

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ADULT EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 6TH MARCH, 2013

**AT 6.00PM
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM 2
THE COUNCIL HOUSE
DUDLEY**

If you (or anyone you know) is attending the meeting and requires assistance to access the venue and/or its facilities, could you please contact Democratic Services in advance and we will do our best to help you

JOE JABLONSKI
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OFFICER (DEMOCRATIC SERVICES)
Internal Ext – 5243
External – 01384 815243
E-mail – josef.jablonski@dudley.gov.uk

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

MEETINGS IN DUDLEY COUNCIL HOUSE

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There is to be no smoking on the premises in line with national legislation. It is an offence to smoke in or on these premises.

Please turn off your mobile phones and mobile communication devices during the meeting.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Your ref:	Our ref:	Please ask for:	Telephone No.
	JJ/jj	Mr J Jablonski	815243

26th February, 2013

Dear Councillor

Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee to be held on Wednesday 6th March, 2013 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley to consider the business set out in the Agenda below.

The agenda and public reports are available on the Council's Website www.dudley.gov.uk and follow the links to Councillors in Dudley and Committee Management Information System .

Yours sincerely



Director of Corporate Resources

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

To report the names of any substitute members serving for this meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

4. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15th January, 2013 (copy herewith)

5. PUBLIC FORUM

To receive questions from members of the public.

6. PROGRESS REPORT - DUDLEY BOROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (PAGES 1- 6)

To consider a report of the Director of the Urban Environment

7. MEASURES TO IMPROVE TOWN CENTRES VITALITY:PORTAS PILOT PROJECT (PAGES 7 – 15)

To consider a report of the Director of the Urban Environment

8. CONSIDERATION OF INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION AND THE PROVISION OF ADULT EDUCATION (PAGES 16 - 27)

To consider a report of the Director of Adult,Community and Housing Services

9. STRAY AND ILLEGALLY GRAZING HORSES - UPDATE (PAGES 28 - 34)

To consider a report of the Director of the Urban Environment

10. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11.8 (IF ANY)
AND QUESTIONS ON INFORMATION ITEMS PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED SEPARATELY (IF ANY).

Members are asked to e-mail Joe Jablonski, at the address shown on the agenda cover, at least three working days before the meeting details of any questions they would wish to raise ON THE INFORMATION ITEMS.

This will enable responses to questions to be circulated prior to the meeting. Questions on information items raised at the meeting will receive a written response following the meeting.

Councillors – A.Ahmed, Attwood,Blood, Body, Caunt, G.Davies, Hale, Herbert, K.Turner, Tyler and Wright

**REGENERATION, CULTURE AND
ADULT EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, 15th January, 2013
at 6.00 pm in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor Tyler (Chair)
Councillor K Turner (Vice Chair)
Councillors A Ahmed, Attwood, Blood, Body, Caunt, G. H. Davies, Hale, Russell
and Wright

Officers

Assistant Director, Housing Strategy and Private Sector (Lead Officer to the Committee); Treasurer; Change Architect (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services); Assistant Director, Culture and Leisure, Assistant Director, Economic Regeneration, Head of Sports and Physical Activities, Head of Economic Development and Planning Policy Manager (all Directorate of the Urban Environment) and Mr. J. Jablonski (Directorate of Corporate Resources)

26 **APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence for the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Herbert.

27 **SUBSTITUTE MEMBER**

It was reported that Councillor Russell had been appointed as a substitute member for Councillor Herbert for this meeting of the Committee only.

28 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

29 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6th November, 2012, be approved as a correct record and signed.

30 PUBLIC FORUM

No matters were raised under this item.

31 LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND ADULT LEARNING DIVISION BUDGET_ UPDATE

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted arising from the request made at the last meeting of the Committee for an update on the proposals in place to achieve the £347,000 saving in the divisional budget.

The Change Architect presented the content of the report to the Committee and arising from the presentation given members commented to the effect that further details were required so that the Committee could fully scrutinise the budget prior to it receiving consideration by the Cabinet and Council. In view of this calls were made for a special meeting of the Committee to be held so that further information could be provided.

In response to comments made it was reported that further discussions were being held on the balance of £272,000 for consultation later in 2013.

In the light of further comments on this aspect the Treasurer reported that the balance of £272,000 of savings would not appear in the budget for 2013/14 but would be deferred to 2014/15. There would be an opportunity to scrutinise the £272,000 proposals in November when they would feature in the 2014/15 budget, or earlier. The impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy of deferring these savings for one year would be met from savings in the current year in the Quality and Commissioning Division of the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services.

Arising from further questions asked the Change Architect undertook to respond to Councillor Body regarding the amount spent on books in the last year and in respect of upgrades to libraries.

At the end of questions and comments Councillor Turner moved the following motion which was seconded –

‘In view of the incomplete information given in the budget reports contained in the agendas of 6th November 2012 and 15th January 2013 that have not allowed the full scrutiny of the budget as it affects this Committee, and in spite of the statements made at the meeting of 6th November 2012 and the email from the Director of Corporate Resources, we are not satisfied that scrutiny has yet been possible. I move that a special meeting of this Committee is held before the budget is further considered by the Cabinet and the Council with the budget scrutiny as the only substantive agenda item.’

On being put to the vote the motion was lost.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, and as reported at the meeting, on the proposals in place to achieve the £347,000 saving in the divisional budget, as requested at the last meeting of the Committee, be noted and that at the appropriate time members contribute to the consultation process when proposals are more fully developed.

32 GLASS MUSEUM – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted updating the Committee on progress in relation to the glass museum project which had previously been reported to this Committee on 3rd March, 2011.

Arising from a presentation of the content of the report by the Assistant Director, Culture and Leisure members asked a number of questions in particular regarding aspects of the proposals and how they might be developed and the role of the Council in relation to that development.

Overall it was commented on that the project development was at a very early stage and that the concerns and issues raised by members had yet to be fully considered and developed.

The officers concerned were also asked to bear in mind certain points, for example how the site would be controlled; that a lot of the glass collection was owned by the Council and that it was hoped that it would not be handed over to a third party without the necessary controls being instituted; related security issues with the need to ensure that the collection remained as secure as possible and that consideration should be given to incorporating a section of the canal tow path within the site which would be secure and safe and encourage people to tie up and so use and view the facilities on offer.

Overall, it was considered that the report detailed very much the first stages in the project development, that there was a long way to go but that it appeared to be the right direction which was innovative and the way forward.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, updating the Committee on progress in relation to the glass museum project, be noted.

33 PROGRESS REPORT ON REGENERATION OF THE BOROUGH'S LOCAL AND PRINCIPAL TOWN CENTRES

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted updating the Committee on progress in the regeneration of the Borough's Local and Principal Centres.

Arising from a presentation of the content of the report by the Head of Economic Development, members asked a number of questions and made comments, most of which were responded to.

In respect of other issues raised, the Head of Economic Development undertook to respond direct to Councillor Blood regarding his queries in respect of the fourth and fifth bullet points contained in paragraph 33 of the report submitted in relation to the Crown Centre in respect of the 1500 sq meters of the new mall (including Food Court) and whether car parking charges would be introduced in the High Street and Market Street, Stourbridge.

In response to a question from Councillor Caunt, the Lead Officer to the Committee undertook to arrange for the point raised as to whether the old Sedgley Housing Office for which a sale had been agreed was premature as it was considered that this land had been bought as part of a planned sustainable access route proposed for Sedgley.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, and as reported at the meeting, on the progress made in regenerating the Borough's principal and local centres, be noted.

34 LONDON 2012 - LEGACY

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on an overview of the legacy arrangements arising from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Arising from the presentation given by the Head of Sports and Physical Activities on the content of the report submitted members commented in particular on the representation of both athletes and officials from Dudley and the rest of the Black Country in the games and the take up with particular emphasis on take up from disabled athletes arising from the holding of the games. In response to the latter point it was stated that in Dudley the numbers participating were growing.

In relation to a suggestion made as to whether details of the Games Makers Team could be obtained for possible future use it was reported that a breakdown in respect of the Black Country was available and that the point made would be pursued.

In respect of a further question regarding the Doorstep Clubs and the twenty most deprived communities of England residents of which were expected to provide 80% of such club members the Head of Sports and Physical Activities undertook to provide Councillor Russell with a list of those deprived communities.

Members also commented on points made in relation to officials from the Black Country who had participated in the games and in this connection reference was made to Bob Dillon of the Lions Boxing Club in Silverend, Brierley Hill and as a mark of appreciation it was suggested that a letter of thanks be sent to him on behalf of the Committee.

Regarding officials a query was raised regarding the need for people to act as officials and whether any courses to facilitate this were being held. In response it was noted that this was being developed for cycling in that cycle leaders had been identified in relation to the project referred to in paragraph 8 of the report submitted.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, on the range of legacy opportunities that were available arising from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, be noted and that the Lead Officer to the Committee be requested to arrange for a letter of thanks to be sent by the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, to Mr Bob Dillon thanking him for the work he had undertaken in relation to the games.

The meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.

CHAIR

Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee - 6th March 2013

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Progress Report - Dudley Borough Economic Development Strategy

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee with an annual progress report on the Dudley Borough Economic Development Strategy, for the period 2012/13.

Background

2. The Dudley Borough Economic Development Strategy (2011/12 - 2013/14) was approved by Cabinet on 16th March 2011.
3. The Economic Development Strategy is a three-year strategy setting out the overall aims for economic development and the activities to be taken forward to create the right conditions for increasing competitiveness and securing sustainable economic growth. It is developed in response to the key economic challenges set out in the statutory Dudley Borough Economic Assessment.
4. The Dudley Borough Economic Assessment was approved by Cabinet in March 2011. It includes an Economic Scorecard setting out high level performance indicators to monitor the Borough's economic performance.

Dudley Borough's Economic Performance 2012/13 - Headline Findings

5. This report provides an annual update of the Economic Scorecard and a summary of the headline findings.
6. The Economic Scorecard has been updated according to the themes of 'business and enterprise' and 'people and communities' with the latest data available for each indicator - attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
7. Compared to the previous reporting year, at a Borough level the following changes are worthy of note:

5%+ improvement in performance

- % of total manufacturing jobs (this compares favourably when compared with regional data which shows a decline)
- % of people self employed
- % of the working age population with no qualifications
- % of the working age population with Level 4 (degree) or higher qualifications

0% up to 5% improvement in performance

- Gross Value Added (GVA) per head
- Annual gross earnings for full time employees living in the Borough
- Total number of businesses
- Gross disposable household income per head
- Working age employment rate (this is contrary to both the regional and national performance which have both shown a decline in performance)
- % of the working age population with Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE grades at A* to C) or higher qualifications
- % of the working age population with Level 3 (equivalent to A' Levels) or higher qualifications
- % achieving 5+ A* to C GCSE grades including English and Maths

8. Conversely, compared to the previous year:

5%+ decline in performance

- New business start-up survival rates after 12 months*
- New business start-ups survival rates after 3 years*

0% up to 5% decline in performance

- Weekly and annual gross earnings for full-time employees for people who work in the Borough
- Number of full-time jobs*
- New business registrations per 10,000 population (started by those aged 16+)
- % of working age population claiming out of work benefits*
- % of Job Seekers Allowance Claimants claiming for more than 1 year*
- Job Seekers Allowance Claimants as a % of the working age population

(*) indicates a decline in performance at both a Dudley, regional (West Midlands) and national (England) level

Economic Development Strategy

9. The Economic Development Strategy sets out the strategic aims and three year plan for economic development activities for Dudley Borough. Currently, Officers are in discussion with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration on how best to refresh the forthcoming Economic Development Strategy in order to maximise its use as an effective marketing tool for the Borough.

10. The three strategic aims are as follows:

1. Place: To improve and champion the economic infrastructure and assets of Dudley Borough and secure additional resources to improve its competitiveness.
2. Business & Enterprise: To encourage the development of a dynamic and diverse business base and job opportunities through support to new and existing businesses in the Borough.

3. People & Communities: To optimise the opportunities for local people - including the most vulnerable people and those from deprived areas - to develop and improve their skills and obtain jobs.

11. Some of the key projects to be taken forward, or developed, include:

- Redevelopment of Dudley Market Place
- New build Dudley College development
- Castle Hill regeneration scheme
- Dudley Townscape Heritage Initiative
- Crown Centre development in Stourbridge
- Local Investment Plan (LIP) schemes including North Priory, Extra Care Housing and Local Authority New Build.
- Dudley Business First
- Dudley Business Loan Fund
- Apprenticeship Programme
- Community First/Community Innovation & Enterprise Fund
- Engagement with Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

External Funding - Economic Regeneration Projects

12. From 2003/04 to 2012/13, over £65m of external funding has been secured to support the delivery of economic regeneration projects in the Borough.
13. Provisional external funding at Black Country level amounts to £21.3m, including Regional Growth Fund 3, Black Country Property Investment Programme, Black Country GOLD and ERDF Technical Assistance. It is estimated that around 25% of this funding could potentially benefit Dudley Borough (approximately £5.3m) up to the end of 2015.
14. Project-specific funding includes £4.5m for Castle Hill, £2.4m for Townscape Heritage Initiative and £500,000 for the Dudley Business Loan Fund as well as outline approval for £2.6m funding for the Dudley Town Centre Public Realm and Ambassador project.

Finance

15. The Council will work with all relevant partners and agencies in seeking the required external financial support for economic regeneration projects and activities within the Economic Development Strategy which are not currently financed within either the Council's or other organisations' budgets. However, the impact of national and global economic issues will continue to provide a major challenge to business, public bodies and the voluntary sector, as well as to families and individuals within the Borough.

Law

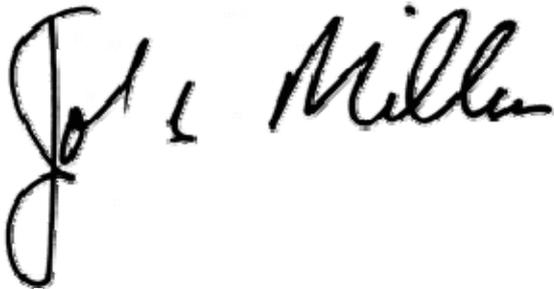
16. The Council may do anything which is incidental to conducive to or which facilitates the discharge of its functions under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Equality Impact

17. The Economic Development Strategy aims to bring increased prosperity across the Borough. In addition, Strategic Aim 3 - People & Communities: Optimising opportunities for local people to develop and improve their skills and obtain jobs - is primarily aimed at residents, including children and young people, and areas and communities that are recognised as being disadvantaged in economic and social terms.

Recommendation

18. It is recommended that the Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee:-
- notes the contents of the report and provides further comments on any particular areas that it considers need to be taken into account in delivering the Dudley Borough Economic Development Strategy in 2013/14; and
 - provides recommendations on the process for developing the next Economic Development Strategy, to commence April 2014.



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John Millar
Director of the Urban Environment

Contact Officer: Lynne Avery
Telephone: 01384 814143
Email: lynne.avery:@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Dudley Borough Economic Assessment (March 2011)

Dudley Borough Economic Development Strategy - 2011/12 - 2013/14

Appendix 1

Indicator	Latest Performance			Latest Data (Year)
	Dudley	W Mids	England	
Business & Enterprise				
Gross Value Added (GVA) per Head (£)	£14,075	£17,486	£21,349	2011
Weekly Gross Earnings for Full Time Employees - Workplace (£)	£411.50	£469.20	£512.10	2012
Annual Gross Earnings for Full Time Employees - Workplace (£)	£22,224	£24,600	£26,800	2012
Weekly Gross Earnings for Full Time Employees - Residents (£)	£454.80	£469.30	£512.70	2012
Annual Gross Earnings for Full Time Employees - Residents (£)	£23,933	£24,617	£26,804	2012
Total Business Stock	10,345	208,975	2,218,215	2012
Number of Full Time Jobs	112,000	2,304,000	23,059,000	2011
% of Total Jobs in Manufacturing	16.0	12.0	9.0	2011
New Business Registrations per 10,000 population (16+)	35.9	43.3	54.0	2011
% Self Employed	7.4	8.3	9.4	Jan-Dec11
New Business Start-Ups Survival Rates - 12 months (%)	86.1	87.1	86.8	2011
New Business Start-Ups Survival Rates - 3 years (%)	57.5	58.6	57.9	2011
People & Communities				
Population Size	313,300	5,608,700	53,107,200	2011
Working Age Population	195,200	3,561,100	34,347,400	2011
Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) per head (£)	£12,234	£13,989	£15,938	2010
Working Age Employment Rate	71.5	67.2	70.2	Jan-Dec11
% of Working Age Population Claiming Out of Work Benefits	14.0	13.9	12.1	Feb-12
Job Seekers Allowance Claimants as % of working age	5.3	4.6	3.7	Aug-12

population				
% of Job Seekers Allowance Claimants Claiming for 1 year +	33.7	29.6	27.2	Aug-12
% of Working Age Population with No Qualifications	11.9	14	10.4	Jan-Dec11
% of Working Age Population with Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE grades at A* to C) or higher	65.7	64.3	69.5	Jan-Dec11
% of Working Age Population with Level 3 (equivalent to A' Levels) or higher	45.1	45.9	52.4	Jan-Dec11
% of Working Age Population with Level 4 or higher	24.4	26.3	32.7	Jan-Dec11
% achieving 5+ A* to C GCSE inc. Eng & Maths	57.7	57.0	58.3	2011

Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee 6 March 2013

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Measures to improve Town Centres vitality; Portas Pilot project

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Scrutiny Committee on the pilot project set up to improve vitality in the Borough's centres

Background

2. Along with many traditional Town Centres across the country, the Borough's centres have for a number of years faced an increasing number of challenges to their vitality and role. The common cited reasons for this often mask a more complex set of circumstances; The changing patterns in retailing which have developed highly convenient, easily accessible services which serve today's consumers, along with the enormous growth of online and mobile retailing, the speed and sophistication of major national and international retailers and the recession have all changed the nature of retail activity to the detriment of the traditional High Street.
3. The Council has over the last decade made a number of interventions to seek to improve the fortunes of its Principal and Local Centres and these include:
 - 3.1 The preparation of Area Action Plans and Regeneration Strategies in order to guide and support appropriate and sustainable development
 - 3.2 The creation of the arms length company, New Heritage Regeneration Limited, to coordinate borough wide development, initially in Dudley and Brierley Hill Town Centres in partnership with the Council
 - 3.3 The securing of significant amounts of external funding from Advantage West Midlands, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, English Heritage and Section 106 receipts towards land acquisition, development and environmental projects
 - 3.4 The creation and/or support of Partnership groups such as the former Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership, Dudley and Brierley Hill Town Centre Partnerships and Local Centre Partnerships

3.5 The delivery of a Town Centre events programme

4. This Committee have considered reports on the subjects referred to in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.4 on a number of occasions, most recently the 7 January 2013
5. On 17 May 2011 the Prime Minister announced that he had asked Mary Portas, the leading retail marketing consultant, to undertake a review of the high street. The report *The Portas review: an independent review into the future of our high streets* was published on 13 December 2011. The Government's formal response to the recommendations made by Mary Portas in her report was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 30 March 2012.
6. The purpose of the Portas review was to identify what the Government, local authorities, businesses and others can do together to promote the development of new models of prosperous and diverse high streets. It forms part of the Government's work on the Growth Agenda and the main aims of the review were to:
 - Examine the case for developing town centres that contribute to promoting economic growth, creating jobs and improving quality of life in local areas
 - Explore new business models for high streets relevant to the modern consumer
 - Recommend what action government, businesses and other organisations should take to create diverse, sustainable high streets where small businesses and independent retailers are able to thrive.
7. A summary of the recommendations to the Portas Report are included in Appendix 1 to this report, and include a number of measures which the Council had already initiated
8. The final recommendation (No. 28) proposed that a number of High Street Pilots be set up to 'test proof of concept' and in February 2012 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) invited applications from local partnerships and consortiums for grant funding under a new Portas Review pilot scheme. The scheme sought to support twelve pilots with funding of up to £100,000 for each. Submissions were invited on the basis of the following criteria:
 - The creation of a "Town Team" that would be able to drive innovation and improvement in the way the current high street is managed, develop a strategic and collaborative approach, and be made up of a wide range of local interests including landlords, retailers, local authorities and local communities.
 - Pilot areas representative of a variety of high streets and town centres and smaller retail areas with a good geographical spread and areas with both high and low average income levels and high and low shop vacancy rates
 - Pilots areas with a transformational vision for their high street and the backing to make it a reality.

- Pilot bids able to demonstrate maximum commitment to the Town Team approach amongst retailers, landlords, the local authority and the local community
 - areas able to demonstrate the potential for improvement
 - The most innovative ideas that will have maximum impact and could be replicated elsewhere.
9. Given the critical mass underway with a number of significant regeneration initiatives in and around the Town Centre (including the Market Place public realm project, the Townscape Heritage Initiative, Dudley College developments, Supermarket proposals and Castle Hill and Zoo project) the Dudley Town Centre Partnership in close liaison with the Council submitted a proposal for this round, and for the second round, however neither was accepted by DCLG
10. However, given the enthusiasm demonstrated by the Dudley Town Centre Partnership for the principles set out in the Pilot Bid, the Partnership agreed to progress without the support of DCLG for its own Pilot Project, and on the 17 December 2012 the Partnership formally adopted the role of the Town Team for Dudley Town Centre and charged a Project Team which meets on a monthly basis with the evolution and delivery of the Action Plan which was included in the DCLG bid.
11. The current Action Plan is included as Appendix 2 to this report

12. Progress to date on the Action Plan includes:

Physical improvements	Improve residential offer in the town centre	Funding bid to the Homes and Communities agency is in preparation in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord
Community and Events	Develop social enterprise in the Town Centre	A Community Engagement specialist has been engaged and presented findings to the Town Team on the 26 February
Filling/Occupying Units	Survey – what and who is missing from the Town Investigate capacity for further free on street parking	Consultation is underway with Dudley College students Consultation on amending time limits is currently underway and proposals for additional on street parking are in preparation
Marketing	Package of support to encourage more take up of market stalls	Outline ERDF approval secured for Market Place project
	Surveys	First footfall survey has been completed Town Centre vacancy survey has been completed and will be repeated on a quarterly basis
	Develop Tourism Strategy	Stakeholder event took place at the end of February to start the preparation of the strategy

Finance

13. The work of the project team is funded from existing resources, and seeks to identify opportunities to generate investment into the Borough through various external funding sources.

Law

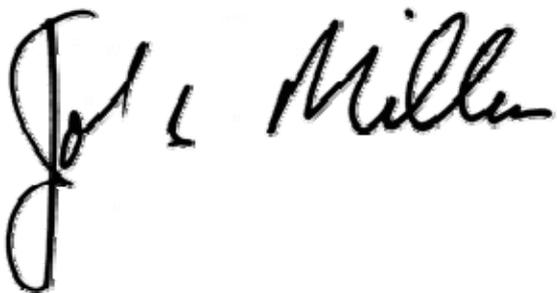
14. Pursuant to Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council has the general power of competence to do anything that individuals generally may do

Equality Impact

15. Delivery of the proposals in this report would bring significant benefits to the Borough and would have a major positive effect for residents, visitors, businesses, investors and developers and all groups in society

Recommendation

16. That the Committee note the progress made in developing the Portas Pilot for Dudley Town Centre



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John Millar
Director of the Urban Environment

Contact Officer: Rupert Dugdale
Telephone: 01384 815538
Email rupert.dugdale@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

The Portas Review - An independent review into the future of our high streets. Mary Portas/DCLG December 2011

Appendix 1 – A summary of the recommendations to the Portas Report

1. Put in place a “Town Team”: a visionary, strategic and strong operational management team for high streets
2. Empower successful Business Improvement Districts to take on more responsibilities and powers and become “Super-BIDs”
3. Legislate to allow landlords to become high street investors by contributing to their Business Improvement District
4. Establish a new “National Market Day” where budding shopkeepers can try their hand at operating a low-cost retail business
5. Make it easier for people to become market traders by removing unnecessary regulations so that anyone can trade on the high street unless there is a valid reason why not
6. Government should consider whether business rates can better support small businesses and independent retailers
7. Local authorities should use their new discretionary powers to give business rate concessions to new local businesses
8. Make business rates work for business by reviewing the use of the RPI with a view to changing the calculation to CPI
9. Local areas should implement free controlled parking schemes that work for their town centres and we should have a new parking league table
10. Town Teams should focus on making high streets accessible, attractive and safe
11. Government should include high street deregulation as part of their ongoing work on freeing up red tape
12. Address the restrictive aspects of the ‘Use Class’ system to make it easier to change the uses of key properties on the high street
13. Put betting shops into a separate ‘Use Class’ of their own
14. Make explicit a presumption in favour of town centre development in the wording of the National Planning Policy Framework

15. Introduce Secretary of State “exceptional sign off” for all new out-of-town developments and require all large new developments to have an “affordable shops” quota
16. Large retailers should support and mentor local businesses and independent retailers
17. Retailers should report on their support of local high streets in their annual report
18. Encourage a contract of care between landlords and their commercial tenants by promoting the leasing code and supporting the use of lease structures other than upward only rent reviews, especially for small businesses
19. Explore further disincentives to prevent landlords from leaving units vacant
20. Banks who own empty property on the high street should either administer these assets well or be required to sell them
21. Local authorities should make more proactive use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers to encourage the redevelopment of key high street retail space
22. Empower local authorities to step in when landlords are negligent with new “Empty Shop Management Orders”
23. Introduce a public register of high street landlord
24. Run a high profile campaign to get people involved in Neighbourhood Plans
25. Promote the inclusion of the High Street in Neighbourhood Plans
26. Developers should make a financial contribution to ensure that the local community has a strong voice in the planning system
27. Support imaginative community use of empty properties through Community Right to Buy, Meanwhile Use and a new “Community Right to Try”
28. Run a number of High Street Pilots to test proof of concept

Measures to improve Town Centres vitality; Portas Pilot project

Appendix 2 – Town Team Action Plan

Priority Areas	Activities	Potential Funding	Timescale	Lead/Key Partners
Physical Improvements	Refurbishment of neglected High Street shops 25-30 shop fronts	Vacant shop front budget	2013 Q1+	Council/Dudley College/retailers
	Townscape Heritage Initiative – Phase 2	HLF/Council	2013 Q4	Council /HLF/ owners of premises
	Improve residential offer in town centre	Council/Homes & Communities Agency/Registered Social Landlords	2013 Q3+	Council/Homes & Communities Agency/Registered Social Landlords
Community and Events	Distinctly Dudley! Engage communities visiting Dudley Town Centre	Council//Dudley College	2013 Q2+	Council//Dudley College/Town Team
	Develop social enterprise offer in town centre: 1. Identify current Dudley offer and develop strategy for town	N/A officer time only	2013 Q2	Council
	2. Develop social enterprise hub within the town	Local Enterprise Partnership/Property Improvement Programme	2014 Q1+	To be determined
	3. Develop package of support for new and developing social enterprises	Social Enterprise Fund/Chamber	2014 Q1+	To be determined
	Development of an outdoor gym with community organisation	Community Forum	2013 Q3+	Council/Community Group
	Community proposal management fees	Portas/Town Centre Innovation Fund	2013 Q1	Council
	Filling/Occupying Units	Extend 'meanwhile' strategy - vinyls on empty shops and voluntary & community use of vacant properties	Vacant shop front budget/voluntary/ community/ Dudley College	2013 Q1+

Priority Areas	Activities	Potential Funding	Timescale	Lead/Key Partners
	Package of business support including business health checks, mentoring scheme, loans, finance, free rental period on market stalls & empty shops	Dudley and Stourbridge Colleges/Town Centre Innovation Fund/Rate Relief/Dudley Business First/Local Enterprise Zone	2013 Q2+	To be determined
	Package of support to encourage young entrepreneurs including start up units with business support	Dudley and Stourbridge Colleges/Town Centre Innovation Fund/Rate Relief/Prince's Trust/ Local Enterprise Zone	2013 Q2+	To be determined
	Set up specialist markets including Sundays and evenings Encourage retailers to open on Sundays Package of support to encourage more take up of market stalls	Town centre innovation fund	2013 Q2+	Council/Town Team
	Develop Business Plan for the market place Lighting Strategy	N/A officer time only Arts Council. Implemented through ERDF project Portas	2013 Q3 2013 Q2+	Council/Town Team/ Traders Council/Town Team/ Traders
	Survey - what and who missing from the town Investigate capacity for further free on street parking	No funding required	2013 Q1 Ongoing	Council Council
Marketing	Develop website for Dudley town centre which links to town centre businesses and included a diary of events	Council Revenue from businesses using website Black Country Chamber/LEP	2013 Q1+	Council/Town Team
	IT training for businesses	Dudley College Black Country Chamber European Social Fund	2013 Q2+	Council/Town Team

Priority Areas	Activities	Potential Funding	Timescale	Lead/Key Partners
	Town Centre Rewards Scheme	Revenue from business/Portas	2013 Q2+	Council/Town Team
	Surveys: baseline survey work	Portas	2012 Q2	Council
	business, community & visitors	Dudley Town Centre Public Realm ERDF project	2013 Q2; 2014 Q2	Council
	Marketing & communications strategy including radio, newspapers, posters/flyers etc	Council	Ongoing	Council/Town Team
	Develop tourism strategy	Council	2013 Q3	Council/Town Team
	Public art project and spin off creative work	Arts Council/ Lottery/ Community Forum/Dudley College	2013 Q3+	Council/Town Team Dudley College/ Community Groups/Arts Council/Lottery
	Strengthen our High Street campaign	Marketing budget	2013 Q1+	Council/Town Team
	Annual Event	Marketing budget/Portas Retailers/other businesses/ landlords	2013 Q1+ 2014 Q1+	Council/Town Team
	Local environment improvements to the town centre	Community Forums	2013 Q2+ 2014 Q2+	Council/Town Team
	Tying in with national events	Dudley Town Centre events budget	Ongoing	Council/Town Team
	Treasure Trails	Council/ Community Group/Dudley College	2013 Q2 & 2014 Q2	Council/Community Group/Dudley College
	Develop 'Traders Charter' and hold launch event	Council/Dudley Business First	2013 Q3 2014 Q3	Council/Town Team/ Traders
	Introduce Retailer of the Year award	Council/Dudley Business First	2013 Q3 2014 Q3	Council/Town Team
	Introduce Dudley Ambassadors	Ambassador scheme - ERDF/Council	2013 Q4+	Council/Town Team / attractions
	Develop town centre tourist information hub linked to the Ambassadors	Vacant shop front budget/ Community Forum	2013 Q4+	DMBC/DTC Partnership/ attractions

Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee

Report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services

Consideration of indices of multiple deprivation and the provision of Adult Education

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee in response to their question about the nature of adult learning provision with priority groups and in priority areas.

Background

2. The Adult and Community Learning (ACL) Team are externally funded by the Skills Funding Agency to provide Community Learning on behalf of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.
3. The ACL Team work in partnership with further education colleges, voluntary organisations, libraries and schools, borough wide, to support adult learner engagement and progression. Learning is delivered directly and commissioned through partners with each organisation working to their strengths.
4. Learning in the community in the Dudley Borough is planned within a strategic framework by the Post 19 Learning, Employment and Skills Partnership. The group aims to support adult and family engagement and learner progression, identify gaps, co-ordinate learning that meets local needs and avoid duplication of provision.
5. The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funding conditions require a targeted introductory learning offer for those adults who may not have benefitted from learning previously or without a Level 2 (equivalent of GCSE A to C) qualification. However the achievement of qualifications is not the main priority of this funding and learners are supported to progress to further learning to pursue qualifications. It is also required as a condition of funding to provide a universal, fee paying offer with a wider curriculum for health, well being and personal development in the community.
6. The adult and family learning offer is an activity rich range of opportunities for adults and families including: language, arts, crafts, sports, fitness, culture, healthy living English, maths, employability and IT skills.

7. The Dudley MBC service was inspected by Ofsted in March 2012. The quality of provision, outcomes for learners and overall effectiveness was graded good. Some outstanding features were highlighted in the report. Inspectors said:
- *” Excellent strategic management and leadership ensures that the ACL provision very effectively contributes towards the achievement of the Council’s strategic priorities.”*
 - *“Teaching and learning are good. Most lessons are well planned, highly individualised and effectively paced.”*
 - *“The service provides good value for money. Learners benefit from good teaching and progress from often low starting points to achieve good outcomes. Partnerships are effective in providing efficient use of accommodation.”*
 - *“The provision has a very strong ethos of promoting equality and diversity through engaging with the most deprived and hard to reach residents.”*
 - *“The service has developed exceptionally strong partnership working which has benefited many learners.”*
 - *“Many Learners go on to make significant contributions to their community. Many have established community development groups or self-sustaining activity groups to benefit community members. The service works well with other community organisations to encourage learners and volunteers to engage in activities to benefit their communities. In most areas learners develop a good awareness of the advantages of adopting healthy lifestyles.”*
8. Some people living in the most deprived areas of the borough may be unemployed, have few, low or no qualifications and have poor experiences of education or training. These barriers together with the negative experiences of making financial ends meet, has suppressed the natural inclination of some adults to think and act through learning, to better adapt and improve their lives. It is difficult to value learning when the daily goal is tackling pressing problems related to health, poverty, language or cultural barriers.
9. The ACL Team has a skilled community outreach team and highly qualified tutors that work in priority areas to reduce the barriers to learning and to engage adults and families in activities that will improve their economic, personal and social well being.
10. Family Learning has been particularly effective in areas where there is significant disadvantage. Experience has demonstrated the value of partnership with schools and children’s centres as community hubs in which families are engaged. Work may address single or linked outcomes and supporting their children’s learning provides an incentive to encourage the whole family to improve their lives through learning.
11. Adult and family courses are developed with learners in neighbourhoods to build the skills, knowledge and understanding for social and community action. Learning outcomes are individually negotiated. Learners may progress to further learning or self sustained activities and volunteering.
12. Support for adults with employability and skills needs starts with a whole team approach to targeted outreach work. Individual advice and guidance is provided and

an action plan is developed. Learners progress to further learning and work is facilitated through strong local partnerships .

13. 'Live 4 Less' is a bespoke course developed to meet a local need. It includes sustainable living themes such as; budgeting; travel utilities; food; energy and volunteering. The Team are working in partnership with the Benefits Team and Housing Department staff to promote this to communities and tenants who will be directly affected by welfare reform. Joint working with the Citizens Advice Bureau provides more intensive support for those who need it.
14. The Work Club initiative has been developed by the ACL Team with libraries, voluntary organisations and Jobcentreplus. The approach makes the most of local knowledge and resources to help unemployed people in their communities gain employment. The clubs provide unemployed people with a place to meet and exchange skills, find opportunities, make contacts, share experiences and receive support to help them in their return to work. Many clients progress to learning and work from these initial contacts.

Finance

15. The Skills Funding Agency has allocated 1.2 million to Dudley Council for borough wide provision in community settings.
16. Conditions of funding require learners who can pay, to contribute to their learning through fees. It is expected that income generated from fees is reinvested in targeted provision.

Law

17. 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 ACL Team manages a subsidised programme of adult and community learning on behalf of the Council.
18. Under the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970 councils have the power to enter into agreements with each other and a large number of designated public bodies listed in the act.

Equality Impact

19. The ACL team facilitates a Lead Accountable Body model of partnership and delivery for Community Learning through the Post 19 Learning and Skills Partnership.
20. Adult Skills is a priority for Dudley MBC, who recognise the importance of English, language, numeracy and employability learning which in turn, will improve economic outcomes for our targeted communities and wards. Priority groups also include adults with disabilities, older learners, unemployed, black and minority ethnic groups with the aim of transforming their lives and improving their well-being.
21. Appendix 1 illustrates the key areas of multiple deprivation in Dudley Borough. However, the areas of most need in learning and training are slightly different as illustrated by the second map. The ACL Team targets work with priority groups as well as in priority areas.

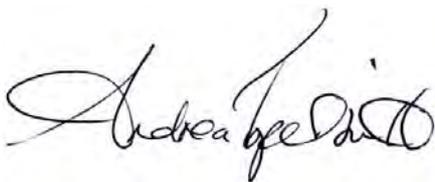
22. The table below shows a profile of learners participating.

Profile of ACL Team adult learners funded by the Skills Funding Agency: Quarter 4 2011/12: Financial Year	
Total enrolments in adult learning courses	10,449
Adults enrolled in skills for life and work programmes	5,080
% of adults achieving learning outcomes	93%
% adults from top 20% deprived neighbourhoods	29%
older Learners 60+	22%
% adults from Black and minority Ethnic Groups	18%
% unemployed adults 19+	37%
% adult learners with disabilities	21%
% of adult learners receiving concessions	59%
Number of entries for qualifications	114
% adults achieving qualifications	95%

23. The block graphs in Appendix 2 shows a demographic breakdown of Dudley Borough priority groups in the population and the percentage of people from the priority groups participating in adult learning.

24. It is recommended that:-

- The Committee note the contents of the report, the issues raised and the progress made to work with priority groups of Dudley adult learners.



.....
Andrea Pope Smith
Director of DACHS

Contact Officer: Ros Partridge
 Head of adult and Community Learning Team
 Telephone: 01384 813976
 Email: ros.partridge@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

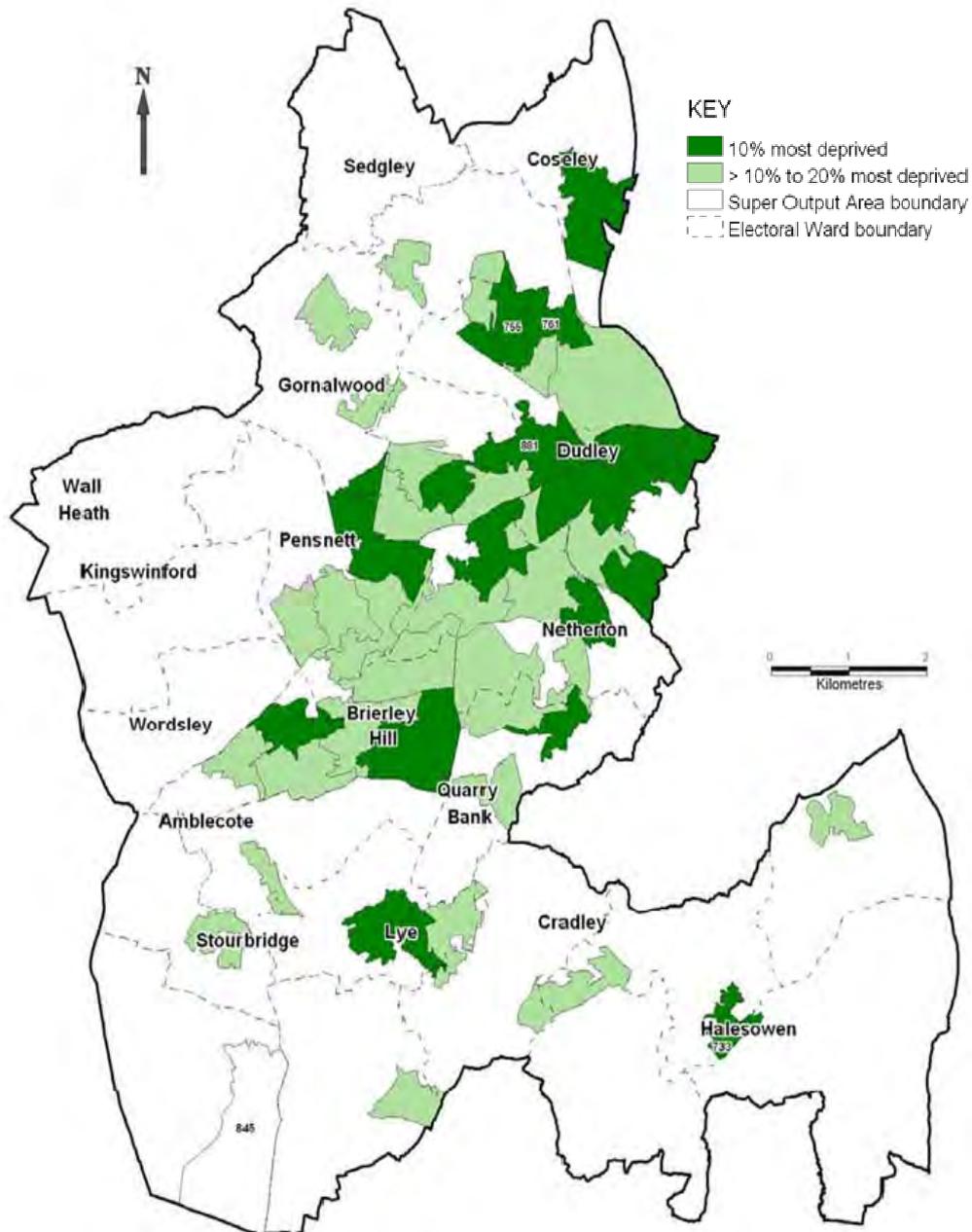
Appendix 1: Dudley Borough Map of multiple deprivation and training and learning domains.

Appendix 2: Dudley Borough Deprivation data.

Adult and Community Learning 2012 Ofsted report <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/50218>

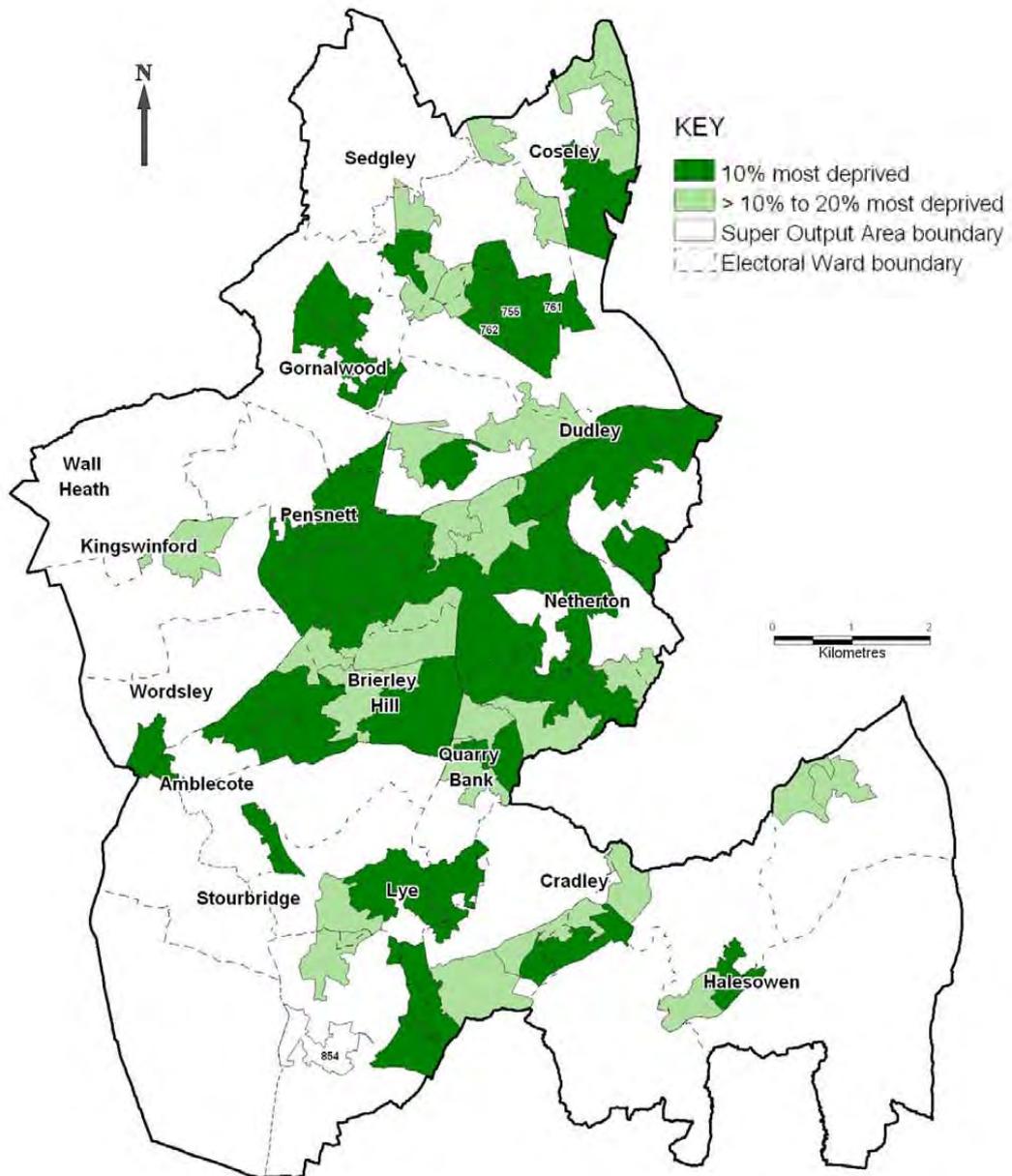
Appendix 1: The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010

Super Output Areas in Dudley Borough that are in the 20% most deprived in England



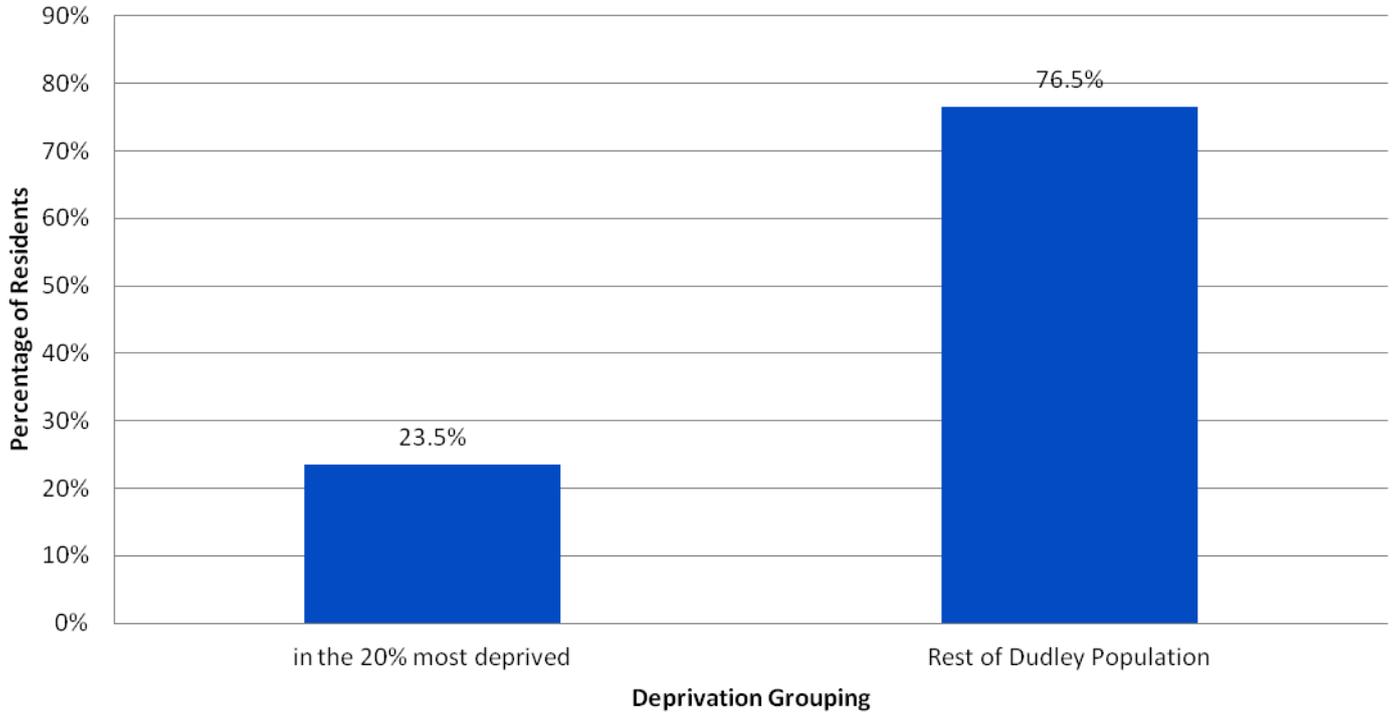
Education, Skills and Training Domain

Super Output Areas in Dudley Borough that are in the 20% most deprived in England

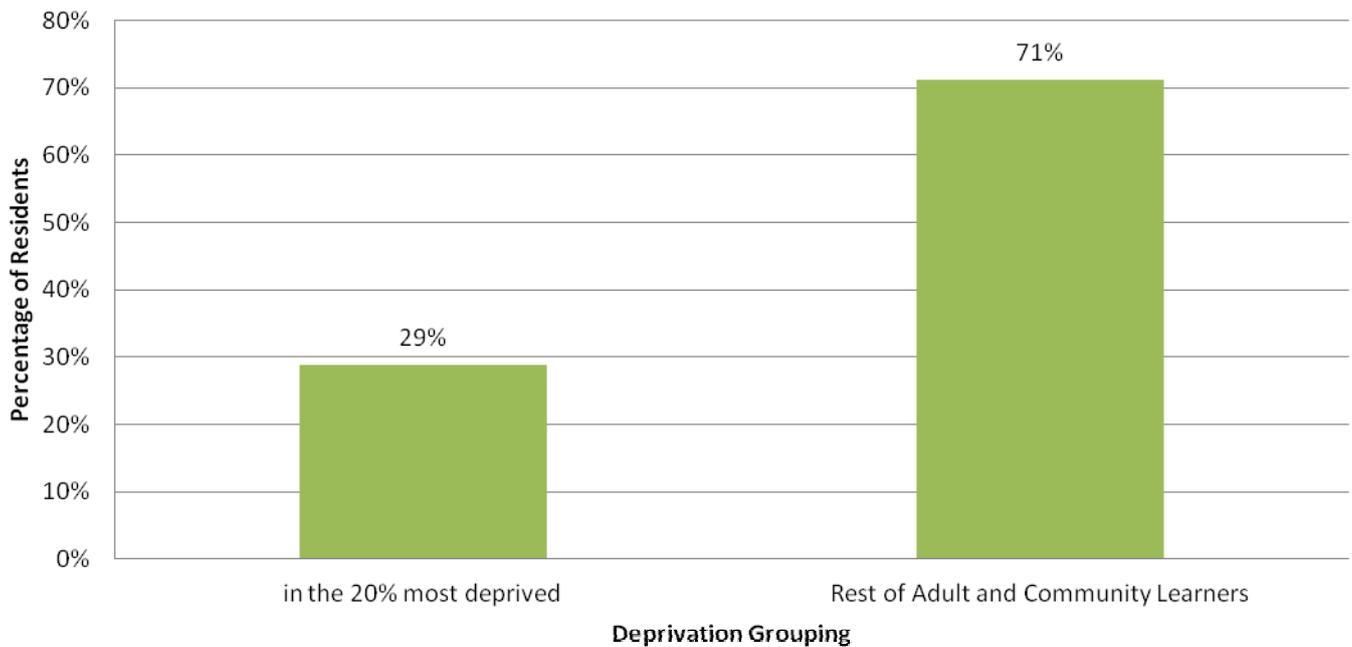


Appendix 2: Data Report Dudley Adult & Community Learning.

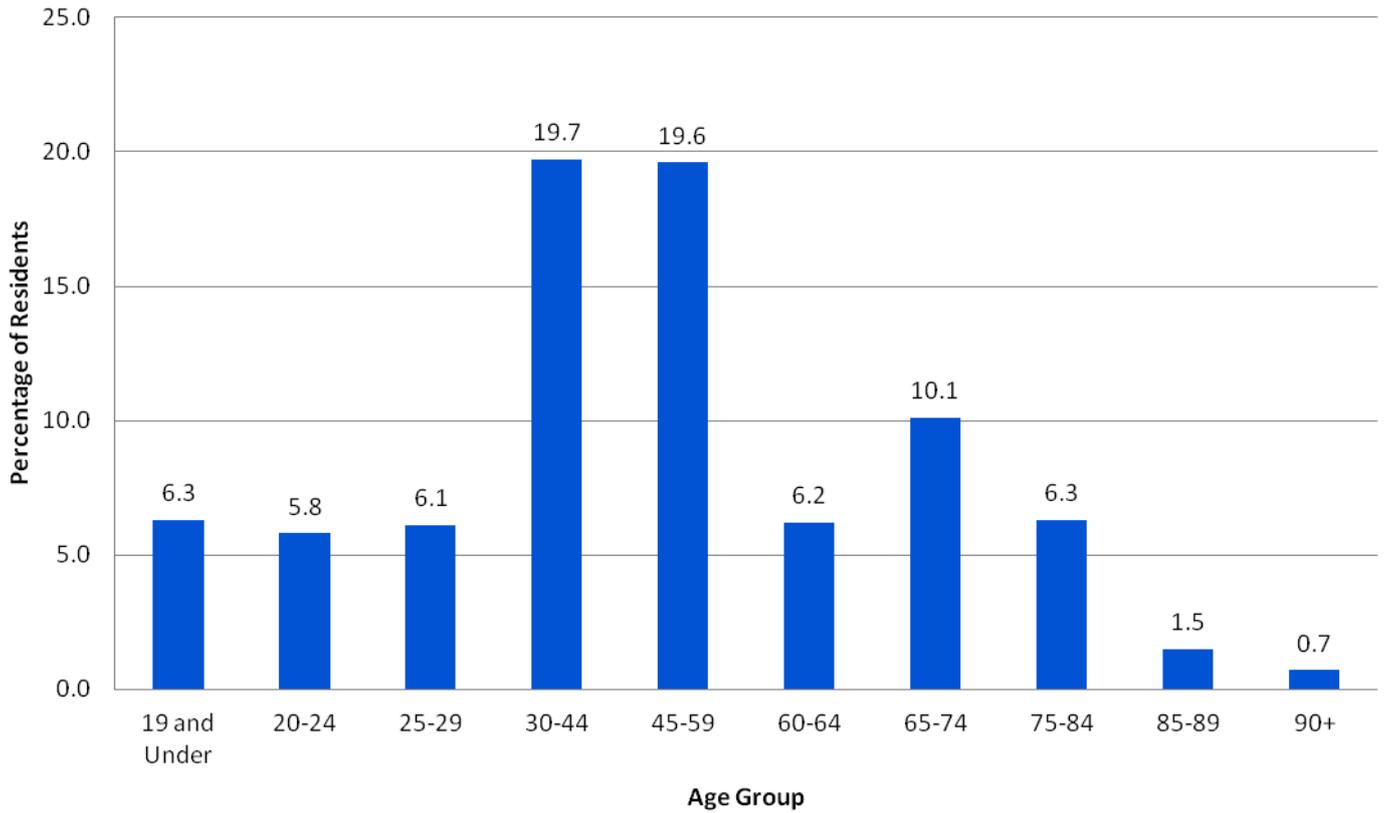
Deprivation of the Dudley Population
(Source: Lower Layer Super Output Area 2011 Census Pop & Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010)



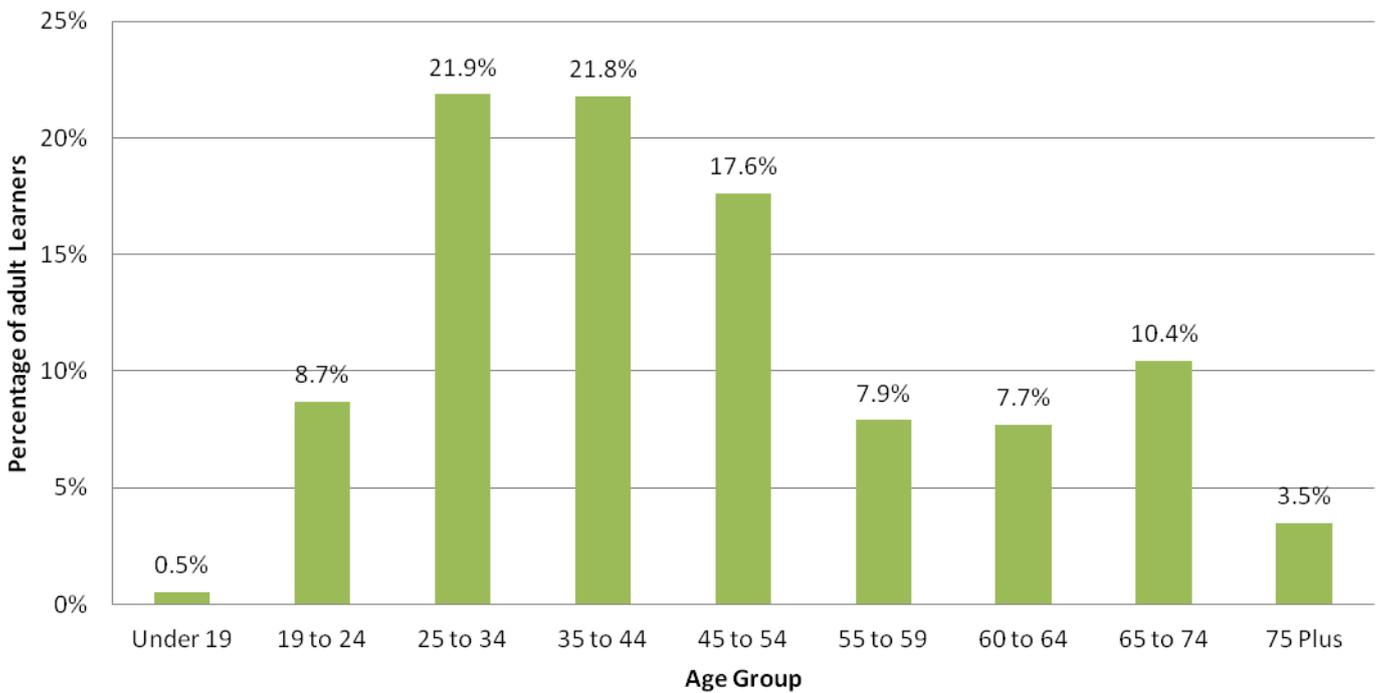
Deprivation of Dudley ACL team learners
(Source: 2011/12 Performance Reports)



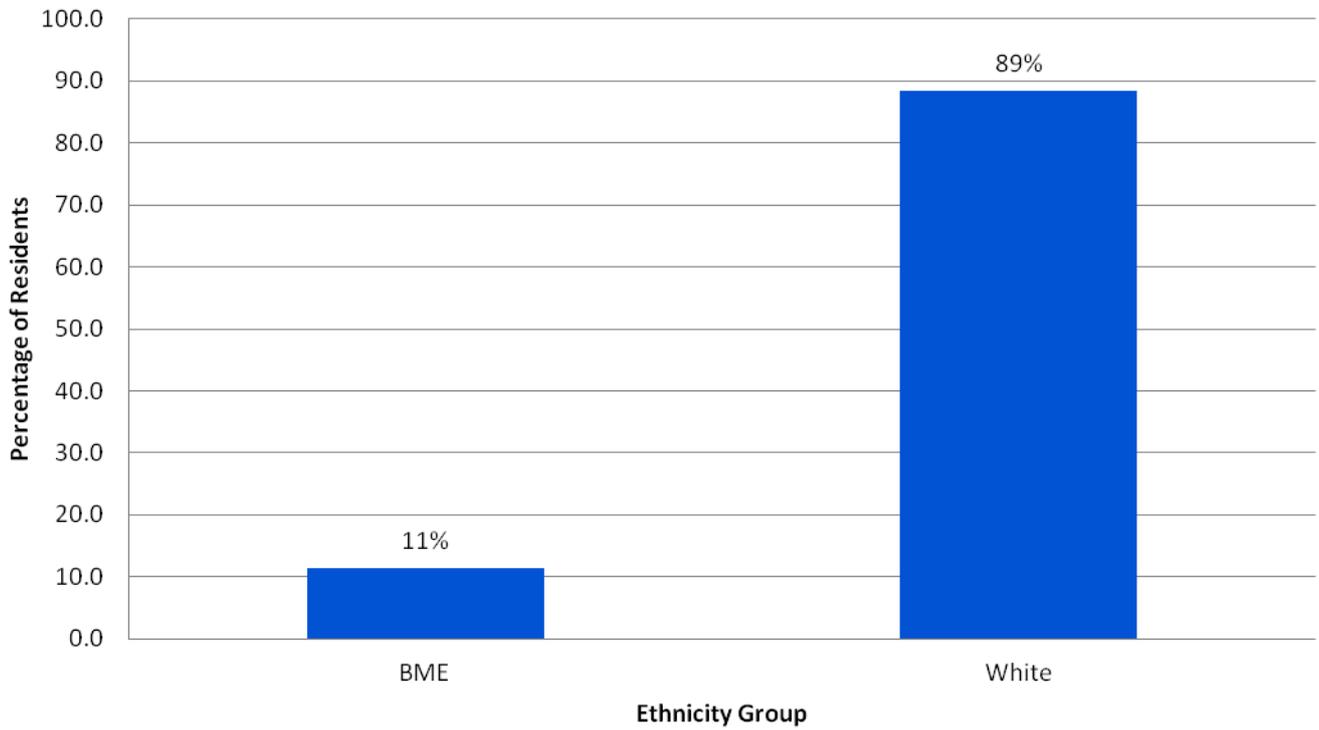
Age Structure
 (Source: Table KS102EW, 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics)



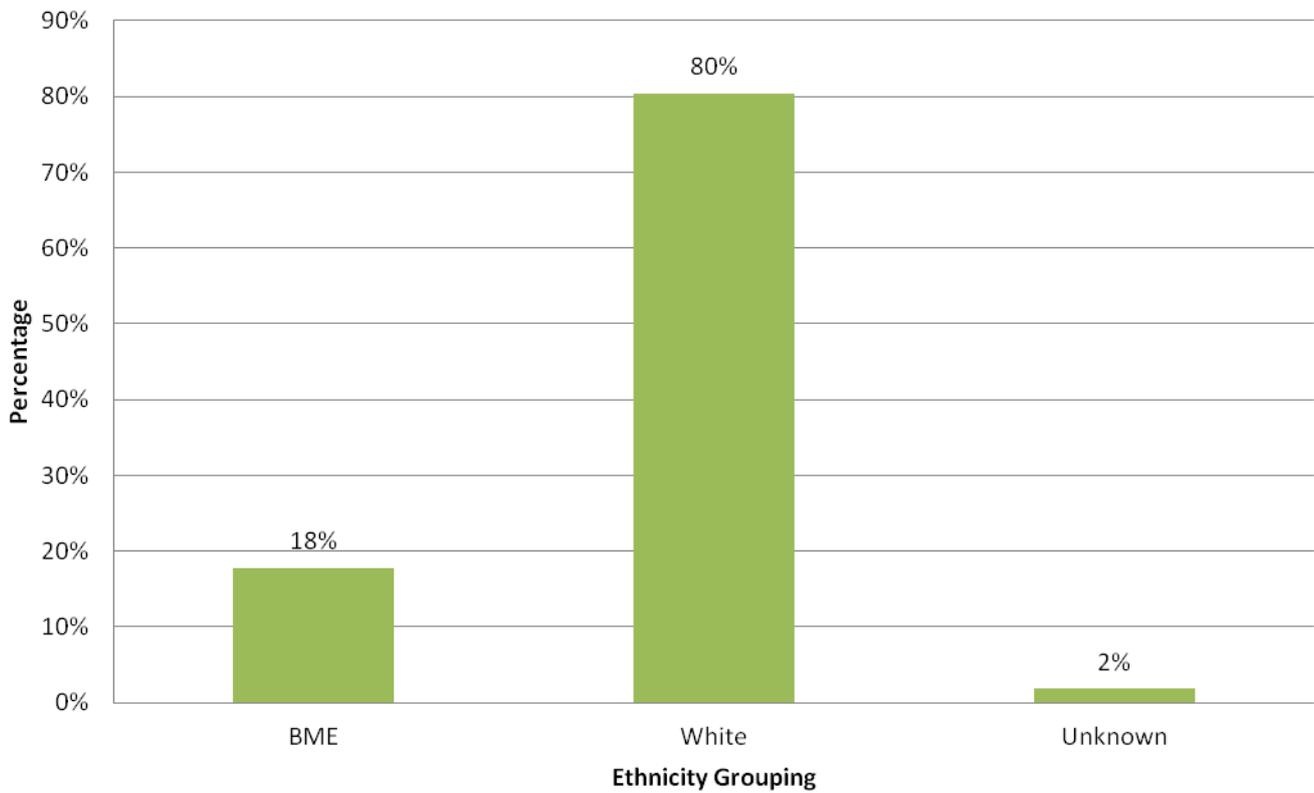
Age Structure of Dudley ACL Team Learners
 (Source: 2011/12 Adult Learning Performance Reports)



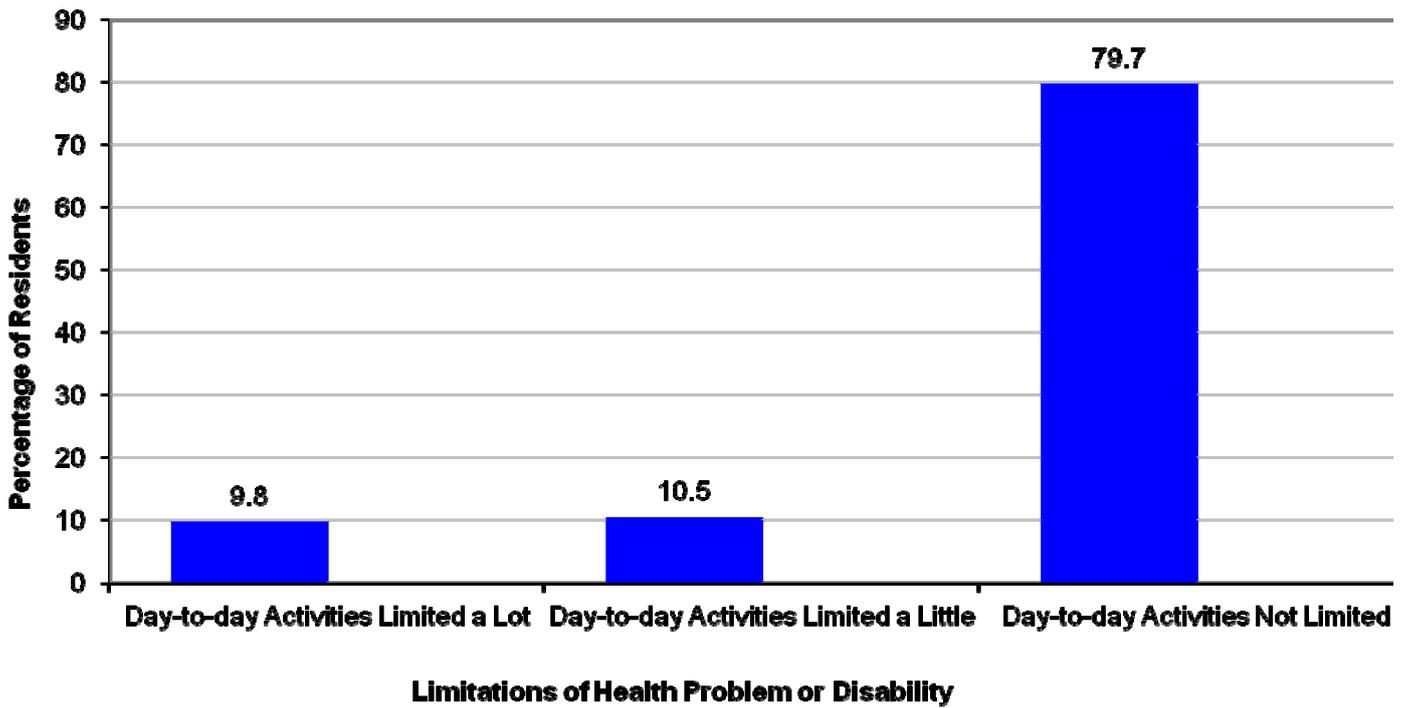
Ethnic Group of Dudley Population
(Source: Table KS102EW, 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics)



Ethnicity group of Dudley Learners
(Source: 2011/12 Performance Reports)

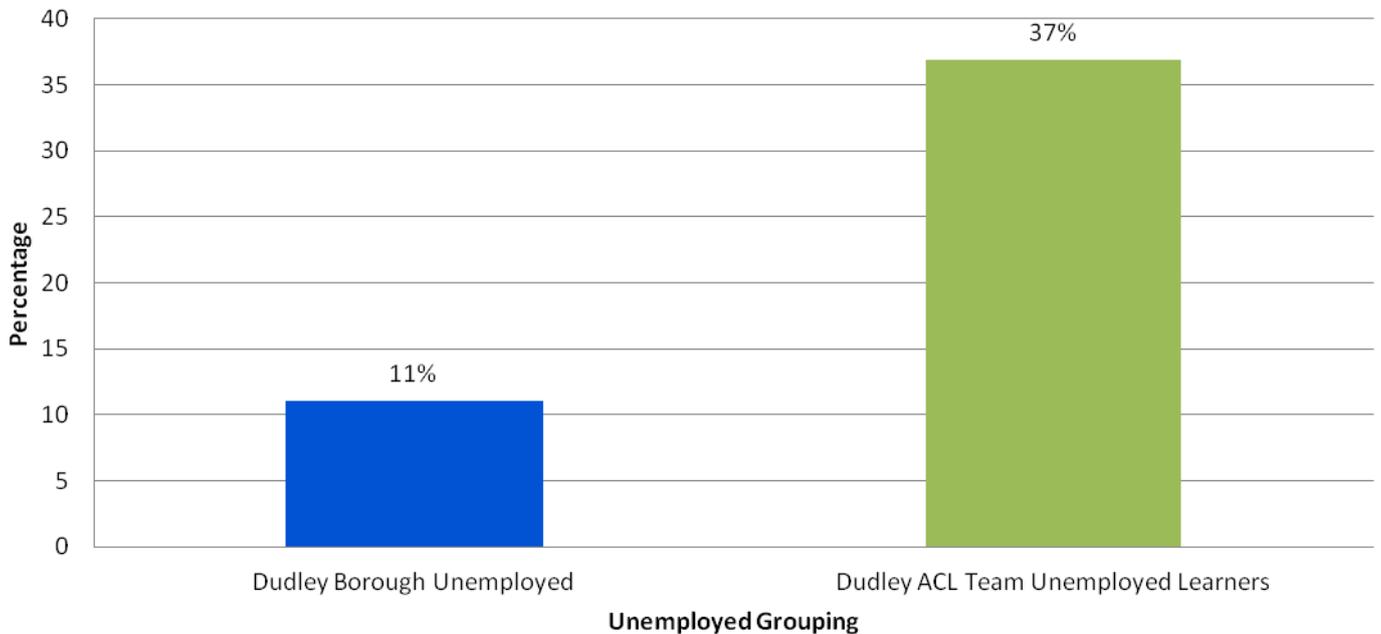


Health Problem Or Disability That Limits Day-To-Day Activities of the Dudley Population
 (Source: Table KS301EW, 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics)

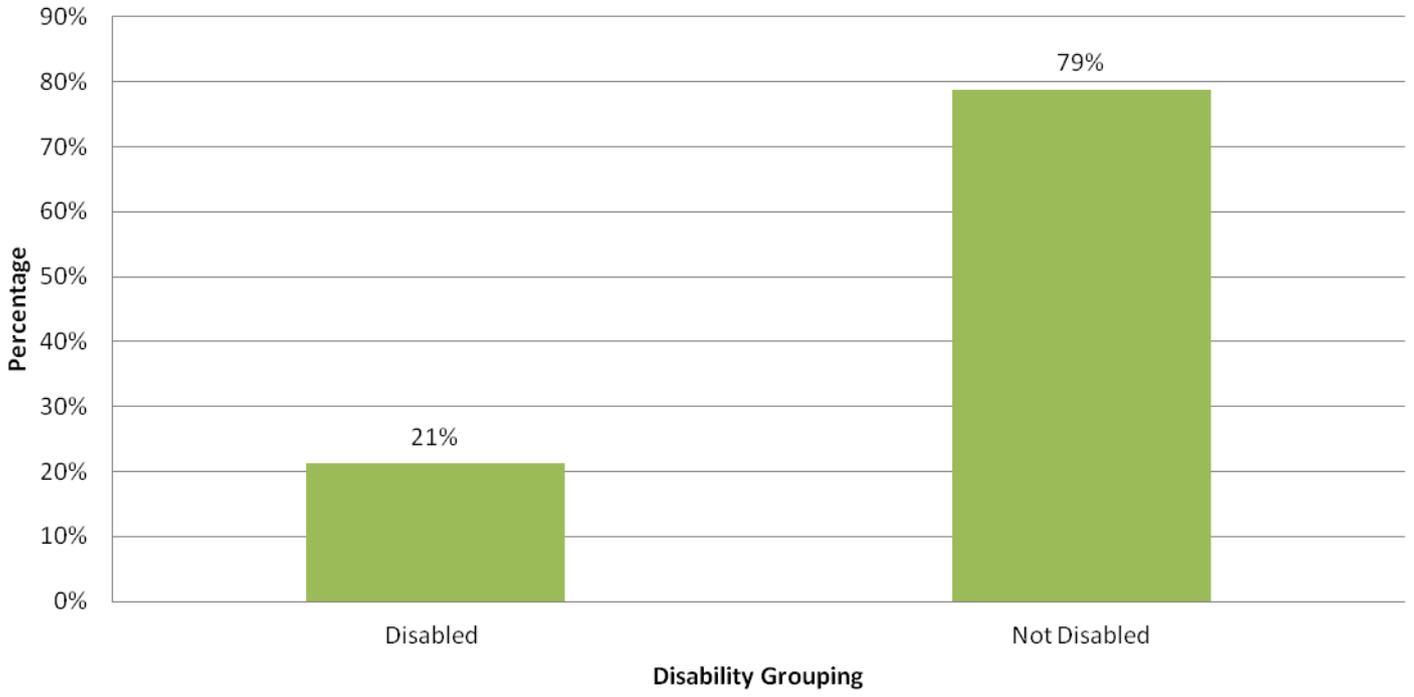


Note: This data refers to health problems / disabilities which have lasted, or are expected to last, at least 12 months

Unemployed breakdown of Dudley borough and Dudley ACL Team Learners
 (Source: Table KS601EW, 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics and 2011/12 Performance Reports)



**Disability breakdown of Dudley ACL Team Learners
(Source: 2011/12 Performance Reports)**



**Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee – 6
March 2013**

Report of the Director of Urban Environment

Stray and Illegally Grazing Horses - Update

Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on the implementation of the Stray and Illegally Grazing Horses Policy.

Background

2. The problem of illegally grazing and stray horses has been endemic within the whole of the Black Country for decades. It has been the practice of horse owners to tether or just leave their animals on parks, football pitches, nature reserves and other open land. The tethering of horses is not prohibited by law, but is unauthorised on Council land.
3. This results in a range of problems including; direct damage to land, loss of amenities such as football pitches, planted and wooded areas being destroyed and potential injury to the public or motorists.
4. In addition to the health and safety problems, stray and tethered horses cause nuisance and result in a considerable volume of complaints from the public which are directed at both the Council and the police. This public concern is also reflected in frequent press coverage given to this subject.
5. Over the years the Council has tried many different approaches to dealing with the problem. These have resulted in repeated threats to staff, damage to vehicles and property and despite considerable cost and effort have had very limited effect on the core problem of illegally grazing horses.
6. It has become clear that the Council cannot eradicate illegal grazing on its land due to the extent of its ownership and the persistent desire, within the local population, to own horses. As a consequence the Council had had to adopt a reasonably practical approach to reduce the risk of injury to persons and damage to property. Therefore priority will be given to situations where there is the highest risk, such as on or adjacent to highways, or well used footpaths, or where the numbers of horses in any one area are increasing to unacceptable levels.
7. Since February 2000, in line with the recommendations of a multi-agency working group, the decision was made to appoint an

independent organisation to act as the Council's Agent (Bailiff) in this matter. They are responsible for managing the situation and impounding selected horses on the Council's behalf. Prior to the removal/impoundment of horses, notices are placed at various sites, where horses are illegally grazing, which advise owners their animals will be impounded if not removed and in the majority of instances the number of horses significantly reduces without the need for impoundment.

8. Therefore a key part of Agency's duties are to regularly monitor the borough and post notices throughout the year, but from time to time it is also necessary to make targeted impoundments. Regular posting of notices and periodic impoundments has effectively maintained the total number of horses illegally grazing in the borough at an acceptable level.
9. However, there remains a serious hot spot in the Fens Pool Area particularly in the winter when grazing is very sparse and these horses stray onto other land or the roads causing the anticipated difficulties that you would expect. This came to a head in the 2010/11 winter period when an influx of horses that were left loose to stray by their owners resulted in high levels of disruption on the highway and across open spaces.
10. **In order to deal with this problem we entered into an arrangement with a reactive bailiff for removal of horses from the highway, undertaken in partnership with the police under legal powers the police can use but that are not available on other than the public highway. This initial trial service proved very effective in dealing with the problem of horses on or adjacent to the highway and reacting quickly to issues as they arose.**

Policy Development

11. In addition the Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee resolved to look into this issue in more detail and established a working group, which comprised both Elected Members and representatives of partner organisations with the following remit:
 - To develop a draft policy for stray horses and illegal grazing on Council land, with due regard to practicalities and cost;
 - To present the draft policy for adoption by the Council;
 - To monitor performance of the trial 'Reactive Service';
12. The working group reported back to the Scrutiny Committee with its findings and recommendations in March 2012 and the policy was adopted by Cabinet at its meeting on 12 September 2012. The policy is attached at Appendix 1 for information.

Recent Activity

13. As has been reported previously to both the Scrutiny Committee, its working group and The Cabinet, the reactive service has proved to be very successful in dealing with problems created by loose horses on or adjacent to the public highway.
14. Initially call outs for this service were on a daily basis with over 120 horses recovered in the period April – December 2011. During the same period the Bailiff Service undertook targeted impoundments on two occasions without any ensuing problems and stray/tethered horse numbers on public land was reduced.
15. More recently in the period October – December 2012 the proactive highways service has been called out to deal with twenty incidents involving stray horses. Across these twenty call outs 35 horses were recovered and taken into care, the majority of these being in a poor physical condition and suffering from a variety of infections.
16. In addition the Bailiff Service has undertaken two impoundment actions where horses have been taken from a small number of sites. The focus of this work is to discourage owners from putting their horses onto public land and there is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that the ‘twin-track’ approach provided by both services is having some success in this regard.
17. Over the last 12 months calls to the Stray Horse ‘Hotline’ have reduced dramatically and, whilst the numbers of horses on public land tends to fluctuate to reflect dealings in the local livestock trade, numbers are significantly reduced in areas that have previously been regarded as hot-spots ie Fens Pool, Buckpool, with higher numbers of horses now seen on private land.
18. So far as the issue of animal welfare is concerned this year (April 2012 onwards) the Council’s Environmental Health Service has dealt with ten horse welfare complaints which have either been received directly from a member of the public or assistance requested by the RSPCA.
19. The Council had planned to work with the RSPCA and other horse welfare charities to run a horse welfare education day when horse owners could bring their horses to receive a free veterinary check, to be identified in accordance with the Horse Passport Regulations 2009 and for free education and advice. Regrettably, it was not possible to arrange this as the RSPCA specialist horse inspector had an enforced period of absence. However, they have now returned to work and a meeting is scheduled to take place in the near future with both the RSPCA and Redwings to plan such an event and to consider setting up a joint plan to deal with horse welfare cases.

- 20 Despite the direct activity that the Council has undertaken and its work in partnership with animal welfare organisations there is still work to be done to promote responsible horse ownership and improve the welfare of some horses. This will continue to be a focus for the Council and its partners in the coming year.

Finance

21. The enforcement activity detailed within the report in 2011/12 has been funded from resources held by the Directorate of the Urban Environment and has been built into the budget for 2012/13 onwards.

Law

22. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that a local authority shall have power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

Equality Impact

23. This report has taken into consideration the Council's Equality and Diversity policies and in particular its impact on certain sections of the community including Travellers and young people.

Recommendation

24. It is recommended that members of the Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee note the contents of this report and respond accordingly.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.B. Millar'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'M'.

J.B. Millar
Director of the Urban Environment

Contact Officer: Duncan Lowndes,
Assistant Director Culture & Leisure
duncan.lowndes@dudley.gov.uk

POLICIES

The Council's agreed approach to dealing with this issue is set out in the following 4 policies:

POLICY 1 : HORSES ON THE HIGHWAY

The Council in partnership with the Police will endeavour to remove all stray horses reported on, or near the highway , using the legal powers and resources available to them.

In order to deal with the problem of loose horses on or in proximity to the highway, the Council will retain the services of a bailiff who can provide a ***reactive impoundment service***. All action taken by the bailiff will be supported by the Police. The Council and the Police will encourage members of the public to report any incidents directly to the police, information from calls relating to this matter reported to the Council's horse reporting line, will be forwarded immediately to the Police.

POLICY 2: ILLEGALLY GRAZING HORSES

The Council will endeavour to restrict the levels of stray and tethered horses, on publicly owned and accessible land, to a minimum using the legal powers and resources available to it.

This is to be achieved by the retention of an independent service which will provide planned and targeted action. Specifically the service will survey the Borough for illegal grazing and, in conjunction with the Council, will be responsible for posting of prohibition notices and taking planned and targeted action. Priority will be given to situations where there is highest risk, namely adjacent to highways or well used footpaths or where the number of horses in any one area are increasing to unacceptable levels.

The Council will continue to encourage members of the public to report any incidents to the Council's horse **reporting line 01384 814182** (24 hour answer phone) and all information will be forwarded to both the Agency and the Police as appropriate. This number is posted on the Dudley MBC web site and periodically included in press releases. Dudley Council Plus also communicates this number to the public when required. All information will be treated in confidence.

Private property owners, school, or housing land managers retain the responsibility to remedy their issues with stray and illegally grazing horses. However lines of communication with the Directorate of the Urban Environment will be established and advice given on procurement of the services of an appropriate agency.

POLICY 3: COUNCIL GRAZING LAND

Where the Council leases land for grazing it will require that all tenants comply with legislation pertaining to passports and identity chipping and that they hold the appropriate insurance.

The Council will regularly review it's portfolio of grazing land with a view to maximising occupancy and meeting demand.

The Council currently has 112 acres of land across the Borough which is designated for grazing. However this is not sufficient to meet the demand and there are a significant number of people on a Waiting List. In addition a high number of these fields are in need of fencing repairs before they can be re-let.

A significant number of fields are in, or adjacent to, areas of considerable nature conservation interest such as Local or National Nature Reserves, or within recognised wildlife corridors. In both of these cases, the Council is mindful of it's wider duties to protect the natural heritage of the Borough and would wish to retain the land and manage it by grazing as a means to protect its designated Local and National Nature Reserves and Wildlife Corridors, grazing being an expedient means of managing the land.

POLICY 4: PROMOTION OF RESPONSIBLE HORSE OWNERSHIP AND WELFARE

The Council will work with welfare organisations to promote responsible horse ownership and welfare. However where this approach fails the Council will, in partnership with the police and welfare organisations, take more direct action using its powers under the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

The education of horse owners is key to ensuring the welfare of horses and, therefore, minimise any intervention by the Council and/or other agencies. Where appropriate the Council will work with welfare organisations in promoting responsible horse ownership.

Where education is inappropriate or failing, the Animal Welfare Act 2006 provides powers for local authority officers and police officers to take action to deal with welfare issues. These powers include the service of *Improvement Notices* to deal with specific welfare issues (these powers are available only to local authority officers) as well as emergency action which can be taken by both local authority officers and the police. The local authority has the power to prosecute under the Act although private prosecutions by such organisations as the RSPCA may also be brought.

The Council will continue to work with and support the work of horse welfare organisations when responding to any instances of horse welfare. It must, however, be acknowledged that the Council is only able to deal with some of the more serious welfare issues with the help of outside organisations who have the necessary land resources and veterinary expertise available.
