment to the Borough
  3. To encourage and support the development of a diverse and dynamic business base that increases the proportion of well paid jobs across the Borough
  4. To improve the economic and environmental infrastructure of Dudley Borough and its town centres
  5. To champion the interests and assets of Dudley Borough, securing additional resources and improving its position regionally, nationally and internationally

The Economic Strategy is underpinned by a Strategic Action Plan which details the key actions that will be delivered against each Strategic Aim together with information on the relevant targets, outputs, milestones and timescales.

4. The Economic Strategy is updated annually to ensure that the document reflects new developments that are planned and/or underway.
5. The Economic Strategy supports the aspirations set out in the 2033 Black Country Study Vision 'Looking Forward: The Black Country in 2033', and its four key objectives, which are:

1. Population growth to 1.2m
  2. Raising incomes to the national averages
  3. Achieving a better balance of resident households reflecting the national average
  4. Land use/transportation restructuring to create high quality sustainable environments
6. The Economic Strategy recognises that successful implementation depends on joint working, strong partnerships, and input of resources from a variety of public and private sector organisations at regional, sub-regional and local level.
7. The Strategy reflects cross directorate working within the Council. Other Directorates, in addition to the Directorate of the Urban Environment, are contributing to the update of the Economic Strategy, and will also contribute directly to the implementation of the Strategic Aims. These include the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Directorate of Children's Services.

In addition, external organisations involved in the delivery of the Strategy are involved in its development, including the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, Business Link and The Prince's Trust.

8. The Economic Strategy is currently being updated for 2008/09.
9. Part of the updating process involves a review of what has been achieved in the past twelve months. Some of the key achievements identified to date include:
- City Strategy initiative underway with Local Management Groups established for all 5 target wards
  - Deprived Areas Fund awarded to support delivery of City Strategy (contract negotiations to be finalised with LSC)
  - 350 clients placed into work through Future Skills and 180 people placed into work through Adult & Community Learning
  - 560 new learners engaged in the Family Learning Network
  - 11 Children's Centres to be designated in the borough by March 2008
  - 30 new business start-ups supported through the Prince's Trust
  - Business support provided to almost 4000 businesses and 800 individuals in the borough receiving new business start-up support through Business Link West Midlands
  - Endorsement of Phase 1 Revision to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy – Brierley Hill now recognised as a new strategic centre and new role for Dudley town centre as a regional tourism destination and focus for new homes
  - Issues and Options paper prepared for Brierley Hill and public consultation undertaken.
  - Project finances and legal contracts completed for £26.5m new health and social care centre in Brierley Hill (LIFT Project).
  - Cabinet approval received to create an Arms Length Company and select a development partner to lead the delivery of the Dudley Area Development Framework.
  - Modus are working with Dudley MBC to regenerate and extend The Crown Centre, Stourbridge.
  - Work underway on the £30 million redevelopment of Halesowen town centre.
  - Work commenced on the construction of the £27m parallel route in Brierley Hill (Brierley Hill Sustainable Access Network)

- Draft Cradley/Windmill Hill Local Centre Regeneration Plan issued for consultation
- Dudley MBC is hosting the Regional Brownfield Land Working Group and the Regional Brownfield Land Co-ordinator.

10. Some of the plans emerging for 2008/09 onwards to be included in the Strategy's action plan are:

- Continued delivery of City Strategy and LAA targets in priority wards
- Agreement of Next Generation Local Area Agreement
- Creation of Arms Length Company to deliver the developments in Dudley town centre - OJEU process to appoint Joint Venture partner
- Establishment of the Dudley Town Centre Regeneration Partnership
- Further development of Area Action Plans for Brierley Hill, Stourbridge & Halesowen
- Further development of plans for the South Black Country Innovation Campus
- Finalise Regeneration Plans for Shell Corner & Pensnett
- City Region to become a Company Limited by Guarantee – Dudley MBC will be a full member
- Ongoing review of implications for the Local Authority from the Sub-National Review of Economic Regeneration

11. The draft 2008/09 strategy will be issued for consultation in February 2008 and a copy of the draft strategy will be placed in the Members' Room.

12. The final strategy will be reported to the Council's Cabinet meeting in March 2008. When the final strategy is approved by Cabinet and Council, a copy will be placed in the Members' Room.

### **Finance**

13. The Economic Strategy is likely to have a significant financial impact from the level of the Regional economy to that of individual neighbourhoods within the Borough. More detail of this financial impact will be provided in the Resources section of the Strategy document.

The Council will work with all relevant Partners and Agencies in seeking the required external financial support for economic regeneration projects within the Economic Strategy which are not currently financed within either the Council's or other organisations' budgets.

### **Law**

14. Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 empowers the Council to take action to implement measures it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the Borough.

### **Equality Impact**

15. The Strategy aims to bring increased prosperity across the Borough. In addition, Strategic Aim 1, optimising opportunities for local people to obtain local jobs, is

primarily aimed at residents, including children and young people, and wards that are recognised as being disadvantaged in economic and social terms.

Details of Dudley Council's Equality and Diversity Policy are included in Appendix 4 of the Economic Strategy.

### **Recommendation**

16. It is recommended that:-

- the Select Committee for Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education notes the progress report on the 2008/09 update of the Dudley Borough Economic Strategy as part of the consultation process and provides further comments on any particular issues to be taken forward in the update of the Strategy to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration.



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### **List of Background Papers**

2007/08 Economic Strategy