

## **Meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee**

**Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2021 at 6.00pm**

**On Microsoft Teams**

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### **Agenda - Public Session**

**(Meeting open to the public and press)**

**1. Chairs Announcement**

Welcome to this virtual meeting. This is a formal Council Committee. The public proceedings will take place live on the Internet. The meeting will be recorded for future viewing.

It will assist the conduct of business if participants speak only when invited.

Members of the public are welcome to view the proceedings but should not make contributions at this meeting.

All Members of the Committee have received the reports in advance and had the opportunity to read them. The reports are published on the Internet.

All participants should mute their microphones and video feed when they are not speaking.

Anyone wishing to speak should indicate using the 'raise your hand' button on Microsoft Teams. Please remember to unmute your microphone and switch on your video feed when it is your turn to speak. Speak clearly and slowly into your microphone.

If you do not have the hand button, please type your request to speak in the chat function.

When the item on which you have contributed is concluded, you may leave the meeting by using the red 'hang up' button if you wish.



Finally, I ask for everyone's patience with the use of the technology. I apologise in advance if we experience any unforeseen difficulties which we shall try to resolve.

2. Apologies for absence.
3. To report the appointment of any substitute members serving for this meeting of the Committee.
4. To receive any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct.
5. To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 as a correct record.
6. Medium Term Financial Strategy (Pages 1 - 28)
7. Benefits – Financial and other Support (including Covid) and the work of the Corporate Welfare Reform Group (Pages 29 – 39)
8. Attendance Management (Pages 40 – 56)
9. Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 2 (Pages 57 – 99)
10. 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).



**Chief Executive**

**Dated: 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2021**

Distribution:

Councillor T Crumpton (Chair)  
Councillor E Lawrence (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors C Barnett, I Bevan, J Cooper, B Cotterill, S Craigie, P Drake, B Gentle, S Greenaway and P Lee.

Cc: Councillor S Clark (Cabinet Member for Finance and Legal)  
Councillor S Phipps (Cabinet Member for Commercial and Customer Services)



**Please note the following:**

- This meeting will be held virtually by using Microsoft Teams. The meeting will be held live via the Internet link.
- This is a formal Council Committee and it will assist the conduct of business if participants speak only when invited by the Chair.
- The Chair reserves the right to adjourn the meeting, as necessary, if there is any disruption or technical issues.
- All participants should mute their microphones and video feed when they are not speaking.
- Please remember to unmute your microphone and switch on your video feed when it is your turn to speak. Speak clearly and slowly into your microphone.
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- Elected Members can submit apologies by contacting Democratic Services: Telephone 01384 815238 or E-mail **[Democratic.Services@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@dudley.gov.uk)**



**Minutes of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee  
Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 at 6.00 pm  
Microsoft Teams**

**Present:**

Councillor T Crumpton (Chair)  
Councillor E Lawrence (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors C Barnett, I Bevan, B Cotterill, J Cooper, S Craigie, P Drake, B Gentle, S Greenaway and P Lee.

**Officers:**

K O'Keefe – Chief Executive; J Catley – Head of Customer Services, N Kletz – Commercial and Procurement Consultant and S Turner – Head of Procurement (Directorate of Commercial and Customer Services); I Newman – Director of Finance and Legal, M Johal – Senior Democratic Services Officer and K Taylor – Democratic Services Officer (Directorate of Finance and Legal).

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14     **Declarations of Interest**

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

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15     **Minutes**

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2020, be approved as a correct record and signed.

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16     **Strategic Direction of the Council – Chief Executive**

A Power Point presentation was given at the meeting by the Chief Executive outlining the strategic direction of the Council including an update on service delivery during Covid-19, the Borough Vision 2030 and the Dudley Council Plan 2019/22.

Following advice received from Public Health England of the potential risk of Covid-19 to the United Kingdom, the Strategic Executive Board, comprising the Chief Executive and Directors, immediately considered the potential impact to Dudley and commenced remote meetings via Microsoft Teams to test the system and ensure resilience. The excellent work undertaken by the Information and Communication Team (ICT) in rolling out Microsoft Teams to allow employees to work remotely within a short timeframe was commended. It was noted that the work of ICT underpinned the ability to continue back office and front line services which contributed towards the success of delivering services in the Borough and testing new technology.

An infographic highlighting the service delivery during Covid-19 between March and August, 2020 identified that 4,844 businesses had been awarded business rates grants totalling £55.76m, together with an increase in mouse and rat infestations and recycling which was controlled and addressed by relevant departments. The statistics identified that Dudley Council had managed to maintain and respond to increased service demand and service delivery effectively.

Statistical data identified that there had been a rapid rate of increase of infection rates in Dudley, and although the number of infections recorded were much higher than previously, it was reported that this was as a result of the widespread testing that was now taking place. In comparison with neighbouring authorities, it was reported that Dudley's infection rates had remained low for a substantial period of time.

The Borough Vision 2030 had been developed to shape the future of the borough and identify how services would be delivered long term. The plan was built around seven aspirations, and managed by different leads including partners and stakeholders as follows:-

- Affordable and attractive place – Dudley MBC
- Education and skills – Dudley College
- Healthy, resilient and safe communities – Bishop of Dudley
- High quality and affordable transport – Director of Transportation for the West Midlands
- Innovative and prosperous businesses – Black Country Chamber of Commerce
- A place to visit and enjoy – Black Country Living Museum
- Vibrant towns and neighbourhoods – Chief Executive Halesowen Business Improvement District

In order to raise Dudley's profile and deliver the Borough Vision, the Council had identified five key audiences including Elected Members and Staff, residents and businesses, regional audience such as West Midlands Combined Authority, national audience and international audience for foreign investment opportunities.

The Dudley Council Plan had been developed to outline each 3-year step towards delivering the Borough Vision aspirations and outcomes including areas such as housing, children's social care and transformation and performance.



The impact of Covid-19 and lessons learnt provided the opportunity to review the delivery of Future Council 2030 and subsequently streamlined the programme into three core themes that reflected the 'direction of travel' in which the Council must move in order to deliver against the outcomes of the Borough Vision and Council Plan, namely, Workforce, Technology and Facilities.

The Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Review that had taken place in January, 2020 recognised the pride and commitment that officers and partners had with Dudley, the place and as an authority, and the pivotal role of the Council in enhancing the quality of life for residents, staff and businesses. The vast experience and length of service by many employees emphasised a committed workforce, and it was suggested that by harnessing staff, assets and resources within the Borough it would enable the Council to deliver the recommendations arising from the Peer Review.

The Committee was informed of external awards achieved on service delivery including Waste Care and Adult Social Care, in particular that Dudley had been rated in the top 100 authorities in the United Kingdom, and the first in the West Midlands, on the work and effective use of the Apprenticeship Levy. It was noted that Dudley had been voted the third most improved Council in the United Kingdom. Employees had been encouraged to identify areas of best practice for their service areas and adapt to Dudley if required.

Members asked questions, made comments and responses were given where appropriate as follows:-

- Members commented positively on the presentation and update given by the Chief Executive.
- In responding to a question raised by a Member, the Chief Executive acknowledged that there had been no reference to climate change within the Borough Vision 2030 and Council Plan 2019/22, however operational adjustments would be made during a proposed refresh of the Council Plan in 2021. The Committee was assured that work was being undertaken by Directorates in response to the climate emergency.
- With regard to improving cycling facilities, it was reported that green travel plans would become an essential element in planning applications and would be reflected in the Council Plan refresh in 2021.
- In responding to a question by a Member in relation to the impact on future funding and planning for each department as a result of Covid-19, the Chief Executive referred to the additional funding awarded to Local Authorities by Government in response to the Pandemic, which although the majority was ringfenced, a portion was available for general purposes. Extensive planning had been undertaken to monitor the impact of the Pandemic on finances and delivery of services, and it was anticipated that future working would be reviewed as a result of the changes imposed, including remote working and office accommodation.



- A Member commented on the excellent work undertaken in implementing technology to enable employees to work remotely, and the dedication of key workers in delivering essential services should be recognised and celebrated by communities. It was also queried whether an accreditation could be explored for Dudley Council that would also attract local residents in working for the Local Authority and gain the recognition that was deserved.

The Chief Executive concurred with comments made and referred to the success of the TORCh (Transforming Organisation Real Change) programme, comprising learning activities and support for managers and leaders at all levels. It was also noted that a number of accreditations had been awarded to teams within Dudley Council including Legal Services that were Lexcel Law Society accredited for Excellence. The Chief Executive agreed to discuss further with the Organisational and Development Team.

- It was noted that there had been regular contact with the Director of Dudley Zoological Gardens on the support mechanisms available during Covid-19, and that additional flexibility had been given to Dudley Zoo, by request, in accessing their grants which allowed the business to thrive and remain open. The measures implemented by the Zoo in adhering to social distancing regulations and safeguarding visitors and employees were commended.
- Consideration would be given on plans moving forward including a review of the number of workstations and buildings required and supporting employees working remotely through partnership working with the National Health Service and Public Health. It was noted that a programme was being developed to support employees working from home including quizzes, Pilates sessions and coffee mornings.
- The possibility of providing local facilities to enable employees and members of the public to work remotely near to their homes was suggested, and in responding the Chief Executive stated that although the options had not yet been explored, the introduction of public offices was being debated regionally as part of the wider public estate. It was also acknowledged that pollution levels had significantly reduced in Dudley.
- In delivering the strategic direction of the Council, the Chief Executive stated that a holistic approach was essential and ensuring that decisions were not made, or services reduced, in order to generate savings. He assured the Committee that all Directors worked collaboratively and attended remote meetings three times a week to manage any emerging developments efficiently.
- Following a question raised by a Member, it was envisaged that Full Council meetings would return to the Council House when it was safe to do so, however there would be opportunities to consider whether remote meetings were more appropriate in some instances. The Committee were assured that measures that had been implemented had been made to ensure that the democratic process was facilitated and adhered to.



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- Concerns were raised on the lack of funding available for local community groups, and that the impact of Covid-19 had highlighted the solitude factor for many people and families in poverty. The closure of some community centres had also affected support provided to families. It was suggested whether involving community groups and utilising local facilities to administer and assist in the delivery of the Covid-19 vaccine when available could be considered.

The Chief Executive confirmed that he had requested contingency plans be developed on the Councils estate and assets and available spaces if required for the delivery of the vaccine, however to date Dudley had not received any formal instructions or requests. It was anticipated that existing facilities on delivering clinical vaccinations would be utilised in the first instance, and it was noted that all Emergency and Business Continuity Plans were updated across the Council in 2019. A Member commented on the vast logistics and scale of administering the vaccine given the proposed maintenance and delivery of the vaccine.

- The Chief Executive requested that the Members concerned email him with the issues experienced in obtaining responses from Officers working remotely..

The Chair expressed his thanks on the excellent work undertaken by employees involved with waste and refuse collections, in particular given the significant increase of collections and recycling during the Pandemic.

### **Resolved**

That the information reported on be noted.

17

### **Procurement and Social Value Presentation**

Following a request by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020, the Head of Procurement was in attendance to provide a pilot training session on procurement to enable Councillors to perform their roles effectively, including an overview on procurement, rules, social value and achievements at Dudley, the role of the Councillor and the procurement response to Covid-19.

The Head of Procurement stated that procurement was the process of acquiring goods, works and services from third parties and covered all purchasing regardless of value. The key stages included the development of business cases, tender evaluation and awarding contracts, and it was noted that the management and monitoring of contracts and evaluating service delivery and ensuring best value was essential. There were a number of reasons where contracts were unsuccessful namely, lack of senior leadership and commitment in the process and inadequate resources needed to deliver an effective service.



C/22



A chart highlighting the DNA for Commercial Activities presented best practice in procurement which illustrated that the activity of procurement should predominately focus on premarket engagement and contract management, with a simplified process where possible. It reflected Dudley's current position and future ambition. The need to rebalance the focus and resources with the necessary skills set needed for early work was referred to.

The National Procurement Strategy recommends that procurement should be reflected in an executive portfolio, which was currently supported by the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Customer Services. Reference was made to the role of the Councillor including maintaining the alignment of the Corporate Procurement Strategy with the strategic objectives of the Council and consideration of policies on delivery of Best Value and Social Value. It was noted that Councillors were prohibited from participating in commercial negotiations or evaluation of tenders.

In responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, procurement officers ceased all normal procurement activity and focussed on the urgent procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), through working collaboratively with partners and Heads of Service in the West Midlands. It was also confirmed that there was sufficient PPE for the remaining financial year.

The potential implications and uncertainty arising from Brexit was referred to, however Members were assured that the e-tendering system utilised by Dudley was sufficient to proceed compliantly with any future procurements.

It was confirmed that Dudley considered Social Value for all contracts, as long as it was relevant and the procurement was linked to the contract, however it was acknowledged that further work was required with regard to evaluating Social Value during tender evaluation in order for contracts to be measured and accountable. The support provided in delivering the Dudley Deal was referred to, however it was reported that local policies could not be introduced as it would be detrimental to the treaty principles of equal treatment, transparency and non-discrimination based on geographical locations.

The examples of Social Value achieved in Dudley from two contracts was provided that included apprenticeships, training and job opportunities.

Members asked questions, made comments and responses were given where appropriate as follows:-

- The Chair referred to the work undertaken previously at a Scrutiny Working Group focusing on Procurement, promoting opportunities to local businesses and Member involvement through a community event and the production of contact cards or promotional material for Members to distribute to local businesses for information as necessary.

The Commercial and Procurement Consultant referred to an online event at a different Council that facilitated over 90 participants and suggested that a similar platform could be utilised for a community event and undertook to discuss further with the Directorate of Regeneration and Enterprise.

- A Member referred to some instances of significant costs incurred to local businesses following work undertaken by a Dudley Contractor, and commented on the need to ensure that the funding awarded to contractors was an honest and exact contract and queried how it was investigated.

The Commercial and Procurement Consultant confirmed that Dudley advertised opportunities and assigned contracts if requested, and that a number of works contracts utilised an online register called “Constructionline” for pre-qualified contractors and consultants used by the construction industry. It was also noted that the Council required suppliers to procure relevant levels of insurance including Public Liability Insurance.

- Following a request for clarification with regard to prioritising local businesses during the procurement process, the Commercial and Procurement Consultant confirmed that imposing a preference for local businesses could not be considered, however steps could be implemented in ensuring adequate advertising locally, and supporting local businesses to ensure social value in Dudley.

Following comments made, it was agreed that the training session given should be presented to all Elected Members, before the end of the financial year, and that an information card be distributed afterwards to assist Members in supporting local businesses. Members of the Scrutiny Committee were requested to provide feedback of the training session to Officers by e-mail if required.

Following further comments, the Commercial and Procurement Consultant undertook to create a catalogue of businesses within the Dudley Borough that had been awarded contracts through the procurement process.

The Chair thanked Officers for their attendance and presentation given.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That the information reported on be noted.



- (2) That the Commercial and Procurement Consultant be requested to explore further on arranging a virtual community event targeting local businesses on procurement opportunities and support available.
- (3) That the training session on procurement be provided to all Elected Members, together with an information card to assist Members in supporting local businesses, before the end of the financial year 2021.
- (4) That the Commercial and Procurement Consultant be required to create a report of businesses within the Dudley Borough that had been awarded contracts through the procurement process and circulate to the Committee for information.

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18 **Comments made by the Chair**

Following a discussion and subsequent agreement by the Committee, it was agreed that an additional item be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee providing an overview of welfare benefits and the grants awarded and support provided to recipients during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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19 **Question Under Council Procedure Rule 11.8**

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11.8, notice of the following questions had been received:

**Question 1:**

“Can the Committee confirm what consideration was given to the Black Country Plan under agenda item 12 (of the last meeting of this committee) 17th September, 2020; in terms of consultation and engagement with people living in the Borough on matters relating to the call for housing sites and local green spaces.”

The following response was noted by the Committee without discussion in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.9:

The matters relating to the Call for Sites and Local Green Spaces were not discussed under that item as these relate to the Black Country Plan process. The report was focussed on public engagement in relation to the Development Management process specifically. There is a separate process in place for public consultation through the Black Country Plan review, the next consultation stage is planned for Summer 2021.

**Question 2:**

“Can you please confirm how many awards have been made, by the Council, to those making claims under the Covid 19 Emergency Assistance Grants.”



The following response was noted by the Committee without discussion in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.9:

- The Council has made 320 payments totalling £75,855.
- Additionally, the Council has paid £30,000 to Dudley Council for Voluntary Service to allow them to provide support.

The meeting ended at 8.04pm

CHAIR

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## **Meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021**

### **Joint Report of the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Legal and Acting Deputy Chief Executive**

#### **Medium Term Financial Strategy**

##### **Purpose**

1. To consult the Scrutiny Committee on the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2023/24 as approved by Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020, with emphasis on those proposals relating to the committee's terms of reference. For this committee the relevant items are those relating to Chief Executive, Finance and Legal Services, and Commercial and Customer Services in paragraphs 25 and 28, and Appendices D and E.

##### **Recommendation**

2. That the Committee considers and comments on the Cabinet's proposals for the Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2023/24, taking into account the considerations set out in paragraph 38.

##### **Background**

3. The Council approved the General Fund budget for 2020/21 and the MTFS to 2022/23 on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020.
4. A report on the 2019/20 outturn was considered by Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

##### **External Audit**

5. The External Auditors (Grant Thornton) presented their Audit Findings Report to the Audit and Standards Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

6. On the basis of significant risks threatening the Council's financial sustainability, they reported their intention to give an adverse qualified opinion on Value for Money. They have subsequently reviewed the position and issued a qualified "except for" opinion on Value for Money.

#### Forecast 2020/21 Position

7. Since originally setting the budget in March, the Council's operations and finances have been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The forecasts in this report are made in the context of significant uncertainty about the path of the virus, the nature and duration of the public health measures and the severity of the economic impact, so the financial impact by the year end may in practice be greater.
8. In response to Covid-19, the Government has directed significant additional funding to councils and the table in Appendix A shows the allocation to Dudley. Of the forecast allocation, £30.5m is unringfenced (of which £0.9m was used to offset impacts in the last financial year and £29.6m remains to offset impacts in 2020/21). The remainder (standing at £132.4m and rising) is for specific purposes and is expected to be matched by specific increases in expenditure or reductions in income.
9. The forecast General Fund position after transfers from / to earmarked reserves is as follows. It is important to note that this table does not include forecast reductions in Business Rates and Council Tax income (see Collection Fund below) as these do not impact on the General Fund in the current year, but can be spread over future years.

Directorate	Latest Budget £m	Outturn £m	Variance £m
Chief Executive Other	0.8	0.9	0.1
Adult Social Care	97.0	102.8	5.8
Children's Services	69.1	77.4	8.3
Health and Wellbeing	2.9	3.0	0.1
Finance and Legal	3.6	3.9	0.3
Commercial and Customer Services	0.7	5.2	4.5
Housing	6.6	6.7	0.1
Public Realm	50.1	51.3	1.2
Regeneration and Enterprise	11.0	15.3	4.3
Corporate, Treasury and Levies	8.2	7.1	(1.1)
Total Service Costs	250.0	273.6	23.6
Total Resources	(250.0)	(279.6)	(29.6)
Use of Balances	0.0	(6.0)	(6.0)

10. Further detail is provided in Appendix B. The significant variances are as follows:
- We have included £21.0m of service pressures on returns to the Government identifying costs arising from Covid-19 and we are forecasting £29.6m of unringfenced Covid-19 funding for 2020/21 which will generate a net favourable variance of £8.6m. This does not include pressures on Business Rates and Council Tax income (see Collection Fund below).
  - There are pressures arising from Children Looked After placements totalling £3.4m
  - There is an underlying cost pressure of £1.3m within Home to School Transport.
  - The Successor project is forecast to cost an additional £1.0m.
  - As a result of local elections being postponed until May 2021 there is a £0.3m underspend this financial year.
  - The budget included provision for a 2% staff pay award, but this has now been settled nationally at 2.75% which represents a £1.0m cost pressure.
  - Due to slippage in the Council's borrowing requirement there are £1.0m savings in debt financing costs.
  - Release of the £2m contingency provision from the original budget.
  - Other net favourable variances of £0.8m
11. Progress with delivery of specific savings within the current budget is set out in Appendix C. Performance on delivery of savings supports and is consistent with the forecast 2020/21 position outlined above and in Appendix B.
12. The costs of Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) services are met from the High Needs Block within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). As previously reported, we (in common with many other councils) have been experiencing significant financial pressures from increasing demand for children that require additional educational support. Notwithstanding the high-level recovery plan that has been agreed, there is a forecast deficit on the High Needs Block of £13.9m at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The Government has regulated to ensure that this pressure sits within the Dedicated Schools Grant and can be recovered over a number of financial years. As such it is not included in Appendix B.



### General Fund Balances

13. The impact of the outturn shown above leaves the main unallocated General Fund Balance at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 as follows:

	Original Budget £m	Latest Position £m
Forecast balance 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020	15.2	15.2
2019/20 outturn (as reported to July Cabinet)		+0.5
Balance at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020	15.2	15.7
Forecast 20/21 outturn		+6.0
General Fund Balance at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021		21.7

14. This continues to show a low level of reserves in the light of the financial challenges that the Council faces.

### Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2023/24

15. In updating the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, Members will need to consider carefully:
- (a) the levels of Government support allocated to the Council;
  - (b) spending pressures, opportunities to free up resources (including savings), and Council Plan priorities;
  - (c) the implications of spending levels in later years as part of the Council's medium term financial plan;
  - (d) the views of consultees;
  - (e) the external factors and risks inherent in the Strategy;
  - (f) the impact on Council Tax payers.
  - (g) the potential impacts on people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. Members will need to have due regard to the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010. (Further details are set out in the Equality Impact section below.)

## Government Funding

16. Forecasts presented to Cabinet were based on the Chancellor's announcements in the one-year Spending Review on 25<sup>th</sup> November. These included the following:
- An increase in assumed Business Rate income and underlying Revenue Support Grant in line with inflation. The actual Business Rate multiplier will be frozen but councils will be compensated for the income shortfall compared with an inflationary uplift.
  - Additional Social Care Grant of £300m nationally.
  - Improved Better Care Fund to continue at 2020/21 levels.
  - New Homes Bonus funding on the basis of new homes (and reductions in long term empty homes) above a threshold, with a consultation on review for 2022/23 to be published shortly.
  - One-off £1.55bn unringfenced funding nationally for Covid spending pressures in 2021/22.
  - Continuation of compensation for a proportion of lost income from sales fees and charges for the first quarter of 2021/22.
  - Compensation for a proportion of 2020/21 Council Tax and Business Rates losses, which would otherwise have to be charged to the General Fund in future years.
  - £670m unringfenced funding nationally towards the anticipated additional cost of providing Local Council Tax Support in 2021/22.
  - Continuation of the 2017/18 100% Business Rates Retention pilots – including that for the West Midlands.

We have subsequently received the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22 including allocations to individual councils and a verbal update will be given to Scrutiny Committees.

17. The Government has indicated that it will take stock of the previously proposed funding reforms (Business Rate Retention and Fair Funding Review) in the context of the position in which the sector now finds itself, both with regard to the impact the pandemic has had on the resources available to councils, and the demands on local services.

## Council Tax

18. Forecasts to Cabinet took into account the economic outlook reflected in the Spending Review, and indicated:
- A Collection Fund deficit of £2m for the current year arising mainly from increased numbers of working age Council Tax Reduction (CTR) claimants and partially offset by government compensation for losses of income. This deficit was assumed to be charged to the General Fund over the next three years (£1.8m in 2021/22 and £0.1m in each of 2022/23 and 2023/24).



- Ongoing reductions in the Council Tax base, mainly arising from increases in the number of working age CTR claimants, peaking at around 17,500 in the second quarter of 2021 and then recovering gradually in line with the assumptions in the Spending Review.

Forecasts have also been adjusted to reflect current numbers of households in receipt of discounts and exemptions. The position will continue to be monitored closely and any updated forecasts reported to Cabinet in February.

19. The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 enabled the Council to increase the “Empty Homes Premium”, thereby increasing the council tax payable on properties that have been empty for more than two years as follows:

- from 1st April 2019 for properties which have been empty for between two and five years a premium of up to 100%, resulting in a 200% council tax charge;
- from 1st April 2020 for properties which have been empty for between five and ten years a premium of up to 200%, resulting in a 300% council tax charge;
- from 1st April 2021 for properties which have been empty for ten years or more a premium of up to 300%, resulting in a 400% council tax charge.

The Council, when setting the 2019/20 and 2020/21 budgets, agreed that the flexibilities available from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 be utilised in full from those dates. It is now proposed that the further flexibility available from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 be utilised in order to incentivise the bringing back into use of some of the Borough’s housing stock in line with the Council’s Empty Homes Strategy.

20. The Spending Review included proposed Council Tax referendum principles for 2021/22 of a core limit of less than 2% plus an Adult Social Care (ASC) precept limit of 3%. There has been no indication that an ASC precept will be allowed in subsequent years. However, the 3% for 2021/22 can be spread over the two years 2021/22 and 2022/23.

### Business Rates

21. Forecasts to Cabinet took into account the economic outlook reflected in the Spending Review and indicated:
  - A Collection Fund deficit for the current year reflecting challenges to collection, partially mitigated by 100% relief for retail, leisure, hospitality and nurseries and also partially offset by government compensation for losses of income. This deficit (of £2.3m net of grants carried forward in reserve) was assumed to be charged to the General Fund over the next three years (£1.1m in 2021/22 and £0.6m in each of 2022/23 and 2023/24).
  - A prudent assumption that 100% relief for retail, leisure, hospitality and nurseries will cease in 2021/22, though final announcements on this are not expected until the new year.



- Adverse impacts in the wake of the pandemic, leading to increased empty property reliefs, removal of properties from rating and other losses. Forecasts were on the basis that these impacts will peak in 2021 and gradually recover.

There is ongoing uncertainty concerning the impact of the 2017 revaluation on our business rate and grant income. We continue to face considerable uncertainty arising from the impact of appeals following the revaluation and the introduction of the new “Check, Challenge, Appeal” process. We have already applied part of our provision for appeals to partially offset underlying reductions in gross rates payable and further application of the appeals provision is likely to be needed in future years. The position will continue to be monitored closely and any updated forecasts reported to Cabinet in February.

### Combined Authority

22. The West Midlands Combined Authority (CA) receives three elements of funding via the constituent authorities as follows:
- The Transport Levy to fund its transport functions, allocated by statute on a population basis.
  - A contribution to reflect assumed real terms growth in the central share of business rates from 2016/17 onwards to fund its regeneration activities, under the terms of the Devolution Deal.
  - A further contribution to fund its non-transport functions currently allocated by agreement partly on a population basis and partly by equal shares.
23. Forecasts in this report assume that contributions continue on the same basis.

### Base Budget Forecasts

24. The Base Budget reflects the impact on spending of forecast inflation and other anticipated changes, before directorate spending pressures or savings proposals are taken into account. Details are as follows.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m
2020/21 base	250.0	250.0	250.0
Pay ( <i>note 1</i> )	1.4	3.5	5.9
General price inflation ( <i>note 2</i> )	-	3.2	6.7
Income uplift ( <i>note 3</i> )	-0.8	-1.8	-3.1
Pensions ( <i>note 4</i> )	-0.8	-1.6	0.7
Combined Authority ( <i>see paras 22-23</i> )	0.1	0.3	0.4
Treasury ( <i>note 5</i> )	1.2	1.6	0.9
Remove previous contingency ( <i>note 6</i> )	-2.0	-2.0	-2.0
Other adjustments ( <i>note 7</i> )	-0.7	-1.1	-1.3
Base Budget Forecast	248.4	252.1	258.2



Notes:

- (1) Allows for an increase in line with the Chancellor's announced public sector "pay freeze" in 2021/22 with increases only for staff earning less than £24,000 per annum of £250, and increases in line with forecast CPI thereafter. The 2021/22 figure also includes the impact of the actual 2020/21 pay settlement being 2.75% rather than the budgeted 2%. Note that Central Government does not control Local Government pay directly.
- (2) No general provision has been made for 2021/22, with any specific inflationary issues being reflected in spending pressures below.
- (3) Assumes an increase of 2% per year on fees and charges.
- (4) Contributions in 2023/24 will be determined following the 2022 actuarial review. It is currently assumed this will not give rise to any change in underlying contributions. Contributions in individual years are impacted by the current arrangements which give varying annual discounts for 3 year advance payment.
- (5) Impact of Capital Programme, treasury management and investment income changes.
- (6) The existing Medium Term Financial Strategy includes a £2m general contingency. Specific pressures have now been identified within this report so to avoid double counting the contingency has been removed.
- (7) Fall-out of previous one-off items, non treasury impact of Leisure Centre Strategy, and other adjustments.

Spending Pressures

25. Spending pressures provided for are as follows. These are detailed in Appendix D.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care	5.2	7.1	9.0
Children's Services	4.8	4.8	4.8
Health and Wellbeing	0.1	0.1	0.1
Chief Executive	0.3	0.3	0.3
Finance and Legal Services	0.6	0.6	0.6
Commercial and Customer Services	0.5	1.0	1.1
Regeneration and Enterprise	0.0	0.0	0.1
Housing and Communities	0.3	0.3	0.3
Public Realm	0.3	0.8	0.8
Total	12.1	15.0	17.1

26. In addition to ongoing pressures the proposed budget contains a £6.7m contingency for Covid cost pressures and loss of income, to the extent that they are not covered from the extended compensation for Sales, Fees and Charges scheme, that may arise in the early part of 2021/22.



27. Proposals within the report include provision to cease Mandatory Unpaid Leave (£1.1m) and restore 1% previously withheld from Grade 7 and above (0.7m) from 2021/22 onwards.

### Savings

28. In total the following saving proposals have been identified as the basis for scrutiny and consultation. Details are set out in Appendix E.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care	3.2	3.7	3.8
Children's Services	1.3	2.1	2.1
Commercial and Customer Services	0.0	0.1	0.1
Regeneration and Enterprise	0.6	0.7	1.0
Housing and Communities	0.1	0.1	0.1
Public Realm	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total	5.4	6.9	7.3

### Public Health

29. The recent Spending Review announcement did not give any detail regarding future years Public Health Grant allocations, except that it will remain flat in real terms and continue to be ring fenced. It is therefore assumed that general inflation will be added annually in line with the Consumer Price Index. The future intention regarding Agenda for Change is unclear, however the spending review made a commitment to NHS pay increases which would need to be reflected in future grant allocations. It is assumed that the grant will be fully spent in 2021/22 onwards, nevertheless these estimates will be reviewed again with Dudley's new Director of Public Health.
30. The overall forecast position for the Public Health Grant funded budget can be summarised as follows:

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m
Base budget forecast	21.3	21.7	22.0
One-off spending plans	0.6	0.6	0.0
Total spend	21.9	22.3	22.0
Forecast grant	21.3	21.7	22.0
Deficit	-0.6	-0.6	0.0
Reserve brought forward	1.2	0.6	0.0
Reserve carried forward	0.6	0.0	0.0

## Medium Term Financial Strategy

31. The MTFS reflecting the revised spending proposals set out above, and forecasts of resource availability, was summarised to Cabinet as follows.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m
Base Budget Forecast - see para 24	248.4	252.1	258.2
Pressures - see para 25	12.1	15.0	17.1
Covid Contingency	6.7		
Savings - see para 28	-5.4	-6.9	-7.3
Terms and Conditions	1.8	1.8	1.8
<b>Total Service Spend</b>	<b>263.6</b>	<b>262.0</b>	<b>269.8</b>
Retained Business Rates	84.0	86.4	89.0
Tariff	-6.0	-6.1	-6.2
Business Rate Grant	12.6	12.9	13.2
New Homes Bonus	0.2	0.2	0.2
Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF)	16.1	16.4	16.7
Social Care Grant	11.8	12.0	12.2
Covid General Grant	6.7		
LCTS Support Grant	3.3		
Council Tax	133.2	138.3	142.8
Collection Fund Deficit – Council Tax	-1.8	-0.1	-0.1
Collection Fund Deficit – Business Rates <sup>1</sup>	-46.1	-0.6	-0.6
Business Rate Grant reserve	45.0		
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>259.0</b>	<b>259.4</b>	<b>267.2</b>
Deficit funded from Balances	4.6	2.6	2.6
Balances brought forward	21.7	17.1	14.5
Balances carried forward	17.1	14.5	11.9

32. The table above assumes that Council Tax increases by 4.99% in 2021/22 and 1.99% in subsequent years. Based on proposed referendum limits, this would not require a referendum in accordance with Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

<sup>1</sup> 2021/22 figure mainly resulting from increased relief for retail, leisure, hospitality and nurseries in 2020/21, offset by Business Rates Grant received in the General Fund in 2020/21 and carried forward into 2021/22 via an earmarked reserve, shown on following line in table.



## Estimates, Assumptions & Risk Analysis

33. The proposals in this report are based on a number of estimates, assumptions and professional judgements, which are subject to continuous review:
- (a) that pay inflation does not vary materially from current forecasts;
  - (b) that the 2021/22 finance settlement and any specific grant income would be in line with forecasts;
  - (c) that in subsequent years income from (non Covid related) general and specific grants rises in line with forecast CPI;
  - (d) that the underlying impact of any local government funding reforms is neutral;
  - (e) that underlying net income from Business Rates (excluding temporary Covid impacts) rises in line with forecast CPI, and that income and expenditure in respect of the EZ is in line with current forecasts;
  - (f) that the cost of Council Tax Reduction awarded will not substantially exceed forecasts, and the underlying tax base (excluding temporary Covid impacts) will continue to grow as anticipated;
  - (g) that the pressure on the High Needs Block is met from within the Dedicated Schools Grant;
  - (h) that cash limited non-pay budgets will be managed so as to absorb any price inflation not specifically provided for in 2021/22 and any inflationary pressures in 2022/23 and 2023/24 will be no more than the amount provided for;
  - (i) that income and expenditure relating to treasury management activity are in line with forecasts;
  - (j) that there will be no other unplanned expenditure (including any resulting from demographic, legislative or case law pressures) or shortfalls in income, which cannot be met from reserves;
  - (k) that there will be no changes to government policy on maximum underlying Council Tax increases without the need for a referendum;
  - (l) that the Adult Social Care market is able to absorb National Living Wage pressures within the proposed provision;
  - (m) that there will be no underlying change in the level of employers' pension contributions from 2023/24 compared with the current MTFS;
  - (n) that contributions to the WMCA are in line with the forecasts in this report;



- (o) that the proposed contingency will be sufficient to cover any additional costs of managing Covid in 2021/22.

34. The assumptions set out above lead to forecast deficits in all financial years. These assumptions are subject to uncertainty and in some cases this uncertainty is significant. Actual outcomes may be more positive or more negative than the forecasts set out in this report. In the event that outcomes are more negative, then action (to reduce levels of expenditure or increase income) may become more urgent. It should be noted that this budget is being set against a background of significant political and economic uncertainties.

### Consultation

35. Thousands of people have taken part in the budget consultation over the past few years. Last year more than 1,400 responses were received after an extensive promotion period through the media, social media and through the e-bulletin. Hard copies were also made available in libraries, leisure centres and at Dudley Council Plus. This year, the council will continue to consult far and wide using the extensive reach it has through a range of communications channels as well as working with partner organisations and community groups to encourage more people to have their say. The results will be reported back to Cabinet in the spring
36. Detailed consultation will also be undertaken with groups identified as being potentially affected by the specific savings proposals, with a particular emphasis on equalities issues. Further information is set out in the Equality Impact section below.
37. A consultation document will be distributed to representatives of Non-Domestic Ratepayers setting out the provisional budget proposals in this report. Consultees will be offered the opportunity for a meeting to be held if there is sufficient interest. Further detailed information (as required in pursuance of the statutory duty to consult) will be distributed in February for comment before the Council Tax setting meeting.
38. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Scrutiny Committees are being asked to consider the issues set out in this report and any related specific issues relevant to their Council Plan and service responsibilities. For this committee the relevant items are those relating to Chief Executive, Finance and Legal Services, and Commercial and Customer Services in paragraphs 25 and 28, and Appendices D and E. Senior Management will be available at the meeting to address any queries. In framing their responses, the Scrutiny Committees are being asked to consider both the spending and funding implications (including the impact on Council Tax) of any observations they may wish to make.

### Finance

39. This report is financial in nature and relevant information is contained within the body of the report.



## Law

40. The Council's budget setting process is governed by the Local Government Finance Acts 1988,1992, and 2012 and the Local Government Act 2003.
41. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Financial Officer to report on the robustness of estimates made for the purpose of final budget calculations, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves and this will be included in the final budget report.
42. The Localism Act 2011 introduced a new chapter into the Local Government Finance Act 1992 making provision for Council Tax referendums to be held if an authority increases its Council Tax by an amount exceeding principles determined by the Secretary of State and agreed by the House of Commons.
43. The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 are designed to enable a local authority to compensate employees whose employment terminates on grounds of redundancy or in the interests of the efficient exercise of the authority's functions. Any local arrangements in place must also be compliant with the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the Equality Act 2010.

## Equality Impact

44. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 - the general public sector equality duty - requires public authorities, including the Council, to have due regard to the need to:
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't;
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.
45. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
  - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
  - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
  - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

46. The legislation states that "the steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities." In practice, this means that reasonable adjustments should be made for disabled people so that they can access a service or fulfil employment duties, or perhaps a choice of an additional service for disabled people is offered as an alternative to a mainstream service.
47. Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- tackle prejudice, and
  - promote understanding.
48. Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.
49. The duty covers the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
50. An initial assessment of the budget proposals has been made. Where proposals are likely to have a significant equality impact, they will undergo an equality impact assessment informed by consultation with the protected groups who may be adversely affected, during the autumn. The results of this process and any steps which emerge that might help to mitigate any potential impact of the budget proposals on the protected groups will be reported to Members so that they can pay due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty in making decisions on the budget. In making decisions on budget proposals, Members will need to weigh the Public Sector Equality Duty against the forecast financial position, risks and uncertainties set out in this report.
51. With regard to Children and Young People, a substantial element of the proposed budget for the People Directorate will be spent on maintaining and improving services for children and young people. The expenditure of other Directorates' budgets will also have a significant impact on this group.

#### Human Resources / Organisational Development

52. Proposals in relation to staff Terms and Conditions are detailed in paragraph 27.

#### Commercial / Procurement

53. There is proposed additional investment in the Procurement team included in paragraph 25 and Appendix D.



54. Proposed savings from increasing the Dudley Town Hall catering and bar offer and income from advertising on Boundary signs are included in paragraph 28 and Appendix E

Health, Wellbeing and Safety

55. The forecast Public Health budget is set out in paragraphs 29 and 30. This report includes proposals for investment in the SCAMs Team to support Adult Social Care and wider investment in the health, wellbeing and safety of the residents of the borough.

.....  
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Chief Executive

.....  
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Director of Finance and Legal

.....  
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List of Background Papers

Budget and Council Tax setting 2020/21 report to Council, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020  
Revenue Outturn 2019/20 report to Cabinet, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020



## Funding provided by Government in response to Covid-19

Name	£m	Comment
General Covid-19 grant <sup>2</sup>	25.9	
Compensation for sales, fees and charges	4.6	Latest estimate.
Total Unringfenced	30.5	
Section 31	44.5	Compensates for additional Business Rates relief
SBGF / RHLGF / Discretionary Bus. grants	58.9	Initial allocation to fund grants to businesses.
Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed)	4.8	Up to £3000 per month while closed
Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open)	0.2	Support while open
Further rounds of LRSG	TBC	Further restrictions
Additional Restrictions Grant	6.4	£20 per head discretionary fund to support businesses.
New Burdens-administration funding	0.2	Implementation of hardship funding / business grants / CTR
Infection control - Care Homes	2.9	Ringfenced. 75% to be distributed on a per bed basis, 25% discretionary
Infection Control round 2	2.6	80% to Care homes & CQC care providers, 20% discretionary
CCG	TBC	Support hospital discharges, £1.1m claimed to date
Hardship Fund	3.0	To fund additional Council Tax relief
Emergency Assistance Grant	0.4	Food & Essentials
Winter Grant Scheme	1.1	£170m nationally. Ringfenced, with at least 80% earmarked for food and bills.

<sup>2</sup> £0.8m of Covid-19 grant was credited to the General Fund in 2019/20 and the remainder will be credited in the current year

Name	£m	Comment
Test and Trace Support Payment	TBC	£500 lump sum for those on low incomes
Clinically Extremely vulnerable	0.2	
Emergency Active Travel 1 <sup>st</sup> tranche	0.3	£50k Revenue, £235k Capital. 2 <sup>nd</sup> tranche TBC
Reopening High St fund	0.3	Eligible expenditure to be claimed
Test, Track and Trace	1.9	Ringfenced
Compliance and Enforcement	0.2	Ringfenced to support compliance and enforcement
Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF)	2.6	Very High £8 per head of population. Automatically triggered by Lockdown 2
Additional COMF	TBC	£4 per head per month tier 3, £3 per head tier 2.
Education - Catch up premium	1.9	Academic year grant DSG
Covid Workforce Fund	TBC	For schools once reserves have decreased to 4%
Total ringfenced	132.4+	



## 2020/21 Forecast Outturn position

	Latest Budget £'m	Latest Outturn £'m	Variance £m	Of which Covid £m	Of which Other £m	Comment variance
Chief Executives	0.8	0.9	0.1	0.0	0.1	Other - £0.1m Employee related costs of senior mgmt. posts
Adult Social Care	97.0	102.8	5.8	5.6	0.2	Covid – provider support £2.5m, £3.1m pressures on Dudley Disability Services.  Other - £0.2m Successor
Children's Services	69.1	77.4	8.3	2.0	6.3	Covid – CLA placements £0.5m, Traded Services £0.7m, Schools Trading accounts £0.8m.  Other - £3.4m CLA Placements, £1.3m Home to School Transport, £0.8m Successor, £0.8m consultants/agency.
Health and Wellbeing	2.9	3.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	Covid – Foodbanks £0.1m
Finance and Legal Services	3.6	3.9	0.3	0.6	-0.3	Covid - £0.6m loss of income including summons income  Other - Elections fallow year (£0.3m) saving
Commercial and Customer Services	0.7	5.2	4.5	4.1	0.4	Covid – PPE £2.0m, Regional Mortuary £0.6m, ICT £0.8m, CAPA events £0.4m, Registrars £0.3m

	Latest Budget £'m	Latest Outturn £'m	Variance £m	Of which Covid £m	Of which Other £m	Comment variance
						Other ICT £0.4m
Housing	6.6	6.7	0.1	0.2	-0.1	Covid - £0.2m Homelessness Other - (£0.1m) vacancies
Public Realm	50.1	51.3	1.2	2.2	-1.0	Covid – Waste collection and disposal £0.8m, loss of income (Permit scheme, s74 notices, licensing, car parks) £1.4m Other - (£0.8m) Mobilisation savings, (£0.2m) waste and recycling, Oak lane (£0.2m) offsetting £0.2m transport pressure
Regeneration and Enterprise	11.0	15.3	4.3	4.8	-0.5	Covid – Leisure £2.7m, Catering £0.9m, Planning income £0.2m, Local Mortuary £0.2m, Himley and Halls £0.7m, other pressures £0.1m Other - (£0.4m) net saving on non covid Leisure activities, and reduced expenditure in Adult and Community Learning (£0.1m)
Corporate & Treasury	8.2	7.1	-1.1	1.4	-2.5	Covid – investment income impacted by Covid £1.4m Other - Slippage in borrowing requirements (incl MRP) (£1.0m), (£2m) contingency released, pensions over recovery (£0.4m), lower banking transaction fees (£0.1m), offset by additional 0.75% pay award £1.0m,

	Latest Budget £'m	Latest Outturn £'m	Variance £m	Of which Covid £m	Of which Other £m	Comment variance
Total Service Costs	250.0	273.6	23.6	21.0	2.6	
Total Funding	-250.0	-279.6	-29.6	-29.6	0.0	£0.8m of grant funding used in 19/20. Includes £4.6m compensation for Sales, Fees and Charges
Use of Balances	0.0	-6.0	-6.0	-8.6	2.6	

## Delivery of existing Medium Term Financial Strategy

	£'000	Comment
2020/21		
Adults		
Demand management / All Age Commissioning within Dudley Disability Services (DDS) - a focussed approach within DDS services to: reduce initial demand, increase self-assessment, identify placements eligible for Continuing Health Care funding, and develop specific all age commissioning projects targeted at reducing costs over 5 years	210	Implemented
Residential Care Charging Fraud Initiative - Tackle fraudulent asset disposal in regard to Residential Care financial assessment and charging	200	Implemented
Redesign of voluntary sector contracts - A bespoke exercise to consolidate a number of existing contracts into a single market opportunity to the Voluntary Sector	60	Part of pressures
Home care / Extra Care (new models) - Development of a transformational model for the delivery of home care / extra care provision in the Borough	140	Part of pressures
Re-design Day Opportunities - To re-profile usage of the Dementia Gateways in Dudley whilst retaining both services	30	Implemented
Total	640	
Children's		
Children's Transport – Implement new contracts and route management, to ensure services are safe and efficient	360	Part of pressures
Contact Centres - Reviewing the delivery of Family Contact for Children Looked After and Post Adoption support to ensure that the service is delivered effectively, efficiently and offers value for money	30	Part of pressures
Total	390	
Regeneration and Enterprise		
Dudley Town Hall - increase the catering and bar offer.	50	Delayed
Total	50	

Where savings have been partly implemented or delayed, the financial impact is reflected in the 20/21 outturn forecast in Appendix B or is being met from directorate earmarked reserves.

## Spending Pressures

Adult Social Care	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
To meet the cost of care for people with complex disabilities and people discharged from the Transforming Care Cohort	1,550	1,550	1,550
Increasing demand for domiciliary care and a basic inflationary increase.	1,120	1,120	1,120
Increase in the cost and complexity of nursing care placements	240	240	240
Increase in the cost and complexity of care for people with Mental Health problems; particularly care that is jointly funded with the NHS (Dudley CCG)	230	230	230
Maintaining investment in the Voluntary Sector given the vital contribution made to the Borough throughout Covid '19	160	160	160
Growth in demand for care for people with complex dementia and learning disabilities and rising costs of care.	1,860	3,770	5,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,160</b>	<b>7,070</b>	<b>9,000</b>

Children's Services	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Placements for children looked after	3,500	3,500	3,500
Home to school transport	1,300	1,300	1,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>4,800</b>

Health and Wellbeing	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Funding to continue the work of the SCAMs Team supporting Adult Social Care	70	70	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>70</b>

Chief Executive	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Additional Project, Policy and Performance capacity.	250	250	250
Support to strengthen existing Human resources and Organisational Development structure	60	60	60
Total	310	310	310

Finance and Legal Services	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Insurance Traded Service - reduction in school income following the introduction of the Risk Protection Arrangement for maintained schools by the DfE	600	600	600
Additional Staff necessary to meet the increased demand for Legal Services	0	50	50
Total	600	650	650

Commercial and Customer Services	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
PIMS contract	70	70	70
Known impact of Microsoft price increase at next renewal of Enterprise Agreement	0	80	80
Additional costs arising from renewed telephony software contract	50	50	50
Additional costs arising from investment in new firewall technology	0	0	90
Additional costs when Microsoft Dynamics is moved to a cloud-hosted model	0	60	60
Granicus software- mailshot solution	10	10	10
Procurement Improvement Programme	170	170	170
Additional costs to introduce a rolling desktop refresh programme	0	390	390
Additional resources to support Revenues & Benefits.	110	110	110
ICT Helpdesk weekend availability	20	20	20
Payroll Turnover within DC+ (Front line)	50	50	50
Total	480	1,010	1,100

Regeneration and Enterprise	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Impact of National Living Wage on outsourced Cleaning Contract for Admin Buildings	20	40	60
Total	20	40	60

Housing and Community	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Recruitment of 5 Police Community Support Officers / Constables in partnership with the Police Authority.	250	250	250
Strengthen private sector enforcement support including provision for travellers' transit site.	50	50	50
Strengthen Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) team (shared cost with HRA) including Victim Support Officer, new ASB case management system and noise nuisance app.	20	10	10
Total	320	310	310

Public Realm	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Waste disposal - inflation pressures across the three main disposal contracts	220	450	690
Food Waste collection trial	0	200	0
Additional resource capacity to support delivery of the Traffic Regulation Order Programme	50	50	50
Additional resource required to manage the impact of Ash Dieback (a disease killing Ash Trees in large numbers across the UK). This will be achieved by cataloguing and monitoring the trees condition as well as undertaking necessary remedial works.	30	50	50
Tree Planting - reinstate budget for planting new trees across the borough.	10	10	10
Total	310	760	800



## Proposed Savings

Adult Social Care	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Ensure the Disabled facilities grant contributes to associated staffing costs.	450	450	450
New support to Carers contract	50	50	50
Acquired Brain Injury Service - cease SLA with Dudley CCG.	100	100	100
Automation of business processes through Successor social care IT system	50	50	50
Streamline the Lye Community Project	50	100	100
Cease the moving and handling team and transfer functions to Occupational Therapy	50	110	110
Maximise contributions to social care (Fairer Charging)	580	580	580
Glebelands contract remodelling.	30	60	60
Supported Living Package reviews in Mental Health	20	20	20
Review and update the charging policy for transport	160	220	220
Contract out aspects of the money management function	30	60	60
Reduce a Supported Living contract by 50% when current extension ends (Mental Health)	80	80	240
Integrated Commissioning Hub restructure - assume straight 5% saving whilst still creating Cross Directorate / Council Programme resource	70	160	160
Restructure of Mental Health Team and efficiencies from exit of Section 75 agreement.	250	400	400
Streamline of the invoice processing functions following the implementation of Successor Social Care IT system	60	120	120
Continuing Health Care contributions to offset general fund expenditure on complex Learning Disability care	500	500	500
Reduction of 50% of the budget for hospital avoidance placements	290	290	290
Reduce the Residential Care Placement for older people budget by 5% to reflect the increasing shift to domiciliary care.	120	120	120

Adult Social Care	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Residential Care Charging Fraud Initiative - Tackle fraudulent asset disposal in regard to Residential Care financial assessment and charging	200	200	200
Total	3,140	3,670	3,830

Children's Services	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Reduced contribution to the Regional Adoption Agency	50	50	50
Vacancy review	50	50	50
Removal of low level weekend working	100	100	100
Managed step down from external residential placements	425	850	850
Movement of external placements into internal residential placements	375	750	750
Transfer of children to Special Guardianship Order status	40	40	40
Review of Independent Fostering Agency placements	80	80	80
Review of home to school transport for SEND children	220	220	220
Total	1,340	2,140	2,140

Commercial and Customer Services	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Income from Boundary signs	0	40	40
Closure of Dudley Council Plus on Saturdays	10	10	10
Total	10	50	50

Regeneration and Enterprise	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Dudley Town Hall - increase the catering and bar offer.	50	100	100
Close or enter into a commercial lease for Halesowen Cornbow Hall	0	0	100
Confirmed success of Accelerated Towns Fund bid, £1m of prudential borrowing debt charges reduced	60	60	60

Regeneration and Enterprise	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Adult and Community Learning - maximising of costs charged to external grant which funds the service, leading to saving on core budget	50	50	50
Estate rationalization - Regent House Dudley	0	50	150
Estate rationalization - Cottage St Offices, Brierley Hill	0	30	30
Estate rationalization - The Mere Education Centre	0	0	40
Reduction in costs, Enterprise Zone Management & skills budget	150	150	150
Bereavement: Memorial Safety Budget	10	10	10
Metro Lead contract not extended beyond 31/3/21, project manager post budget becomes available	50	50	50
Himley – staff re-structure	40	40	40
Bring bars back in-house for Stourbridge Town Hall & Cornbow Hall	0	10	10
Bereavement: Stop locking cemetery gates	30	30	30
Leisure Centres: Options Plus Discount scheme - reduce or remove certain categories	20	20	20
Reduce Dudley Business First controllable budgets - based on 2019/20 outturn	50	50	50
Review of vacant posts/spare hours in CLS	30	30	30
Wider re-structure within Regeneration & Skills following a retirement	60	60	60
Total	600	740	980

Housing and Community	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Housing - reduction in revenue contribution to capital for Housing Assistance Grants	150	150	150
Total	150	150	150

Public Realm	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Mandatory Works Management System Headroom	20	20	20
Release Bulky Waste Trial growth	50	50	50
Release current headroom for Clinical Waste and review annually	70	70	70
Reduction in the resources required to improve the condition of the Borough's football pitches.	40	40	40
Total	180	180	180

## **Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 21st January 2021**

### **Report of the Director of Finance and Legal**

#### **Benefits – Financial and other support (including Covid) and the work of the Corporate Welfare Reform Group**

##### **Purpose**

1. To provide information about the various elements of support provided by DMBC, to provide an update on work specifically relating to Covid and the work and future plans of the Corporate Welfare Reform Group.

##### **Recommendations**

2. That the Committee acknowledges the work undertaken to date and ongoing work and agrees and supports planned future work.
3. That the Committee considers the option of this becoming an annual report where updates can be provided.

##### **Background**

4. Teams within DMBC provide a range of financial support services. Whilst the following list is not exhaustive, it is hoped that it captures the majority of these services.
5. Help with council tax is provided via council tax reduction (CTR). This is supplemented by a discretionary council tax reduction scheme. Nearly **27,000** people receive CTR at an annual cost of nearly **£20m**. This is increasing. Both schemes are administered by the Revenue & Benefit Services Division.
6. Help with housing costs (rent) is provided in the main via housing benefit (HB), when including help for pensioners. Whilst many working age customers continue to get HB, growing numbers are now receiving such support via their universal credit (UC) award. This change may cause confusion as HB is administered by DMBC, whereas UC is administered via the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP). Nearly **12,500** people receive HB at an annual cost of circa **£50m**. This is decreasing as more people move to UC. HB is administered by the Revenue & Benefit Services Division.



7. Further support for housing costs is provided via discretionary housing payments (DHPs). The demand for this scheme has increased significantly in recent years following a number of welfare reform changes. As a result, this has been an ongoing agenda item for the welfare reform group. Funding for this is provided by Government but Housing also supplement this up to £550k per year to meet demand in relation to council tenants. So far this year nearly **£950k** of DHP have been awarded. DHPs are administered by the Revenue & Benefit Services Division. See Appendix A for details.
8. Specific support to DMBC housing tenants is provided by a range of teams within the Housing and Community Directorate. See Appendix B for details.
9. Support is provided to private sector housing and in some instances housing tenants by Housing Options & Support. See Appendix C for details.
10. DMBC's welfare rights team provide advice and support to residents of Dudley who are vulnerable and in need of extra support. See Appendix D for details.
11. The Warm Home Discount is a Government scheme funded by suppliers that provides £140 to lower income and vulnerable households to help with energy costs during the winter. Those in receipt of Guaranteed Pension Credit automatically receive it, whereas those on a low income (less than £16k per annum) or in receipt of certain benefits may be eligible and need to apply. Each supplier has different criteria and not all are part of the scheme. Some suppliers have additional criteria e.g. be either elderly, have young children or receive a disability benefit. This is coordinated by the Council's Winter Warmth Team. Funding is limited and allocated on a first come first served basis.

### **Covid specific**

12. **Business Grants.** The first set of grant schemes ran from March 2020 to August 2020. Well over **5,000** businesses were awarded nearly **£59m**. New grant schemes started again with the November 2020 lockdown and are continuing with a raft of schemes dependant on business type, whether a business has to close and what tier/lockdown the council is placed within. With regard to the "new" grants, to date nearly **2,000** grants have been awarded, totalling nearly **£2.4m**. The schemes are administered by the Revenue & Benefit Services Division and Dudley Business First, with support from a number of individuals from other service areas, particularly audit, finance and Dudley Council Plus (DC+).
13. **CTR Hardship payments.** This scheme is for working age council tax (CT) payers who are in receipt of CTR. For those eligible, a further reduction of up to £150 can be made from their 2020/21 CT liability. Over **16,000** people have received this award at a total cost of circa **£2.7m**. It is funded by Government. This scheme is administered by the Revenue & Benefit Services Division.
14. The **Emergency Assistance Grants scheme** commenced in August 2020. This scheme was launched in August 2020 and offers short term emergency help for people who are struggling to afford food, fuel and other essentials due to financial hardship and/or hardship caused specifically by Covid. This scheme is administered by DC+. DC+ are also supporting the track & trace work, attempting

to contact individuals where the nationally led work has been unsuccessful. See Appendix E for details.

15. **Isolation payments** commenced 28 September 2020, with eligible individuals entitled to a support/discretionary support payment of £500. This is to support people on low incomes who are unable to work from home if they are told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace and will lose income as a result. From the end of September to the end of December, **1,824** applications were received, with **508** being successful. Government criteria on this scheme limits the number of applications that can be approved. This scheme is administered by the Revenue & Benefit Services Division.
16. **Covid Winter Support grant** was allocated at Christmas from the Government. It is primarily aimed at families with a proportion for vulnerable adults. The grant is for food and fuel/warmth. There is some cross over with other grants. Food vouchers were issued over the Christmas period. A process is being set up to offer financial support to eligible households who have a pre-paid fuel meter. It is more difficult to support those households not on a pre-paid meter and officers are working with partner agencies to find a speedy solution to this.

### **Welfare Reform Group**

17. This group was revised and re-launched around March 2017. Group members represent various parts of DMBC, including Finance, Housing, Childrens Services, Adult Services and Public Health.
18. The group has a standard agenda, focussing on the effects and impacts of welfare reform and other associated issues. It meets on a monthly basis, but following significant pressures brought about by Covid, the group has been meeting fortnightly since August 2020.
19. In early 2017 the agenda was dominated by Universal Credit (UC), the Benefit Cap, Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), Supported Accommodation, Under Occupancy Charge / Size Criteria, Council Tax Reduction (CTR) and Local Welfare Allowance (LWA) Loans.
20. More recently the group has focussed on the mitigating poverty project led by Public Health, UC, DHPs and various Covid support schemes.
21. The latest addition to the agenda has been at the request of Cllr Crumpton, where the group is now looking at collating efforts to make the journey to benefits awareness and claiming more simple and coordinated.

### **Looking Forward**

22. Our immediate focus is to continue to find resources to ensure all Covid support schemes are designed and delivered as efficiently as possible, getting support to those in need as quickly as we can.



23. Our next task is to complete the first element of our “benefits awareness” work, by creating an insert to go out with the main council tax bills for 2020/21 that are due to start being issued in March.
24. As soon as possible the group will continue to provide significant support to the corporate mitigating poverty project. This project had made substantial progress up to February 2020, with a number of meetings involving a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders. One of the priorities for the Health and Wellbeing Board is to mitigate poverty across the Borough. The approach taken is to look at the systemic causes of poverty and create solutions, where possible, at that level. Parallel to this is to provide immediate help and support to those in poverty or on the edge of poverty. Due to demands on capacity because of Covid, the systemic work has not progressed as quickly as wanted, but immediate support and help has increased. There is a multi agency steering group overseeing operational work and colleagues from services mentioned elsewhere in this report attend the board.

### **Finance**

25. Most of the “traditional” work described above, e.g. that of the welfare reform group, is met from within existing budgets. Other ongoing work that is non-Covid related, e.g. DHPs, are funded from Government grants. Most of the Covid related work attracts new burdens funding from Government. Increased workloads caused by Covid do put a considerable strain on budgets.

### **Law**

26. The Coronavirus Act 2020 and associated Regulations make provision in connection with the coronavirus pandemic, and for connected purposes.

### **Equality Impact**

27. The proposals take into account the Council’s Policy on Equality and Diversity. This report and areas of proposed expenditure are intended to promote independence and improve quality of life for protected groups. We know that there is a disproportionate representation of people from BAME communities in poverty. Data also tells us that those children from financially poor families are less likely to do well at school, which may put some children into generational poverty

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

28. Again, the “traditional” work described above has little impact on HR/OD, however Covid related work has put great pressure on available DMBC resources. It has been heartening to be part of cross-directorate working and great achievements have been evidenced. However, most of this has been temporary and in response to specific issues/tasks. When Covid is behind us, it may be beneficial to review how DMBC was able to respond to these demands and whether any lessons need to be learned and / or changes introduced to enable us to be a more resilient / reactive organisation.

## **Commercial/Procurement**

29. All procurements consider if the contracts awarded will allow Directorates to continue and develop their services to trade other public bodies and organisations.

Considerations should also be given to the Commercial Strategy 2021+ to enable the service to benefit from a commercial review of its business model and plans.

There are no direct commercial implications that are associated with this report, however the work through this crisis to support our education customer base helps improve relationships and retain / grow business.

## **Health, Wellbeing and Safety**

30. The work described in this report needs to continue to help build stronger, safer and more resilient workforce, to enable us to better help Dudley residents and businesses through financial pressures and major issues.

Evidence shows that people in poverty are more likely to have poor health, educational outcomes and shorter lifespan. Helping people better manage financially will have positive impacts on resident health and wellbeing.



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### **List of Appendices**

Appendix A - discretionary housing payments  
Appendix B - support for housing tenants  
Appendix C - housing options and support  
Appendix D - Dudley welfare rights service  
Appendix E - emergency assistance grants

## **Appendix A - discretionary housing payments**

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are further financial assistance payments to help with housing costs. Claimants must already be in receipt of Housing Benefit (HB) or the housing element from Universal Credit (UC), in order to qualify.

Each year Government provide us with a yearly budget which is managed by Revenue and Benefit Services Division. This year the budget was £863,075, an increase of approximately 23% on the previous year allocation.

Local Authorities are permitted (within limits) to top up the fund with their own resources, and for a number of years now, Housing have made additional funding available to top up our fund, if required. Last year, Housing topped up our fund by just over £150k.

This year, due to the increased demand of further financial assistance, we reached 100% expenditure at the end of November 2020, just 8 months into the financial year. It is anticipated that by the end of the financial year, we will have reached approximately 130% of the initial budget. Demand for these payments have increased due to Covid with more claimants in need of further financial assistance.

As at 31/10/2020 we had received 4676 applications for DHP compared to just 1759 over the same period in 2019. Updated data is expected shortly but is not available in time for this report.

## **Appendix B - support for housing tenants**

Specific support to DMBC housing tenants is provided by a range of teams within the Housing and Community Directorate. The Income and Rent Accounting teams manage rent collection and arrears recovery, using a case management approach and encouraging early contact with tenants at the point when they first have difficulty paying, so that arrears do not escalate. We use a wide range of communication methods, including telephone, text, email, letters, flyers, website messages and social media. We support tenants to maximise their income, offer help navigating the benefits system and guidance on repayment plans to help tenants who are in arrears. We encourage tenants to use automated and efficient methods of payment: our Direct Debit take-up has increased from year to year and currently we receive almost £2m per month from nearly 10,000 tenants on Direct Debit. We offer tenants who have fallen into arrears the opportunity to set up a repayment plan at an affordable level, where possible via Direct Debit, and we offer incentives for those who set up and maintain Direct Debit payments. We work with colleagues in Housing Support and Housing Management to support tenants to sustain their tenancies and pay their rent. Housing Support engage with individual cases where more intensive support is required, as well as running regular drop-in sessions across the Borough. Housing Managers work on a patch-based system and will develop local knowledge and awareness of tenants' issues and concerns. We engage at an early stage with the Homelessness team to prevent evictions, and have among the lowest eviction rates in the Midlands. We also work closely with partners in CAB and DWP, including with our local Jobcentres and the Universal Credit Service Centre. This includes regular contact and joint meetings as well as co-location and job shadowing (prior to Covid 19 and the move to remote working).

With this year having been dominated by the pandemic, we have changed our working methods and moved to home working and a primarily telephone-based service. We have undertaken only very limited enforcement action with no evictions in this financial year. We have focused on providing help and support for our tenants to sustain their tenancies. Arrears have increased to around £2.5m compared to £2m prior to Covid 19, but we are managing the majority of this through repayment plans, emphasising the importance of paying rent but recognising the difficult circumstances for many of our tenants and ensuring that they can repay an affordable amount.

Looking forward, we are reiterating our message that we are here to help tenants if they are having difficulties paying their rent in the current circumstances. We have received as a public sector housing landlord no specific government grant support, but we are working closely with colleagues throughout the Council to raise awareness and support those in need.

## **Appendix C - housing options and support**

### **Housing Support**

This includes 2 Substance misuse Housing Support Officers.

### **Housing First**

Housing First is an evidence based approach to successfully support homeless people with high needs and histories of entrenched or repeated homelessness to live in their own homes. The philosophy is to provide a stable, independent home with intensive and personalised support to homeless people with multiple and complex needs. Multiple and complex needs may include complex mental health needs, persistent substance misuse, repeated offending history, physical health needs and experience of violence or domestic abuse and is usually a combination of several of these. Housing First is different to other models of housing as it provides housing 'first' as a matter of 'right' rather than as 'last' or as a reward.

We currently have 19 people housed who would otherwise have continued to/become rough sleepers.

### **Garden Pathways**

This is a service for council tenants that are elderly and/or vulnerable and are no longer able to maintain their gardens.

This could potentially lead to problems with remaining within their tenancy conditions and lead to other problems such environmental issues & neighbour problems.

We offer two levels of service:

- Garden clearance – we will go into a garden that needs clearing and bringing back to a manageable level whereby the tenant maybe able to take back control.
- Regular Maintenance – we will assess a garden and agree a cycle of works to keep the garden in a presentable and manageable state to keep the tenant within their tenancy agreement.

It is important to note that this is not a landscaping service and is purely to keep gardens presentable and manageable. In order to be eligible for the scheme there is an eligibility criteria. The scheme is not advertised as we are always over capacity.

**Mediation Service** – link: [www.dudley.gov.uk/mediation](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/mediation)

### **Employability Service**

### **Intensive Family Support**

### **Telephone Support Service (Previously Drop-in Service)**

**Tenancy Start up project** – To provide a comprehensive Tenancy start up support service to Dudley MBC residents with identified support needs. To help guide residents setting up a tenancy for the first time while offering a clear understanding of responsibilities cover aspects of tenancy management. To provide initial support within the first stages of a tenancy, support to access local health care, Welfare Benefits and continued sustainability. Criteria for Tenancy Support: Prospective clients must live

within the Dudley Borough and be of Council Tenure, completing a first time tenancy sign up, be considered vulnerable or disadvantaged in some way, have short-term needs – it must be demonstrated that clients will be able to gain independent living, must not be receiving support from a similar service, must show a willingness to engage with Tenancy Support for up to 3 months.

**Pre Tenancy Workshops** – face to face workshops are currently suspended due to Covid, however packs with information are provided for support and we are looking to launch a virtual workshop in the new year.

*Face to face sessions for perspective applicant/tenants aims:*

“We want everyone who rents a council property to make it a safe and secure home. At the workshops we share information about things that can help you make positive decisions for your home. It covers budgeting, debts, how to prepare and set up your home, where to get items you need and details of where to get help in the council and local community. It also clarifies yours and the council’s responsibilities for the tenancy. There is no test, and there is the opportunity to request extra information and support at the end of the workshop.”

## **Appendix D - Dudley welfare rights service**

An overview of our service and how we offer support to Dudley residents:

We are a small team staffed by 3 full time and one part time officer (ex-benefit shop). We each have approximately twenty years of experience in providing advice. Our service aims to provide advice and support to residents of Dudley who are vulnerable and in need of extra support. We do this in a number of ways:

We provide training to workers both within the council, and from external bodies. The object of this is to upskill workers with basic benefits advice so that they can best support their service users. Alongside this, we provide an advice line and email service so that all workers can contact us for advice, but can also make referrals to our service for complex cases and appeals. This allows us to cascade our knowledge, whilst providing support where more expertise is required. Many teams within Dudley MBC (housing support, family centres, adult social care, homeless prevention, income team) use our service for advice, and also make direct referrals into our service. Externally, we receive queries from a range of organisations including refuge providers, foyer projects (CHADD), DWMH team, teenage pregnancy team, and Integrated Plus. We ensure that all workers are kept up to date with relevant changes in benefits by issuing regular 'updates' via email.

More recently, we have set up a small project to take referrals for residents applying for Covid emergency assistance grants. This allows us to make contact with residents in order to offer a benefit check, and to assist with any issues that may cause financial hardship. To date, we have helped resolve issues with Universal Credit, identified people with disability who were not claiming a benefit, helped with issues with council tax reduction, and discretionary housing benefit.

Pre Covid, we provided direct assistance at local foodbank surgeries once a week (Stourbridge, Dudley and Brierley Hill Project). This enabled us to meet directly with those experiencing difficulty with benefits and to provide assistance with resolution. Since the pandemic, we have provided telephone advice to the foodbanks. We will also be taking referrals for residents affected by food or fuel poverty where there are also issues with benefit entitlement or payment.

From the onset of the pandemic, we have provided 'factsheets' available on Dudley MBC's website. The factsheets provide information on a range of situations, and an overview of what benefits might be available and how to claim. The factsheets are updated regularly, and also contain contact details for our 'Covid advice line'. The line is open two days per week (due to low staffing levels) but is a way for anyone experiencing difficulties as a result of Covid (through reduced hours of work, redundancy, or illness for example) to receive some support and advice with identifying applicable benefits. We have also participated in a webinar for the BAME community highlighting support as outlined above and will be providing a further session for community and voluntary workers shortly.

The link to the fact sheets is below. Information on the advice line has been provided in a range of council newsletters and emails.

<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/benefits/welfare-rights-service-and-covid-19-fact-sheets/>



## **Appendix E - emergency assistance grants**

The emergency assistance grants (EAG) scheme commenced August 2020. Funding is provided by Government.

This scheme was launched, offering short term emergency help for people who are struggling to afford food, fuel and other essentials due to financial hardship and/or hardship caused specifically by Covid.

The scheme is delivered by Dudley Council Plus (DC+) on behalf of Public Health and applications can be made on line or by phone. Approved awards are made via electronic bank transfer.

Demand is high and continues to increase. In the first 3 months (August to October) we processed **697** applications; in November and December we processed **1034** applications. At the time of writing 723 people have been helped, with grants totalling **£164k** awarded. We expect this high level of demand to continue into 2021, with January showing no sign of a decrease in applications.

The individual circumstances of applicants have been varied. The scheme has dealt with a wide range of customers, many who have never previously asked for assistance from a welfare scheme. Many described unexpectedly losing their livelihood and income due to Covid.

The logistics of gathering evidence has sometimes proved challenging, with applicants isolating and unable to leave home to either obtain or bring in evidence. Technology has been invaluable, mobile phone photographs & screen shots and fast bank payments enabling us to process applications and get payments to people quickly.

The scheme is evidence of a successful joint project between Public Health, Customer Services, ICT and Finance, with each division/section delivering its own element within a tight timescale.



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## **Corporate Scrutiny Committee - 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021**

### **Report of the Chief Executive**

### **Attendance Management**

#### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the current sickness absence levels and the application of the Attendance Management Policy within Directorates.

#### **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee note and comment upon this report.

#### **Background**

3. The council's priority is to support employee's health and wellbeing. However, the number of day's sickness in previous years has been high and there has been a move to support a reduction. This has included joint work with health and well-being colleagues and the provision of well-being services and the review of policies.
4. As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 the Council's employees 4800 (4035 FTE) people within Directorates.
5. The sickness absence rate for Directorates for the complete year 2019/2020 was 12.19 days lost per person against a target of 10.50 days.

#### **See Appendix 1**

6. The sickness absence rate for 2020/2021 Q2 (April 2020 –September 2020) shows 4.35 days lost per FTE against a target of 5.25 days lost; based on trend analysis if the rate of absence continues this may result in a year end figure of 8.7 days lost per FTE for the full year of 2020/2021 (unless days lost significantly increases during the October 2020 – March 2021)



## **See appendix 2**

7. Nationally the average days lost per person to absence is 6.4 days across all sectors. Within the Public sector the average days lost per employee nationally is 7.5 days.
8. Regionally a limited absence survey was undertaken by West Midland Employers Organisation who reported 8.8 days lost per employee.

### **Attendance Management Policy**

9. The Attendance Management Policy was revised from 1st June 2018 with the introduction of revised triggers. Absence triggers highlight those staff whose absence is more concerning and for whom the line manager should focus attention in discussing the employees' health, the support they may provide and taking appropriate action.

From 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018 the triggers are:

- Bradford Factor Score
- 4 weeks continuous absence (regardless of working pattern)
- Any pattern or trend identified by manager monitoring

### **See appendix 6 for explanation of triggers**

10. Attendance triggers are there to “trigger” a manager to review an employee’s absence record. The trigger may require different interventions from supporting an employee through to absence that requires attention, or to a maybe a pattern of absence that is becoming problematic and more detrimental to their service. The trigger, whether a Bradford Score, 4 weeks absence or pattern or trend alerts a manager that they must address this with the employee using the Attendance Management Policy and accompanying toolkits.
11. The Bradford Factor or Bradford Formula is used as a means of measuring worker absenteeism. The theory is that short, frequent, and unplanned absences are more disruptive than longer absences. Bradford factor scores are based on the frequency and length of an employee’s absence during a rolling 12 months and indicates to a manager when they should intervene and at what stage. The Bradford Factor must not be used in isolation as it is meant to target short term frequent absence, hence the other triggers of 4 weeks continuous absence and any pattern or trend emerging.

### **See appendix 7 for further Bradford Factor information**

12. Using the Bradford Factor focusses the manager's attention on the more problematic absenteeism. For example the previous triggers resulted in more employees meeting a stage 1 trigger for being absent for 10 days (2 weeks) with post-operative recovery or chicken pox without having any other absence within the year. Using the Bradford Factor formula for the same situation would not result in a trigger being met. This would give the manager more time to focus and resolve situations of more frequent and long term absences that gives the greater concern and more impact on service delivery.

13. The People Management Information System (PIMS) holds all absence information and line managers are responsible to record the following in the system:

- Start and end date of absence
- Reason for absence
- Return to work completion and information
- Warnings issued
- Absences discounted

All absences information must be recorded in PIMS by the employee's line manager including the completion of return to work interviews. Once the line manager records an absence PIMS generates tasks for the manager to complete and provides ongoing absence information i.e. return to work required, Bradford Factor Score, absences still open.

14. The records held in PIMS show that during October 2019 to September 2020 a total of 331 employees met a trigger as defined in the Attendance Management Policy. 162 employees who have met a trigger have no recorded actions by the line manager. You should note that some of the triggers were met in August and September 2020 and therefore may be pending action and some completed by the time of the report.

**See appendix 5 for more information**

15. Across Directorates, 91 employees have met the stage 3 trigger indicating their absence is problematic and detrimental to the service areas. Of those 91 employees 3 have been dismissed, 47 employees have received a warning that their employment is at risk or are currently having further reviews/ discussions with HR or Occupational Health. 41 employees meeting the stage 3 trigger have no action recorded in PIMS and have not been referred for review with HR as advised in the Policy. You should note that some of the triggers were met in August/September 2020 and therefore may be pending action at the time of this report.

**See appendix 5 for more information**

16. Within the Attendance Management Policy long term absence is described as any absence that reaches 4 continuous weeks (regardless of working pattern). The manager is required to undertake a 4 week review with the employee and decide on the appropriate action i.e. referral to Occupational health, consider adjustments to allow an earlier return to work, recovery is going as planned and a return to work date is identified. The manager is not required to record this action within PIMS. Intervention by the line manager at an early stage of long term absence is crucial in trying to ensure that an early return to work is achieved.
17. Where an employee is unable to return to their job, they cannot be redeployed, or are not eligible for ill health retirement their case is referred to a capability panel for their continuing employment to be considered. The Chair of the Panel is either a Head of Service or Chief Officer supported by an HR Specialist. During the period April 2019 – March 2020 there were 10 employees dismissed for health capability. During the period April 2020 to September 2020 4 employees dismissed for health capability.

**See appendix 8 for dismissals in relation to absence**

18. The main reason for sickness for the council Directorates are in the period 2019 to 2020 was Mental health/Anxiety/Depression (9.1% of absence), followed closely by work related stress (9%) and post-operative recovery (8.3%).

**See appendix 3 for further information**

19. For the period April 2020 to September 2020 the main reason for sickness absence was work related stress (12.9%) and mental health/anxiety/depression (12.6%).

**See Appendix 4 for further information**

20. Return to work interviews are mandatory regardless of time absent. Our records show that 90% of return to work interviews have been complete. Return to work interviews are crucial in the early identification of underlying health issues and for the manager to sign post appropriate help and support initiatives; make temporary adjustments to prevent absence or to discuss the absences may putting the employee's employment at risk. You should note that there may be non-completion of return to work where the employee is currently still absent or they may have left the Councils employment.

**See appendix 9 for further information**

21. Dudley Counselling Service provides various support to employees across the Directorates. The total number of staff requesting support through the Counselling Service during April 2019 to March 2020 was 235.

22. The Counselling Service also provides a number of wellbeing workshops, accessible to all employees to support their mental health and wellbeing. Courses are accessed by employees independently and during 2019/2020 there were 797 employees attending various workshops

**See Appendix 11 for further information**

23. It should be noted that since March there have also been absences from work due Covid. This could either be as a result of a Covid positive test or isolation in line with Government guidance.

**See Appendix 10 for further information**

### **Finance**

24. The cost of absence is not available through data information. According to a National Survey in 2018 of sickness absence the average cost per person is £573. This is unlikely to be a true cost as it does not include any additional costs of covering absence or loss through reduced service where applicable.

### **Law**

25. There is legislation that impacts on this policy - Equality Act 2010 that is reflected in the Attendance Management Policy and Toolkits.

### **Equality Impact**

26. The Attendance Management Policy complies with the Council's Equality Policy Statement.

### **Human Resources and Organisational Development**

27. The council's policies and procedures apply to all staff. Line managers manage through support and resources absences in the workplace with support from the OD team by the provision of training, bespoke team briefings, advice to managers, attendance at meetings involving more complex workplace health issues, review of absence progressing to dismissal, support to prepare capability dismissal documentation, supporting Chair of Capability Panels and through the review of Policy and Toolkits.

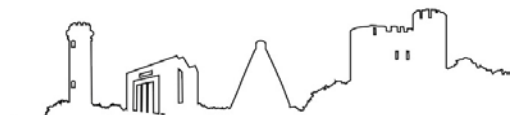


**Kevin O'Keefe**  
**Chief Executive**

Contact Officers: Jo Martin – HR Manager  
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Email: [jo.martin@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:jo.martin@dudley.gov.uk)

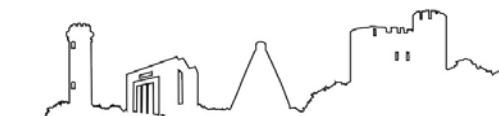


Appendix 1 - Sickness Absence overview April 2019 – March 2020						
Directorate	Headcount	Total FTE staff	Total days lost FTE	Short Term Days lost per FTE	long term Days lost per FTE	Total Days lost per FTE
Adult Social Care	870	729.35	10612.83	3.72	10.74	14.46
Children's	830	690.30	8012	3.13	8.50	11.63
Commercial & Customer Services	348	306.88	2578.80	3.82	4.61	8.43
Corporate Operations	4	4	5	1.25	0	5
Finance & Legal	311	262.90	1702.11	2.45	4.02	6.47
Health & Wellbeing	136	117.68	982.12	3.21	5.20	8.41
Housing	415	374.79	4601.88	3.54	8.85	12.39
HR & OD	57	51.73	474.16	3.13	5.88	9.01
Public Realm	1080	997.48	15175.24	3.58	11.57	15.16
Regeneration & Enterprise	825	546.43	5657.44	2.35	7.98	10.33
Total	4876	4081.54	49801.57			
Actual total for April 2019- March 2020				3.24	8.90	12.19
Target for April 2019 – March 2020				3.0	7.5	10.5
Actual total for year 2018/2019				2.91	9.26	12.17



## Appendix 2 - Sickness Absence overview April 2020– September 2020

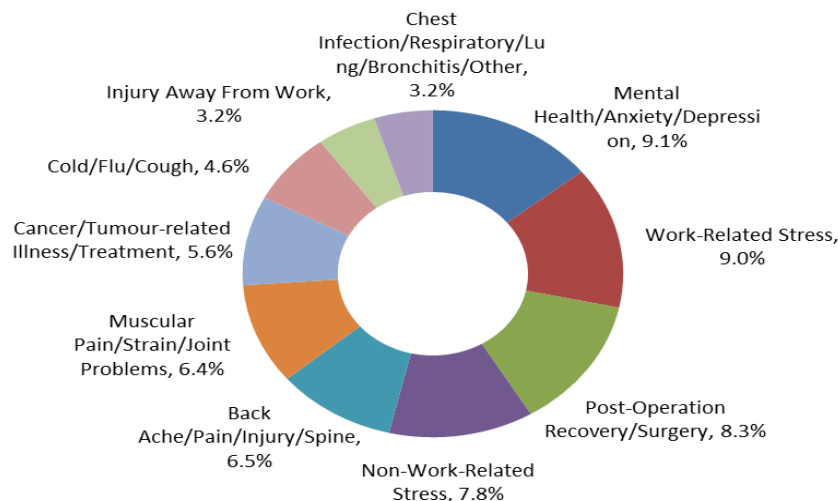
Directorate	Headcount	Total FTE staff	Total days lost FTE	Short Term Days lost per FTE	long term Days lost per FTE	Total Days lost per FTE
Adult Social Care	849	714.86	4937.82	1.23	5.60	6.83
Children's	834	691.68	2769.57	0.81	3.19	4.00
Commercial & Customer Services	344	304.29	1237.35	0.57	3.48	4.05
Corporate Operations	5	5	0	0	1.81	2.19
Finance & Legal	314	266.18	577.25	0.38	0	0
Health & Wellbeing	128	109.27	442.83	2.79	2.79	3.89
Housing	407	370.58	1606.62	3.43	3.43	4.32
HR & OD	55	49.79	27.24	0.53	0	0.53
Public Realm	1067	986.14	4974.29	1.01	4.00	5.01
Regeneration & Enterprise	797	537.35	1086.66	0.33	1.68	2.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>4800</b>	<b>4035.14</b>	<b>17659.61</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>4.37</b>
Target for April 2020 – September 2020				1.50	3.75	5.25
Projected total based on trend for April 20 – March 2021				1.66	7.02	8.75
Target for April 2020 – March 2021				3.0	7.5	10.5
Actual total for April 2019- March 2020				3.24	8.90	12.19





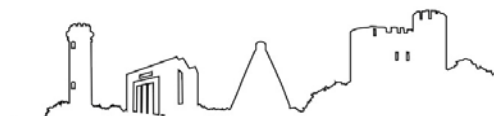
## Appendix 3 - Reasons for Sickness Absence April 2019 – March 2020

**Council Exc Schools Top 10 Reasons for Sickness - 2019-20**



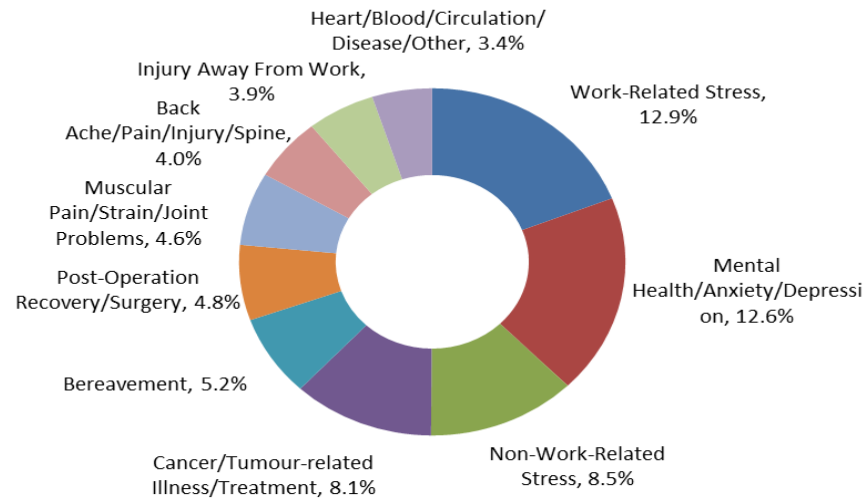
### Work related stress – April 2019 to March 2020

	Headcount	No staff absent for Work related stress	% of workforce	No or periods of absence	No days lost to work related stress
Adult Social Care	870	23	2.64%	24	1062.68
Children's	830	24	2.89%	30	1556.78
Commercial & Customer Services	348	5	1.42%	5	153.80
Corporate Operations	4	0	0	0	0
Finance & Legal	311	3	0.96%	3	46.50
Health & Wellbeing	136	1	0.73%	1	5.19
Housing Management	415	8	1.92%	9	469.27
Public Realm	1080	18	1.66%	19	923.49
Regeneration & Enterprise	825	7	0.84%	7	244.08
HR & OD	57	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4876 employees</b>	<b>89 employees</b>	<b>1.82%</b>	<b>98 periods</b>	<b>4461.79 days</b>



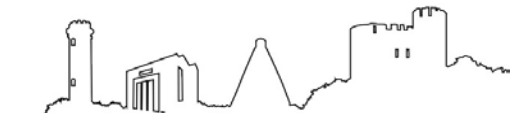
## Appendix 4 - Reasons for sickness absence April 2020 – September 2020

### Council Exc Schools Top 10 Reasons for Sickness - Q2 2020-21

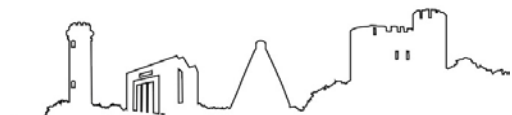


### Work related stress – April 2020 to September 2020

	Headcount	No staff absent for Work related stress	% of workforce	No or periods of absence	No days lost to work related stress
Adult Social Care	849	16	1.88%	17	768.93
Children's	834	18	2.15%	19	762.16
Commercial & Customer Services	344	3	0.87%	4	125.00
Corporate Operations	5	0	0	0	0
Finance & Legal	314	2	0.63%	2	35.50
Health & Wellbeing	128	0	0	0	0
Housing Management	407	6	1.47%	6	178.24
Public Realm	1067	11	1.03%	11	383.00
Regeneration & Enterprise	797	3	0.37%	3	30.81
HR & OD	55	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4800</b>	<b>59 employees</b>	<b>1.22%</b>	<b>62 periods</b>	<b>2283.64 days</b>



Appendix 5 - Triggers reached & Actioned by Manager – October 2019 – September 2020										
Area	Headcount	No Employees reaching Stage 1 trigger	Stage 1 trigger Actioned by Manager	No employees reaching Stage 2 trigger	Stage 2 trigger actioned by Manager	No Employees reaching Stage 3 trigger	Stage 3 trigger actioned by Manager	Total No of employees reaching a trigger	Number actioned by manager	% actioned by managers
ASC	849	33	18	24	9	22	14	79	41	51%
Children's	834	24	12	11	8	17	6	52	26	50%
Commercial & Customer Services	344	13	7	2	2	6	4	21	11	52%
Corporate Operations	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Finance & Legal	314	4	1	5	4	4	3	13	8	61%
Health & Wellbeing	128	4	1	2	0	1	0	7	1	14%
Housing	407	15	3	5	0	6	2	26	5	19%
Public realm	1067	44	21	26	12	27	12	97	45	46%
Regeneration & enterprise	797	17	11	9	6	8	6	34	23	67%
HR & Organisational Development	55	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	2	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4800</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>48.94%</b>



## Appendix 6 - Attendance Management Triggers effective from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018

### The Bradford Factor Score

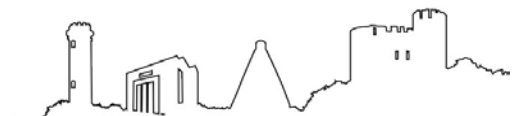
The Bradford factor identifies persistent short-term absence for individual employees as it gives extra weight to the number of periods of sickness absence taken per employee.

### 4 consecutive weeks of absence

The management of an employee's absence should be carried out proactively by the line manager with the prime aim being to support the employee and facilitate his or her return to work as soon as possible. The 4 week absence trigger indicates to a manager they must commence management of the absence.

### Any pattern or trend of absence

Where a pattern of persistent absence is identified, but the Bradford Factor score is less than the triggers, the manager may still commence the formal process. This may include absences before or after annual leave, absences occurring on a particular day or month, or school holidays, pay day, sporting events and so on.



## Appendix 7 - The Bradford Factor Score Explained

Although the Council is using the Bradford Factor Score this should not be used in isolation or relied on to indicate all absence concerns as it is a tool more specifically to highlight short term absence issues with an employee's individual score.

The Bradford Factor calculates a score based on the number of times an employee is absent and the number of days they are absent in a rolling 12 month period, using the following formula:

$$\text{Number of times absent in rolling 12 months} \times \text{Number of times absent in rolling 12 months} \times \text{Total number of days absent in rolling 12 months} = \text{Bradford Score}$$

Example: Within a rolling 12 months an employee is absent in June for 5 days, then absent in August for 2 days and then absent in December for 6 days totalling 3 periods of separate absences and 13 days lost. Their Bradford Factor score would be calculated by the system as follows:

**3**                      **X**                      **3**                      (3x3=9)                      **X**                      **13**                      (9x13)                      **= 117**  
(3 absences)                      (3 absences)                      (Total days absent)                      (Bradford Score)

Depending on the Bradford Factor score, different steps will be considered in order to manage the employee's absence as follows:

<b>Bradford Factor Score</b>	<b>Action by Manager</b>
70-149	Return to Work Interview to include informal review/welfare enquiry meeting
150-274	First Attendance Warning- Stage 1
275-449	Final Attendance Warning –Stage 2
450+	Dismissal Hearing – Stage 3



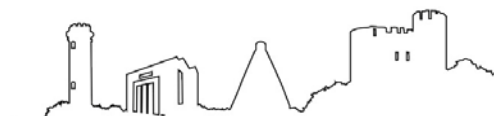
## Appendix 8 - Absence Related dismissals

### April 2019 to March 2020

Division	Ill health retirement	Health Capability	Stage 3 trigger	Total
ASC		3	1	4
Children's	3	1		4
Commercial & Customer Services				
Corp Operations				
Finance & Legal		1		1
Health & Wellbeing	1	1		2
Housing	2			1
Public realm	6	2	1	9
Regeneration & enterprise		2		
HR & Organisational Development				
<b>Total</b>				<b>21</b>

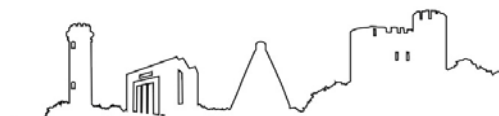
### April 2020 to September 2020

Division	Ill health retirement	Health Capability	Stage 3 trigger	Total
ASC	2	2		4
Children's	1	1		2
Commercial & Customer Services				
Corp Operations				
Finance & Legal	1			1
Health & Wellbeing				
Housing	1			1
Public realm	1	1	1	3
Regeneration & enterprise	2			2
HR & Organisational Development				
<b>Total</b>				<b>13</b>



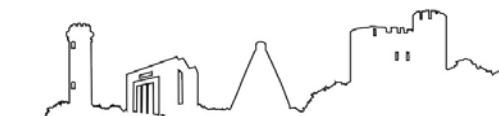
## Appendix 9 - Return to work meetings completed

	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
ASC	92%	93%
Children's	83%	85%
Commercial & Customer Services	97%	94%
Corp Operations	100%	100%
Finance & Legal	100%	98%
Health & Wellbeing	82%	74%
Housing	81%	86%
Public realm	95%	90%
Regeneration & enterprise	89%	93%
HR & Organisational Development	92%	100%
total	90%	90%



## Appendix 10 - Covid related information 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Service	COVID - Clinically diagnosed (Tested)	COVID - Self-isolating - with symptoms	COVID - Household Isolation - Pre Op - Unable to work from home	COVID - Self-isolating - Household isolation - not able to work	COVID - Self-isolating - Household isolation - WFH	COVID - Self-isolating - Test and Trace - Not able to work from home	COVID - Self-isolating - Test and Trace - WFH	COVID - Vulnerable group - not able to work	COVID - Vulnerable group - WFH	Coronavirus - Self Isolated (Non Clinical) - Unpaid (Hours)	COVID - School/Childcare Isolation - WFH	Grand Total
Adult Social Care	11	55		33	19	8	4	19	17			167
Children's Services	3	32		10	15			8	33			101
Commercial & Customer Services	1	7		7	1			7	8			31
Finance & Legal		1		2				1	5			9
Health & Wellbeing		6		1	1			1	6			15
Housing		7		8	19	1		3	65			104
HR & Organisational Development		1						1	5			7
Public Realm	6	62	1	107	24	18	5	47	8			278
Regeneration & Enterprise	1	19		47	12	1		36	15	2		133
Directorate Total	22	190	1	215	91	28	9	122	162	2	0	844





## Appendix 11 - Counselling Services:

### Referral numbers

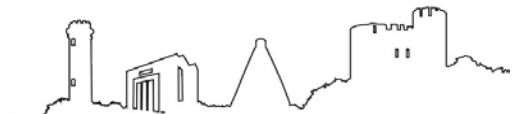
The number of Employees requesting support during 2019-20 totalled 235 calls. This is a slight increase on the number of requests received in 2018-19.

Table 1: Total number of telephone contacts received					
Year	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-2017	2015-16
Number of calls	235	227	217	84	118

### Courses and Workshops

The Counselling Service provides a number of Wellbeing sessions, accessible to all employees to support their mental health and wellbeing Courses available during 2019-20:

- Restful Sleep
- Stress Management
- Mindfulness
- Understanding Anxiety
- Understanding Depression
- 5 Ways to Wellbeing
- Personal Wellbeing & Budget Management
- Menopause (new this year)
- Sleep Education for Professionals (2 part course) (new this year)
- Managers - Tough Conversations
- Managers - Understanding Anxiety & Depression



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## **Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021**

### **Report of the Chief Executive**

### **Corporate Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 2 (1st July 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2020)**

#### **Purpose**

1. To present the Quarter 2 Corporate Quarterly Performance report of the financial year 2020/21 covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

In addition, further data relating to the percentage of agency social workers, following a request from Quarter 1 performance reporting period, has been appended to the report.

#### **Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that the Corporate Scrutiny Committee review the contents of this report and that any identified performance issues are referred to the relevant Cabinet Member.

#### **Background**

3. The Quarter 2 Corporate Quarterly Performance report highlights performance for the financial period 2020/21 covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and focuses on the priorities contained within the Council Plan. The report also provides a detailed review of progress, using a balanced scorecard model, of the quarterly and annual corporate key performance indicators (KPI's) indicating where change or improvement is required.

In addition to balanced scorecards, the scrutiny meeting that took place in September 2020, members requested additional trend data and service delivery against the corporate key performance Indicators (KPI's).

The quarterly performance report has been modified to meet these needs for quarter 2 and future reporting with the inclusion of trend graphs, service exception reports and actions taken to improve future performance.



In addition to the report, Directorate Service Summary Documents are included, these provide an overview of service delivery, achievements during the given quarter. (See Appendices)

### **Performance Summary**

4. Of the 33 KPI's to be monitored in Quarter 2, 16 are on target, 3 within tolerance and 14 are below target. A breakdown of the 14 measures below target are detailed within the quarterly report (page 65).

When aligning the 33 KPI's to our council plan priorities, the highest proportion of measure below target relate to our 'Stronger Safer Communities' (page 66).

It is evident to see the recent pandemic is still having an impact on services cross the directorates regardless of short-term trend. Below is a snapshot of some of these measures that are below target along with an exception report. For a more detailed analysis refer to their respective scorecard: -

- **PI 432 Number of children looked after (LAC) per 10,000 of the population** (page 75)

A slight growth during Qtr. 2 (90.9) compared to Qtr. 1 (90.3) of LAC is reported, this is due to fewer care proceedings were finalised and fewer reunifications/adoptions took place due to Covid-19, the courts would only priorities certain meetings i.e. interim care orders.

- **PI 1447 % of agency social workers** (page 77)

Q2 has seen a small increase in the proportion of agency staff (17.8%) compared to Q1 (17.3%). Close monitoring of staff turnover has identified a disparity between the number of starters and leavers and due to ongoing recruitment challenges experienced during the pandemic, it has resulted in an increase in agency staff.

- **PI 1466 Number of early help assessments started** (page 74)

There is a reduction in EHAs across the borough due to several factors. There is a typical seasonal dip and reduction in EHAs due to the COVID-19 scenario. Two thirds of EHAs are being undertaken by LA staff currently with a third being completed by partners. This was typically a 50/50% split prior to lockdown. Partner availability to act as Lead Practitioner is having a marked impact.

- **PI 1798 Percentage of eligible people receiving a health check (coverage)** (page 79)

The suspension of health checks was lifted by Public Health England in August; this enabled a small number of checks to be carried out within the reporting



period (July – September) equating to 6% (267). To ensure safety of their patients, practices are continuing to complete health checks on an opportunistic basis, therefore anticipate a further increase throughout the coming months.

- **PI 1705 Number of adults 19+ participating in learning** (page 81)

This trend has improved compared to Q1, due to the classroom learning, has recommencing during Q2. However, due to smaller class sizes a mixed approach is still being applied and because of this there have been a number of late starts to course

- **PI.1899 FP02 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings)** (page 71)

Rent loss shows a slight improvement in Q2 (1.5%) compared to Q1 (1.9%). However, remain below target due to Covid19 and the reduction in lettings. This situation will continue to place pressure on void performance measures going forward.

The quarterly report also compares the latest performance against the previous financial year, (Qtr. 2 2019-20 comparing Q2.2020/21) this provides a slightly different picture to the short-term trend above. Of the 27 measures that provide comparable data, 16 have improved, 4 remain consistent and 7 are showing a worsening trend compared to Qtr.2 2019-20. A breakdown of these measures can be found within the report (page 64).

Inclusive to the report Directorate Service Summary documents provide a detailed account of service delivery during the quarter 2 period (1<sup>st</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2020) see appendices for more information.

## **Finance**

5. There are no direct financial implications in receiving this report.

## **Equality Impact**

6. There are no special considerations to be made with regard to equality and diversity in noting and receiving this report.

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

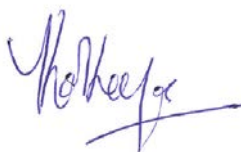
7. There are no specific direct human resource issues in receiving this report. In terms of the Council's sickness levels and the management of attendance, the HR and OD team continues to work with Directors and Heads of Service to assist and provide support in tackling those areas identified as having high levels of sickness.

## **Commercial/Procurement**

8. There is no direct commercial impact.

## **Health, Wellbeing and Safety**

9. Reports to Scrutiny Committee will consider the impact on the health, wellbeing and safety of the Borough's citizens. This is consistent with building stronger, safer and more resilient communities in line with the Dudley Vision and to protect our residents' physical, and emotional health for the future.



**Kevin O'Keefe**  
**Chief Executive**

**Contact Officer:** Clair Blunn, Portfolio Partner - Corporate Performance  
Telephone: 01384 816931  
Email: [clair.blunn@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:clair.blunn@dudley.gov.uk)

## **List of Appendices**

Corporate Quarterly Performance report – Quarter 2 (1<sup>st</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2020)

Additional data report: -

PI 1447 % of agency social workers



# Corporate quarterly performance management report **2020-2021**

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Quarter 2 (1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020)



# Contents

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<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	<b>Page 63</b>
<b>Section 2: Performance Summary</b>	<b>Page 64</b>
2.1: Short-term trend	
2.2: KPI's below target	
2.3: Annual Comparisons	
<b>Section 3: Performance Scorecards and Trend Data</b>	
3.1: <b>One Council, Building an Effective and Dynamic Organisation</b>	<b>Page 67</b>
3.2: <b>A Cleaner Greener Place to Live</b>	<b>Page 69</b>
3.3: <b>Stronger and Safer Communities</b>	<b>Page 73</b>
3.4: <b>Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs</b>	<b>Page 80</b>
<b>Appendices: Directorate Service Summary Documents</b>	<b>Page 83</b>





## Section 1: Introduction

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This Quarterly Corporate Performance Management Report highlights performance for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September. It provides specific information detailed in the Council Plan 2019-22, relating to performance indicators and key actions. Enabling us to monitor progress towards our vision;

### **“Dudley Borough – Forging a Future for All”**

We have a ‘One Council’ ethos to build an effective and dynamic organisation aligned to our three core priorities to:

- Grow the economy and create jobs
- Create a cleaner and greener place
- Support stronger and safer communities

The main body of the report focuses on the four priorities contained in the Council Action Plan and provides a detailed review of the progress of the key performance indicators within the plan.

The scorecards show performance for the;

- Reporting Quarter
- The score symbol status denotes performance against set targets.
- The trend symbol status compares latest performance against previous reporting frequency.

The score status symbol employed for performance indicators as follows;

- ★ Where performance exceeds the target tolerance
- Where performance is on target and in the upper half tolerance
- ▲ Where performance is below the target tolerance

Short term trend status symbol employed as follows;

- ↗ Performance is improved against previous reporting frequency
- Performance is consistent against previous reporting frequency
- ↘ Performance is worse against previous reporting frequency



## Section 2.1: Performance Summary

There is a total of 34 KPI's which monitor the progress of delivery of the Council Plan 2019-22. The charts below summaries performance against short term targets and trends (quarter 1 comparing Quarter 2)

**Overview:** Quarter 2 reported performance indicators

Number of performance indicators due for reporting this quarter: **33**

**Performance Indicators status**  
(see Chart 1)



**16**

Exceeds target



**3**

On target upper tolerance



**14**

Below target

**1 Delayed Data PI 2131 (Scorecard Pg. 18)**

**Short term trend status**  
(see Chart 2)



**10**

Short-term trend  
**Improved**



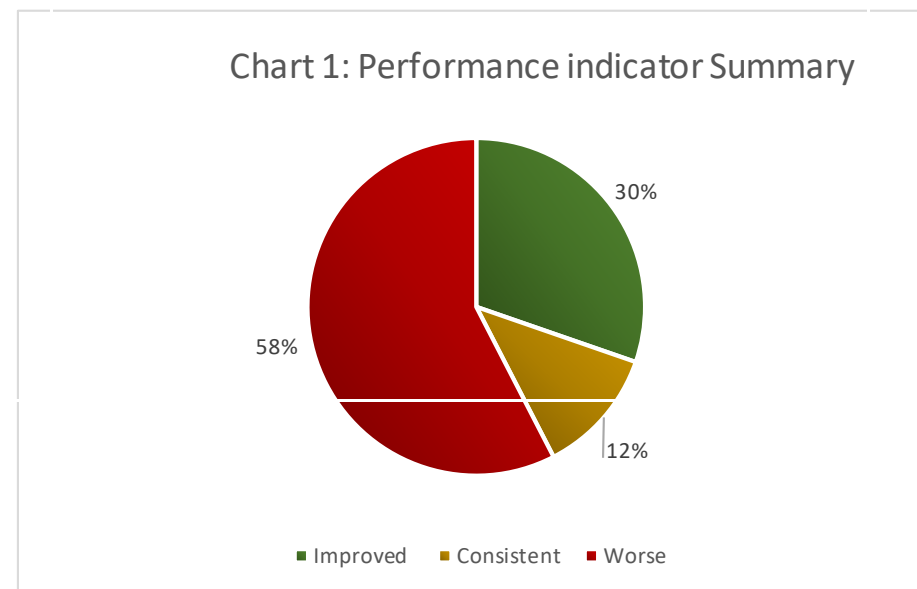
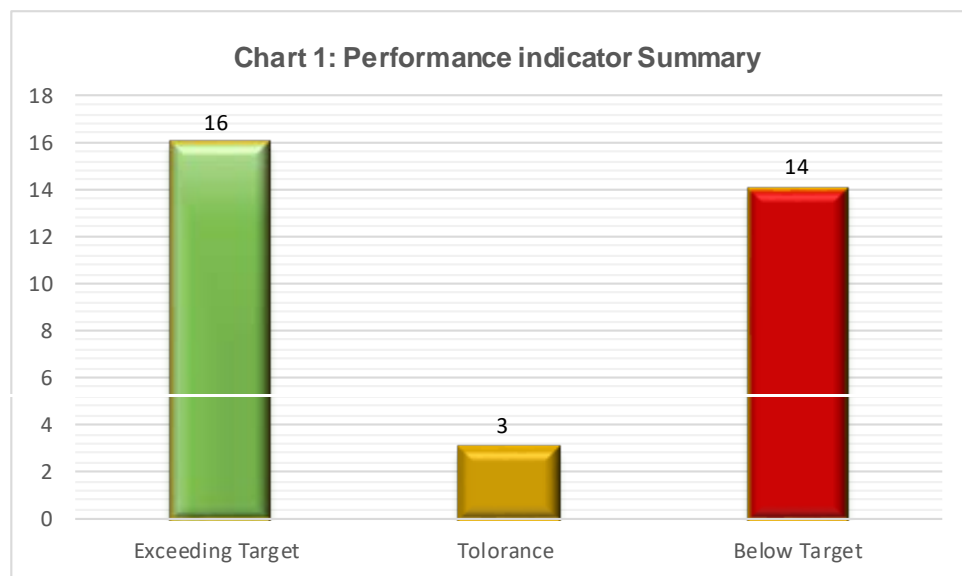
**4**

Short-term trend  
**Consistent**



**19**

Short-term trend  
**Worse**



14 performance indicators below target with trend values as follows;
















➡ 2 are improving: ➡ 1 consistent: ➡ 11 worsening

14 (58%) performance indicators showing a worsening short-term trend compared with quarter 1 outturn.



## Section 2.2: Performance Summary Cont'd

The following table shows the **14 performance indicators** where the score status is **below target** for the reporting quarter, including its respective short-term trend.

Table 1: Performance indicators below target  (refers to chart 1)	Q2 trend	Priority & reference to comments
PI.47 % of Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days		<b>One Council building an effective and dynamic organisation</b> (Pages 8-9)
PI.2079 Number of Corporate Complaints received (Replaces PI 46 from Qtr. 1)		
PI.2036 Number of new customers onto the revolution traded services portal		
PI.2027 Satisfaction with way your anti-social behaviour complaint was handled		<b>A Cleaner greener place to live</b> (Pages 10-13)
PI.1899 FP02 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings) (HouseMark CP & Strategic PI)		
PI 1466 Number of early help assessments started		<b>Stronger and safer communities</b> (Pages 14-19)
PI 432 Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the population		
PI 433 Number of children subject to child protection plan per 10,000 of the child population		
PI 1447 % of agency social workers		
PI.2132 % of contacts to adult social care with an outcome of information and advice/signposting		
PI 1798 % of eligible people receiving a health check (coverage)		
PI.120 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)		<b>Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs</b> (Pages 20-21)
PI.1705 Number of adults 19+ participating in learning (3500)		
PI.1709 Number of employers supported with ACL funding streams		




## Section 2.3: Performance Summary cont'd

### Annual comparison

This section compares the latest performance indicator results for Qtr. 2 against the previous year's Qtr.2 2019-20. There are 27 performance indicators where comparisons against the previous year's performance are available.

**Annual Comparison status**  
(see table 2 & 3)

 **12**  
**Improved**  
Annual Comparison

 **5**  
**Consistent**  
Annual Comparison

 **10**  
**Worsened**  
Annual Comparison

Table 2

One Council, Building an Effective and Dynamic Organisation	Status
<b>PI.352</b> Working days/shifts lost per FTE due to sickness absence	
<b>PI.370</b> Long-term sickness absence per FTE	
<b>PI.371</b> Short-term sickness absence per FTE	
<b>PI.2078</b> Number of Customer Compliments received	
<b>PI.47</b> % of Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days	
<b>PI.2036</b> Number of new customers onto the revolution traded services portal	
<b>PI.2079</b> Number of Corporate Complaints received	
<b>A Cleaner Greener Place to Live</b>	
<b>PI.2027</b> Satisfaction with way your anti-social behaviour complaint was handled	
<b>PI 1319</b> Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent due	
<b>PI 1323</b> Former tenant arrears at the end of the year as a % of rent due	
<b>PI.1396</b> ST10 Overall, satisfaction with the repairs service	
<b>PI.1899</b> FP02 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings)	
<b>PI.1499</b> Percentage of municipal waste land filled	
<b>PI.1498</b> Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	

Table 3

Stronger and Safer Communities	Status
<b>PI 1466</b> Number of early help assessments started	
<b>PI.426</b> Timeliness of Single Assessments - % Completed Within 45 Working Days	
<b>PI 1447</b> % of agency social workers	
<b>PI 501</b> ASCOF2B (P1) - Prop of 65+ at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement services	
<b>PI 432</b> Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the population	
<b>PI 433</b> Number of children subject to child protection plan (per 10,000 population)	
<b>Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs</b>	
<b>PI.120</b> 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	
<b>PI.863</b> Proportion of children and young people who attend a good or outstanding school	
<b>PI.1691</b> % of Major applications determined within 13 weeks	
<b>PI.1692</b> % of Minor Applications determined within 8 weeks	
<b>PI.1693</b> % of other applications determined within 8 weeks	
<b>PI.1705</b> Number of adults 19+ participating in learning (3500)	
<b>PI.1709</b> Number of employers supported with ACL funding streams	



## Section 3.1: One Council, Building an Effective and Dynamic Organisation

The following sections provide a detailed scorecard for each key performance measure aligned to the Council Plan priority. Where applicable the percentage and number outturn shown for this specific reporting quarter.

Summary Status

 4  
Exceeds Target

 0  
On target upper tolerance

 4  
Below target

	2019-20 Comparator		2020-2021 Financial Year						
Performance Indicator	Qtr.2	Qtr.2	Qtr. 1	Quarter 2					
	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Target	Score	Quarterly Trend	Benchmarking Comparator Data	
PI.352 Working days/shifts lost per FTE due to sickness absence (excluding schools) – Cumulative Calculation	5.89 Days	5.25 Days	2.06 Days	4.35 Days	5.25 Days	★	↘	5.69 Days English Met	4.56 Days West Midlands Employees
Sickness as a % of FTE Days	5.3%		3.72%	3.92%					
PI.370 Long-term sickness absence per FTE (excluding schools)- Cumulative calculation	4.37 Days	3.75 Days	1.65 Days	3.51 Days	3.75 Days	🟡	↘	3.87 Days English Met	2.9 Days West Midlands Employees
Long-term sickness as a % FTE Days	3.94%		2.98%	3.17%					
PI.371 Short-term sickness absence per FTE - Cumulative calculation	1.52 Days	1.5 Days	0.41 Days	0.83 Days	1.5 Days	🟡	↘	1.80 Days English Met	1.84 Days West Midlands Employees
Short-term sickness as a % FTE Days	1.36%		0.74%	0.75%					
PI.47 % of Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days	71.0%	85.0%	80.0%	71.0% (292)	85.0%	⚠	↘	Local trend data	
PI.2078 Number of Customer Compliments received	299	150	324	302	150	🟡	↘	Local trend data	
PI.2079 Number of Corporate Complaints received	327	275	289	413	275	⚠	↘	Local trend data	
PI.2061 Identify and deliver procurement savings	PI will no longer be measured following the procurement review								
PI.2036 Number of new customers onto the revolution traded services portal	3	5	0	0	2	⚠	➡	Local trend data	



### Section 3.1: One Council, Building an Effective and Dynamic Organisation – continued

The Information below provides historical trend data against the performance indicators below target aligned to the council priority '**One Council Building an Effective and Dynamic organisation**', where applicable.

#### KPI's below target against priority: 4

(scorecard page 67)

#### PI 47: % of Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 Working Days

#### PI 2078 Number of Corporate Complaints received

**Exception Report:** PI 47 continues to remain under target; however, Directorates confirm many cases which genuinely cannot be handled within the 20 day target due to either the complex nature of what they do (social care and housing both mention these reasons).

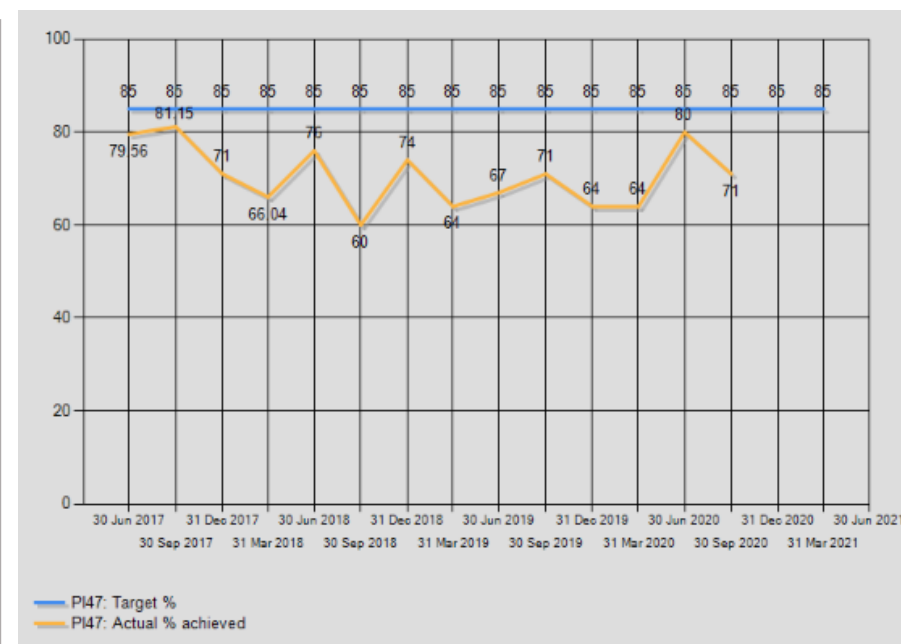
**Theme:** Of the number of complaints received (PI 2078), whilst the volume is over target, only 62 of these (17%) were classed as upheld and another 66 (18%) partially upheld. Therefore, genuine complaints (where the council had got or done something wrong/poor) is less than the target figure of 275.

Below is a breakdown of complaints handled and the status for this quarter -

- 17% (62) upheld / Justified
- 18% (66) Partially Upheld
- 58% (215) Not upheld
- 7% (26) Other Outcomes

#### Action

- On occasions certain officers are required in order to give a full response to a complaint and if they have been off work (pandemic related or otherwise), we need to ensure the customer has a holding response whilst their return is awaited.



For more information on service delivery associated to Qtr. 2 activity within the Housing Directorate, please refer to the Service Summary document appendices: [Commercial & Customer Services](#)



## Section 3.2: A cleaner greener place to live

Summary Status

★ 2  
Exceeds Target

🟡 1  
On target upper tolerance

🔴 2  
Below target

	2019-20 Comparator		2020-2021 Financial Year					
Performance Indicator	Qtr.2	Qtr.2	Qtr. 1	Quarter 2				
	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Target	Score	Quarterly Trend	Benchmarking Comparator Data
<b>PI.2027</b> Satisfaction with way your anti-social behaviour complaint was handled? (ASB) Star-T Tasb5 (CP) [C]	85.1%	85.0%	84.1%	76.8% (113/147)	85.0%	🔴	↘️	80.6% HouseMark Median
<b>PI 1319</b> Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent due - Housemark Dwellings (Strategic PI)	2.15%	2.8%	1.94%	1.54% (V=£1,339,112)	2.5%	🟡	↗️	2.83% HouseMark Median
<b>PI 1323</b> Former tenant arrears at the end of the year as a % of rent due	2.85%	3.0%	1.87%	1.93% (V=£1,680,698)	2.8%	🟡	↘️	1.41% HouseMark Median
<b>PI.1396</b> ST10 Overall, satisfaction with the repairs service?(various Responsive Repairs)Star-T HMark (Strategic PI)	97.9%	98.0%	98.1%	95.3% (162/170)	98.0%	🟡	↘️	92.6% HouseMark Median
<b>PI.1899</b> FP02 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings) (HouseMark CP & Strategic PI)	2.23%	2.35%	1.9%	1.89% (V=£856,076)	1.5%	🔴	↘️	0.91% HouseMark Median



## Section 3.2: A cleaner greener place to live – Continued

The Information below provides historical trend data available the performance indicators below target aligned to the council priority 'A cleaner greener place to live.

KPI's below target against priority: **2**  
(scorecard page 69)

### PI.2027 Satisfaction with way your anti-social behaviour complaint was handled.

#### Exception Report:

In quarter Q2 - 142 surveys were to be carried out for this quarter with 86 completed, equating to a return rate of 60.6%.

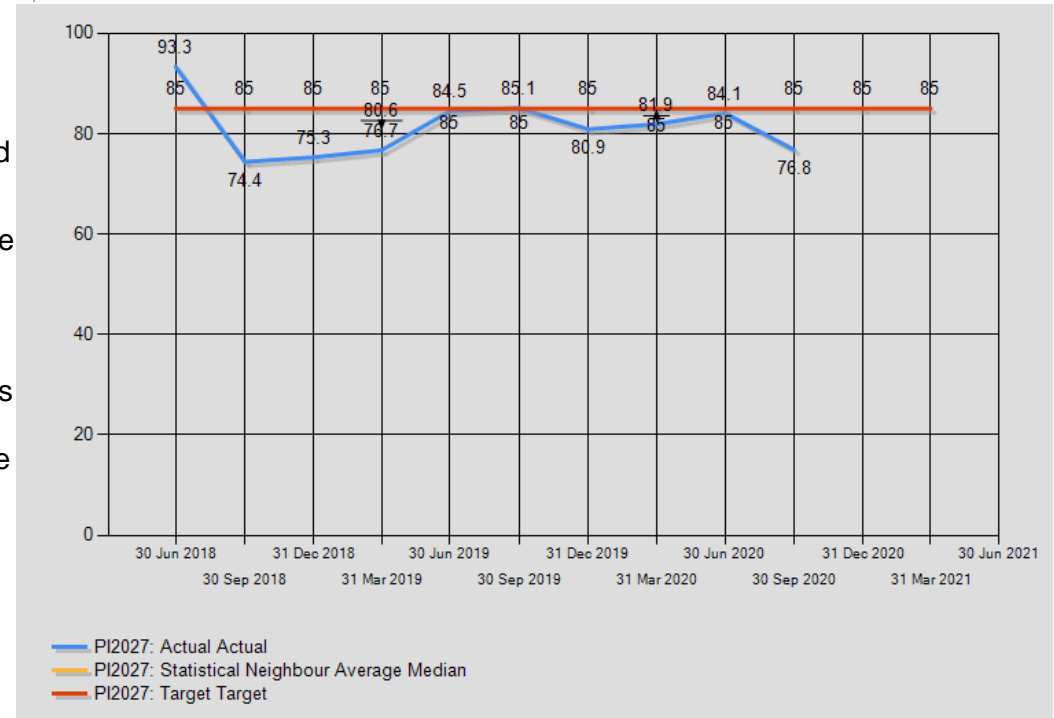
With an increase in customers numbers coming through the door during quarter 2, in addition to an increase in Cllr/MP enquiries have also contributed to service pressures.

There appears to be some contrast to previous Quarter results, there could be a combination of reasons for this, non-more so than how we were forced to have to adapt our case management principles and how we handle cases owing to COVID and the restricted contact we had with our customers.

Overall, there is no denying COVID has had a knock-on effect to these figures and despite some positive indications to the overall customer journey, in looking at the negative trends, they appear to be around communication in the main and accounts for the dip.

#### Actions:

- Closure letters ask complainants to complete an online survey or contact the ASB team to complete a survey over the phone. A chase up exercise to boost return levels are carried out by email and telephone.
- As a service overall, we are acutely aware service delivery may have been better, but we are continually looking at ways to improve and we are committed to doing just that.





**PI.1899 FP02 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings) (HouseMark CP & Strategic PI)**  
(Scorecard page 69)

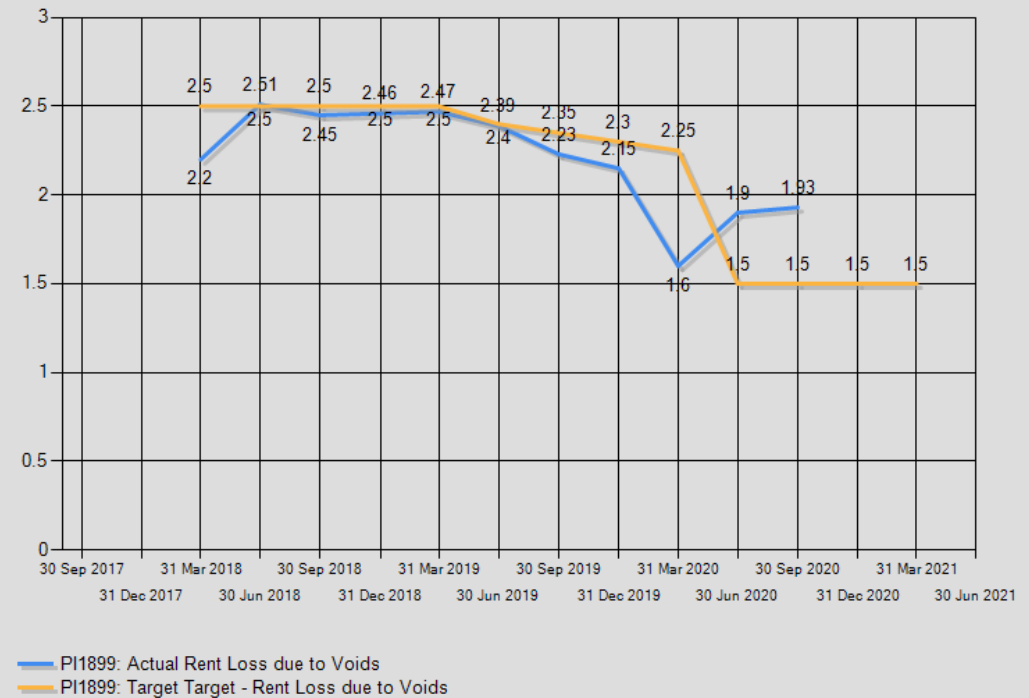
**Quarter 2 Exception Report:**

The rent loss is comparable to the previous quarter. As in Q1 this is partly due to the reduction in lettings due to Covid19.

- Other reasons for rent loss in the Q2 period are (snapshot at end of Q2):
- Investment in sheltered housing = 67 units /£112,113.31 rent loss.
- Tanhouse scheme (works pending or held for future decant) = 1 property / £2,110.16 rent loss
- Being used for decant = 8 properties/ £13,837.18 rent loss
- Stock Investment decision 24 Properties / £42,105.76 rent loss dip.

**Actions:**

- The void process will continue to be monitored and reviewed. Issues with low demand are being addressed through our Asset Management Strategy as well as allocation and management initiatives.
- There has been an impact on the service due to the Covid-19 situation which will continue to place pressure on void performance measures going forward.



For more information on service delivery associated to Qtr. 2 activity within the Housing Directorate, please refer to the Service Summary document appendices: [Housing](#)

## Section 3.2: A cleaner greener place to live – continued

There is a time lag for the following KPI's due to the nature of their collection and validation from the Waste Data flow, Quarter 1 2019 – 20 is the latest data. Waste Data Flow is the national database for municipal waste data reporting by UK local authorities to government therefore will be reported as actual 3 months in arrears i.e. Quarter 2 data presented in Quarter 3 following WDF validation.

Summary Status		🌟 2 Exceeds Target	🟡 0 On target upper tolerance	🔴 0 Below target			
	2019-20 Comparator		2020-2021 Financial Year				
Performance Indicator	Qtr.1	Qtr.1	Qtr. 1				
	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Score	Quarterly Trend	Benchmarking Comparator Data
PI.1498 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)	46.5% (15,687.11)	35.0%	43.5% (15,095.31)	35.0%	🌟	📈	41.1% CIPFA Family Group Average (Quarter 4)
	Measured in tonnes		Measured in tonnes				
PI.1499 Percentage of municipal waste land filled (NI 193)	3.5% (1,316.38)	4.5%	4.1% (1,569.01)	4.5%	🌟	📉	7.03% CIPFA Family Group Average (Quarter 4)
	Measured in tonnes		Measured in tonnes				

For more information on service delivery associated to Qtr. 2 activity within the Housing Directorate, please refer to the Service Summary document appendices: **Public Realm**













### Section 3.3: Stronger and Safer Communities – Children Services

Summary Status

 2  
Exceeds Target

 0  
On target upper tolerance

 4  
Below target

	2019-20 Comparator		2020-2021 Financial Year					
Performance Indicator	Qtr.2	Qtr.2	Qtr. 1	Qtr.2				
	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Target	Score	Quarterly Trend	Benchmarking Comparator Data
<b>PI 1466</b> Number of early help assessments started	536	600	609	<b>534</b>	<b>600</b>			Local Measure
<b>PI 432</b> Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the population	90.7	90%	90.3	<b>90.9</b>	<b>85</b>			<b>85.4</b> (Statistical Neighbours 18/19)
<b>PI.426</b> Timeliness of Single Assessments - % Completed Within 45 Working Days (Assessment service only)	84.6%	90.2%	93%	<b>96%</b> (621/646)	<b>95</b>			Local Measure
<b>PI 433</b> Number of children subject to child protection plan per 10,000 of the child population	44.6	50	58	<b>59</b>	<b>50</b>			<b>55.1</b> Statistical Neighbours (18/19)
<b>PI 1447</b> % of agency social workers	32.3%	30.0%	17.3%	<b>17.8%</b> (44.31)	<b>10</b>			<b>14.4%</b> Statistical Neighbours (18/19)
<b>PI.2129</b> % of eligible children who take up a 'Time for Two's' place in the Dudley Borough	New Measure		85.4%	<b>87.6%</b> (1141)	<b>85.0%</b>			Local Measure



### Section 3.3: Stronger and Safer Communities – Children Services

The Information below provides historical trend data against the performance indicators below target aligned to the council priority '**Stronger and Safer Communities**'.

KPI's below target against priority: **4**  
(scorecard page 73)

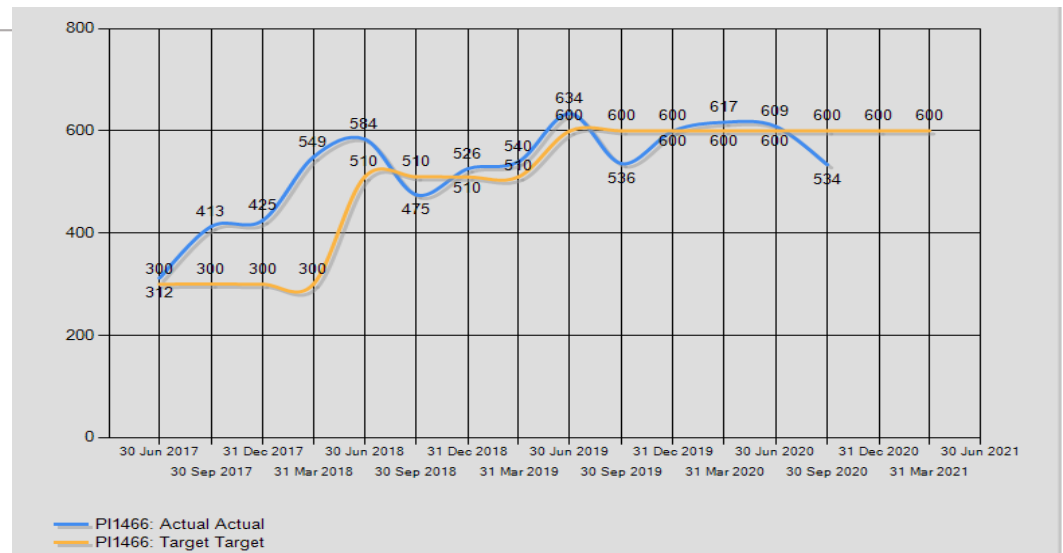
#### PI 1466 Number of early help assessments started

##### Quarter 2 Exception Report:

There is a reduction in EHAs across the borough due to a number of factors. There is a typical seasonal dip and reduction in EHAs due to the COVID-19 scenario. Two thirds of EHAs are being undertaken by LA staff currently with a third being completed by partners. This was typically a 50/50% split prior to lockdown. Partner availability to act as Lead Practitioner is having a marked impact.

##### Actions:

- We expect that it will be back in line with target in the next quarter (Q3)



## PI 432 Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the population

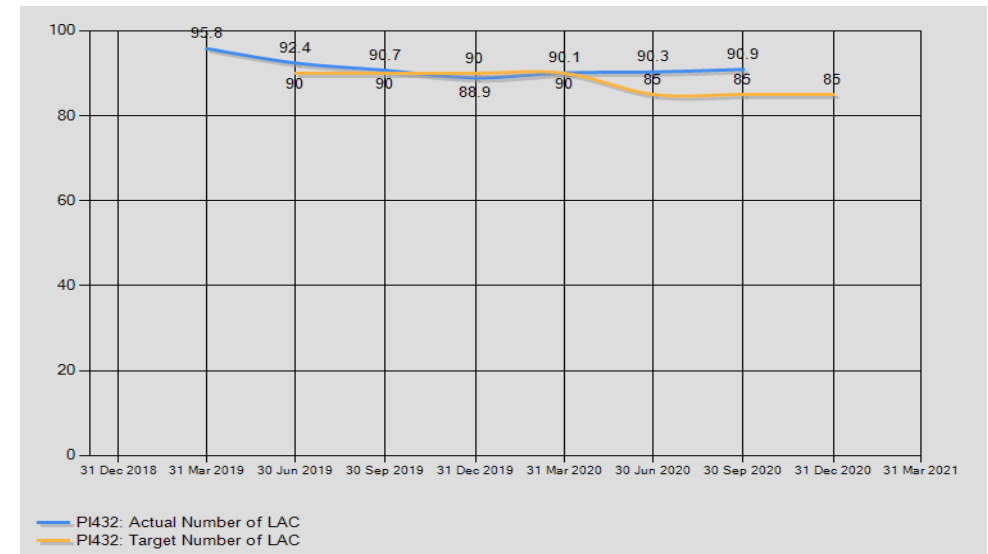
(scorecard page 73)

### Quarter 2 Exception Report:

Fewer care proceedings were finalised and fewer reunifications/adoptions took place due to Covid-19, because the courts would only priorities certain meetings i.e. interim care orders. Therefore, this resulted in a slight growth during Qtr. 2 (90.9) compared to Qtr. 1 (90.3) of LAC. This means tested special guardianship policy prevented foster carers and connected people to apply for permanent orders, this children remain in care longer.

### Actions:

- There has been an impact on the service due to the Covid-19 situation which may continue if the courts continue to prioritize meetings. Courts have adapted to virtual hearings and are progressing adaption.
- 15 children are being progressed to discharge of care orders
- 186 children have been identified as viable for special guardianship orders and work is underway to develop fast track procedure alongside Cafcass.
- The performance strategy is in draft with the aim to reduce children in long-term local authority care.
- Current Services are being assessed and aligned to work towards strengthening edge of care crisis intervention and reunification.



## PI 433 Number of children subject to child protection plan per 10,000 of the child population (scorecard page 73)

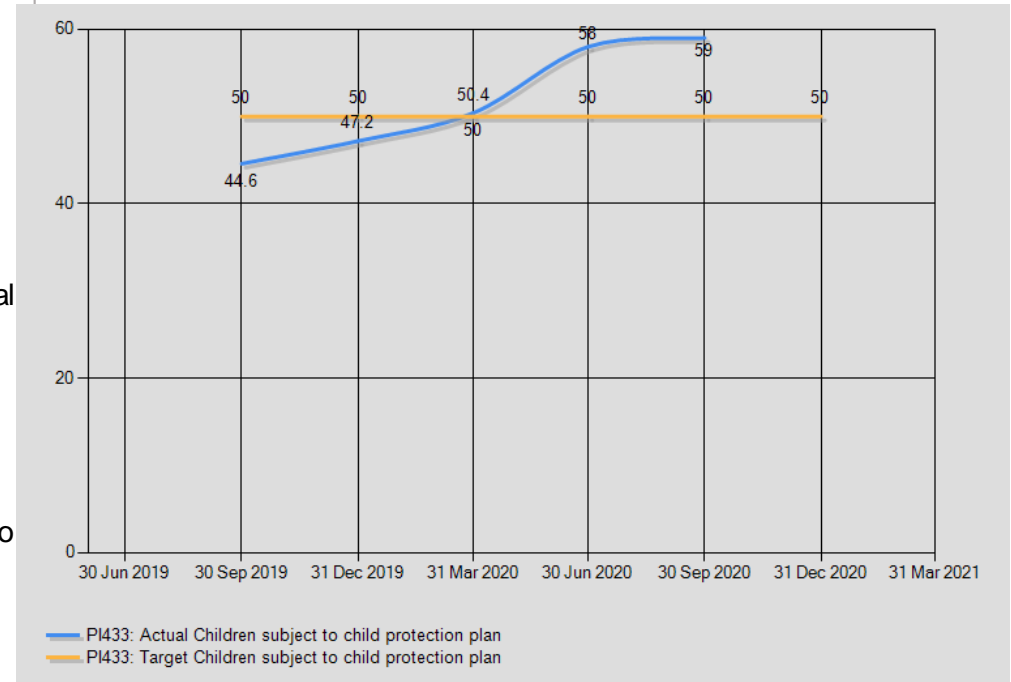
### Quarter 2 Exception Report:

As can be seen in the graph there was a steady rise in the number of children subject to a child protection plan prior to the COVID-19 lockdown. However, there was a spike in the number of plans March-June 2020, this upward trajectory has now flattened and become stable.

### Actions:

There is a piece of work being undertaken to ensure the right children are subject to the right level of intervention and therefore reduce the number of children subject to plans. This includes two action areas:

- To ensure the right children in need of protection are presented to Initial Child Protection Conference. We know that the majority of children presented to Conference often become subject to a child protection plan, Social Work Teams are now using the significant harm checklist within Strategy Discussions meetings to determine whether a child meets the criteria for a child protection plan is considered at an early stage and also includes a discussion between the Social Work Team Manager and the Duty IRO to ensure the right children are presented to Conference.
- To ensure children remain subject to statutory intervention for only as long as necessary. There is a Panel that reviews children who have been subject to a child protection plan for 9 months or longer to determine what needs to happen for the plan to end or to ensure further statutory intervention is timely.

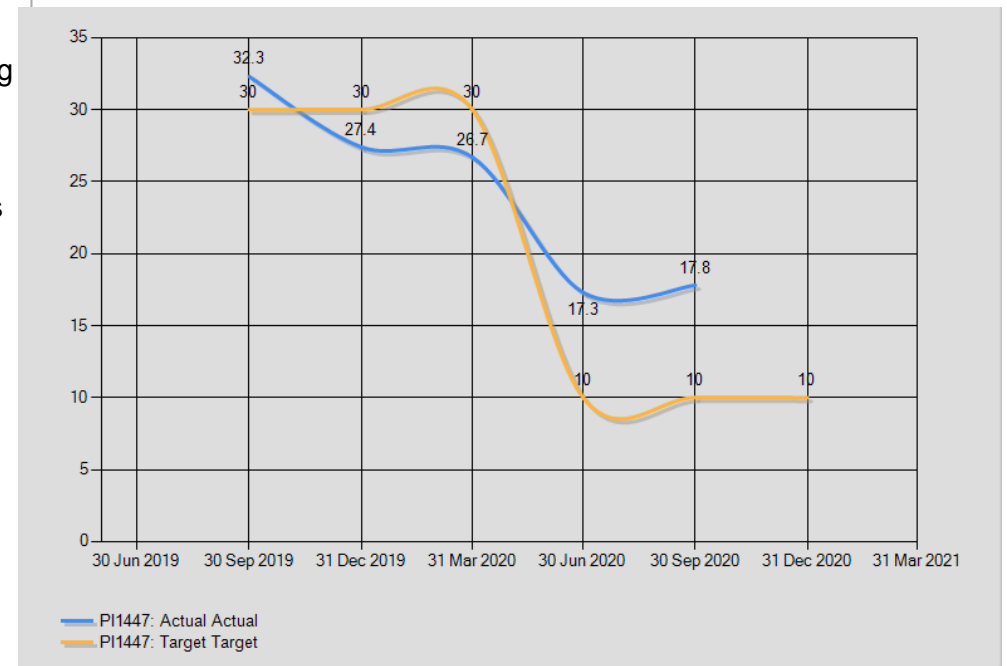


### Quarter 2 Exception Report:

Q2 has seen a small increase in the proportion of agency staff. Close monitoring of staff turnover has identified a disparity between the number of starters and leavers and due to ongoing recruitment challenges experienced during the pandemic, it has resulted in an increase in agency staff. Work is currently underway to identify agency staff who would like to become permanent and this will have a positive impact on the rates.

#### Actions:

- Analysis of demand in care management and court teams being conducted through Childrens Services Improvement Plan.
- Work is currently underway to identify agency staff who would like to become permanent and this will have a positive impact on the rates.



For more information on service delivery associated to Qtr. 2 activity within the Housing Directorate, please refer to the Service Summary document appendices: [Children's services](#)









### Section 3.3: Stronger and Safer Communities – Adult Social Care

Summary Status

 3  
Exceeds Target

 0  
On target upper tolerance

 1  
Below target

	2019-20 Comparator		2020-2021 Financial Year					
Performance Indicator	Qtr.2	Qtr.2	Qtr. 1	Qtr.2				
	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Target	Score	Quarterl y Trend	Benchmarking Comparator Data
PI 501 ASCOF2B (P1) - Prop of 65+ at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement services	87.0%	83.0%	84%	90.0% (234/259)	83.0%			82.4% (All England 2018/19)
PI.2131 % of Delayed transfers of care as percentage of occupied beds	New Measure		Delay with data	Delay with data				4.9% (Feb 2020)
Note: Delay with data due to the coronavirus illness (COVID-19) and due to the need to release capacity across the NHS to support the response, the collection and publication of official statistics have been paused. The latest figure available of 3.9% was reported in February (Qtr. 4 2019/20)								
PI.2132 % of contacts to adult social care with an outcome of information and advice/signposting	New Measure		11.4%	9.8% (1087/11128)	11.0%			Local Measure
Exception: Signposting total recorded for Q1 = 1325 -v- Signposting recorded for Q2 = 1306 – Therefore down 19 signposting calls in Q2. Calls received into Access were up by an additional 2364 calls in Q2 from Q1 and with the Go Live of LAS and the additional calls coming through we missed a total 261 calls in September, which could equate/give some explanation to the decline in signposting being recorded in Q2.								
PI 2133 % of working age service users (18-64) with a primary support reason of learning disability support, who are living on their own or with their family	New Measure		65%	66% (582/882)	60.0%			77.4% England 18/19
PI.2134 % of the conversion of safeguarding concerns to enquiry	New Measure		11%	3.9% (56/1446)	20.0%			39% England 18/19

PI 2132 above indicates below target, this is a new measure, therefore no trend data is available.





## Section 3.3: Stronger and Safer Communities – Public Health & Wellbeing

Summary Status

★ 0  
Exceeds Target

● 1  
On target upper tolerance

▲ 1  
Below target

Performance Indicator	2019-20 Comparator		2020-2021 Financial Year					
	Qtr.2	Qtr.2	Qtr. 1	Qtr.2				
	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Target	Score	Quarterly Trend	Benchmarking Comparator Data
<b>PI 1798</b> Percentage of eligible people receiving a health check (coverage)	53.6%	75.0%	0.0%	<b>6%</b> (267)	<b>33.0%</b>	▲	↗	Local Measure
<b>PI.2074</b> Proportion of premises in the borough that are compliant with food hygiene law	New Measure		86.7%	<b>86.6%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	●	↘	Local Measure

KPI's below target against priority: **1**

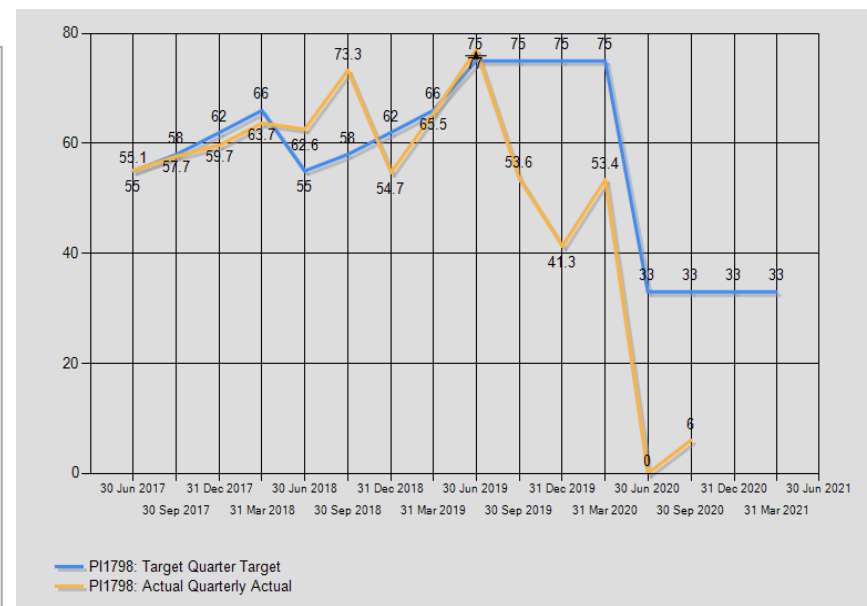
**PI 1798** Percentage of eligible people receiving a health check (coverage)

**Exception Report:** The suspension of health checks was lifted by Public Health England in August; this enabled a small number of checks to be carried out within the reporting period (July – September) equating to 6% (267).

Prior to the pandemic, the trend data shows a continual downward trend against the target (75%) for the percentage of eligible people receiving a full health check. The lowest of the outturns is in Qtr. 3 of 2019 with 41.3% of health checks carried out, this increased slightly in Qtr. 4 2019 to 53.4%.

### Action:

- To ensure safety of their patients, practices are continuing to complete health checks on an opportunistic basis. We anticipate an increase in checks over the coming months.
- A review of the target took place in Qtr. 1 2020, and in line with previous performance and the COVID -19 pandemic the target reduced from 75% to 30%, this is also to account for possible further impacts of the virus for quarters 2 / 3.



For more information on service delivery associated to Qtr. 2 activity within the Housing Directorate, please refer to the Service Summary document appendices: **Adult Social Care**














## Section 3.4: Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs

Summary Status

 3  
Exceeds Target

 1  
On target upper tolerance

 3  
Below target

	2019-20 Comparator		2020-2021 Financial Year					
Performance Indicator	Qtr.2	Qtr.2	Qtr. 1	Qtr.2				
	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Target	Score	Quarterly Trend	Benchmarking Comparator Data
<b>PI.120</b> 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	2.3%	2.8%	3.3%	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>			W Mids. region data
<b>PI.863</b> Proportion of children and young people who attend a good or outstanding school	77.2%	78.0%	76.4%	<b>76.4%</b>	<b>78.0%</b>			DFE Monthly management information
<b>PI.1691</b> % of Major applications determined within 13 weeks	100%	100%	100%	<b>100</b>	<b>60.0%</b>			<b>1<sup>st</sup></b> DCLG Ranking (June 2020)
<b>PI.1692</b> % of Minor Applications determined within 8 weeks	100%	65.0%	100%	<b>100</b>	<b>65.0%</b>			<b>4<sup>th</sup></b> DCLG Ranking (June 2020)
<b>PI.1693</b> % of other applications determined within 8 weeks	100%	80.0%	99.43%	<b>99.46%</b>	<b>80.0%</b>			<b>4<sup>th</sup></b> DCLG Ranking (June 2020)
<b>PI.1705</b> Number of adults 19+ participating in learning (3500)	564	1535	112	<b>489</b>	<b>650</b>			93% against 88.3% target 17/18 Overall
<b>PI.1709</b> Number of employers supported with ACL funding streams	12	16	40	<b>107</b>	<b>20</b>			Unavailable



## Section 3.4: Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs

Information below provides historical trend data against the performance indicators below target aligned to the council priority 'Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs'. KPI's below target against priority: 3

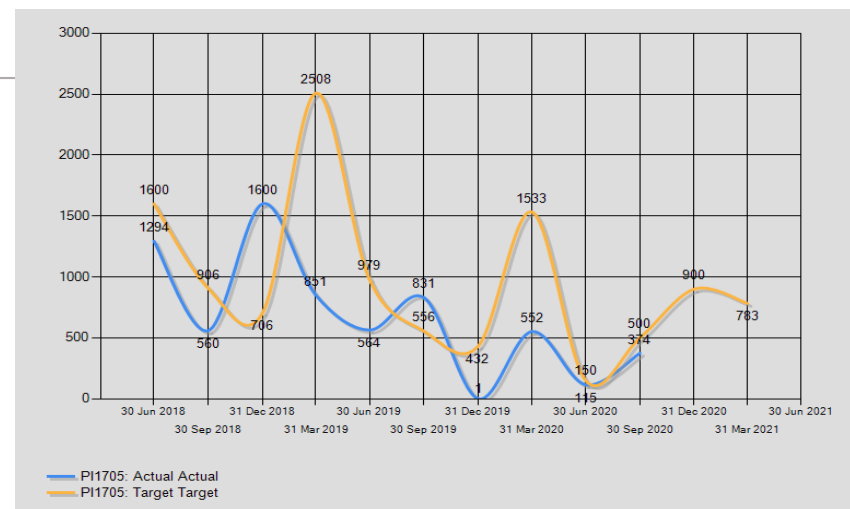
### PI.1705 Number of adults 19+ participating in learning (SC P22)

#### Quarter 2 Exception Report:

Due to Covid-19 online delivery only for the first quarter and lower enrolments that expected. We are now back delivering in classroom but due to smaller class sizes because of social distancing we are continuing to develop a mix of face to face and blended (home) learning. This has caused a number of later starts for courses than we would normally expect.

#### Action:

- There is a backlog of enrolments that need uploaded into the database due to staff annual leave. Therefore, we expect this outturn to increase.
- Following the pandemic, we anticipate returning to normal service and delivering to target



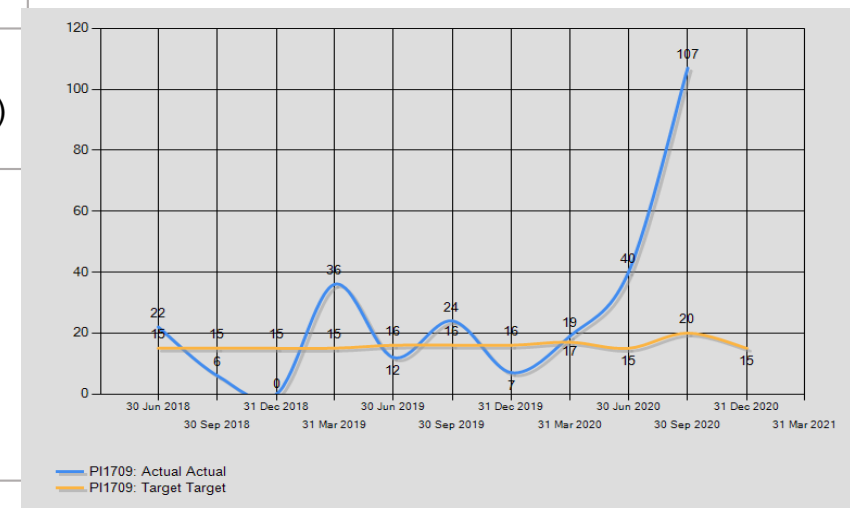
### PI.1709 Number of employers supported with ACL funding streams (SC P22)

#### Quarter 2 Exception Report:

Due to Covid-19, in quarter 2 we continue to experience demand from businesses

#### Action:

Following the pandemic, we anticipate returning to normal service and delivering to target?



For more information on service delivery associated to Qtr. 2 activity within the Housing Directorate, please refer to the Service Summary document appendices: [Regeneration & Enterprise](#) / [Childrens Services \(Education\)](#)

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For additional performance data please visit: <http://appsrvr4/spectrum#>

Dudley in Numbers: <https://connect.dudley.gov.uk/news/PublishingImages/Coronavirus%20response%20infographic%20March%20to%20May.pdf>

## Corporate Quarterly Performance Report

**2020-21**



# APENDICES – Directorate Service Summary Documents

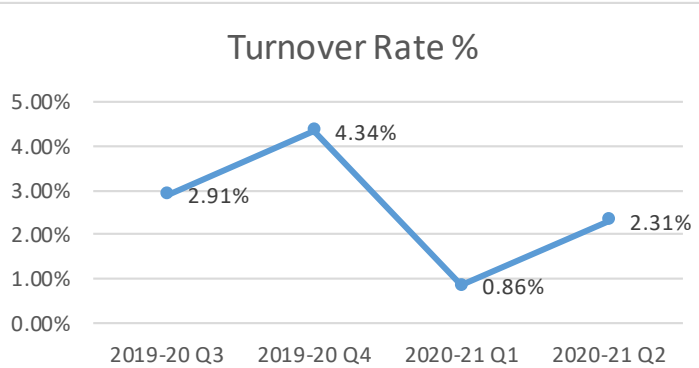
Directorate: Commercial & Customer Service Inc. ICT				
Date: Quarter 2 performance reporting (1/4/20 – 30/6/20)				
Performance Evaluation				
Corporate Performance Measures (KPI's)				
PI No.	Description	Quarter outturn		Score
		Actual	Target	
PI.47	% of Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days	71.0% (292)	85.0%	▲
PI.2078	Number of Customer Compliments received	302	150	●
PI.2079	Number of Corporate Complaints received	413	275	▲
PI.2036	Number of new customers onto the revolution traded services portal	0	2	▲
Benchmarking (with local authorities/nearest neighbours)				
<b>Customer Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dudley Council Plus lead the LACCF (Local Authority Contact Centre Forum) for benchmarking on targets and activities as required specifically in respect of Customer Services. LACCF comprises of Customer Service Managers in the public sector across the country on a continuous basis.</li> </ul> <b>Digital &amp; ICT Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No formal benchmarking since SOCITM service review completed in December 2019.</li> <li>Regular meetings with Heads of ICT at other West Mids authorities</li> </ul> <b>Commercial</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awaiting Data</li> </ul> <b>Procurement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awaiting Data</li> </ul>				
Overview of Service Delivery (include any issues / risks)				
<b>Customer Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate contact centre and switchboard.</li> <li>Extensive service coverage, offering front line advice, assistance and processing which allows service area specialists to focus on the complex areas of their work or be out "on patch".</li> <li>DC+ offers various contact options. KPIs include telephone answer rates, customers seen in the walk in centre within dedicated timeframes, co-ordinating and reporting Councillor Contact and Corporate Customer Feedback outcomes.</li> </ul> <b>Digital &amp; ICT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to roll out laptops as more staff continued to work from home during Covid-19 pandemic</li> <li>New online forms developed for various uses during pandemic</li> </ul>				



- Upgraded wide area network providing increased bandwidth (including to schools)
- Successfully retained compliance with the Public Sector Network security criteria
- Renegotiated mobile telephony contract
- Revised website to comply with new accessibility law
- Supported live deployment of Successor project for adult social care
- Reported to SEB on cyber-security and digital engagement

## Workforce Metrics

Directorate Headcount (Excl. Casual Staff)	Total	FTE
Headcount & FTE as at 30/09/2020	354	304.29
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>%</b>
Female	195	57%
Male	149	43%
<b>Disability</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>%</b>
Disabled	25	7.27%
Not Disabled	169	49.13%
Undisclosed	150	43.60%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>%</b>
BME	42	12.21%
Undisclosed	8	2.33%
White	294	85.47%
<b>Turn over</b>	<b>% Rate</b>	
2020-21 Q2		2.31%



**Service Achievements** *(report of any external accreditation, nomination for awards, positive publicity, during the past quarter)*

## Customer Services

- Meeting most, close to other contact centre targets.
- Corporate performance reporting undertaken thoroughly and service areas chased up on cases over timescales both on recent open cases and more historical ones.
- Focus group also working on improvements to Customer Feedback on an ongoing basis.

## Digital & ICT

- Signed PCI (Payment Card Industry) compliance documents, improving our security for handling credit and debit card payments across our main payment channels
- Website ranked in top 10 nationally for accessibility as measured by external Socitm survey

**Opportunities for Improvement** *(information relating to service complaints / compliments and learning from these).*

## Customer Services

- Additional corporate work undertaken in response to audit recommendations from 2019/20.
- All upheld complaints include feedback to individual staff involved as well as the response/apology to customers.
- As quarter 1 covered lockdown 1 for Covid, vast improvements implemented to assist with Covid related topics (including grant, food and booking systems/schemes to support the customer, internal departments and Dudley MBC as a whole delivered).

## Any additional information relevant to Corporate Scrutiny

- No further comments.



**Directorate: Public Realm****Date:** Quarter 2 performance reporting (1/4/20 – 30/6/20)**Performance Evaluation**

## Corporate Performance Measures (KPI's)

PI No.	Description	Quarter outturn		CIPFA Average	Score
		Actual	Target		
PI.1498	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)	43.5%	35%	38.%	👉
PI.1499	Percentage of municipal waste land filled (NI 193)	4.1%	4.5%	6.44%	★

**Benchmarking** (with local authorities/nearest neighbours)

- The Directorate reported on Q1 2020/21 waste KPIs in quarter 2, in line with national data returns. These KPIs are benchmarked against our CIPFA Family Group average, with outturns showing that Dudley has a higher rate of recycling and a lower rate of landfill than our comparator authorities:
- The first of the 3 Local Environmental Quality Surveys on cleanliness standards undertaken during the year was carried out during quarter 2. The surveys were developed by DEFRA and are now supported by Keep Britain Tidy. The KPIs provided by the survey are benchmarked against national data and continue to show that the levels of litter, detritus and fly-posting in Dudley are lower than the national average.

**Overview of Service Delivery** (include any issues / risks)

- Whilst the majority of the Directorate's frontline services continued to operate during the first lockdown period, quarter 2 saw a complete return to normal services, with recovery plans implemented where needed to ensure backlogs were cleared.
- A number of teams within the Directorate have had to deal with the challenge of reduced staff numbers due to either positive Covid-19 tests or the need to self-isolate.
- Many officers within the Directorate have contributed directly to the Council's Covid-19 response. For example Street Maintenance have supported the setting up of test centres; Traffic Engineers have implemented measures in town centres to support social distancing; work has taken place between Highways and Licencing teams to develop a new Pavement Licence application for outdoor seating in accordance with new legislation introduced by Government to support local businesses; and Licensing Enforcement Officers have worked with colleagues in Trading Standards to ensure licensed premises across the Borough comply with legislation introduced as a result of the pandemic.
- Recruitment has continued as normal, with a new HGV Mechanic, Waste Collection Drivers, Street Cleansing Operatives, a Civil Parking Enforcement Manager and a Traffic Engineer taken on during the quarter.
- The Directorate continues to work with HR as they undertake the corporate recruitment review, especially in relation to our harder to recruit to posts. We began a CV only pilot during the quarter and will work with HR to analyse the results of the trial to establish whether this may be the preferred recruitment option going forward.
- The Directorate has also recruited a second Apprentice Heavy Goods Vehicle Mechanic and a new cohort of Horticultural Apprentices during quarter 2.





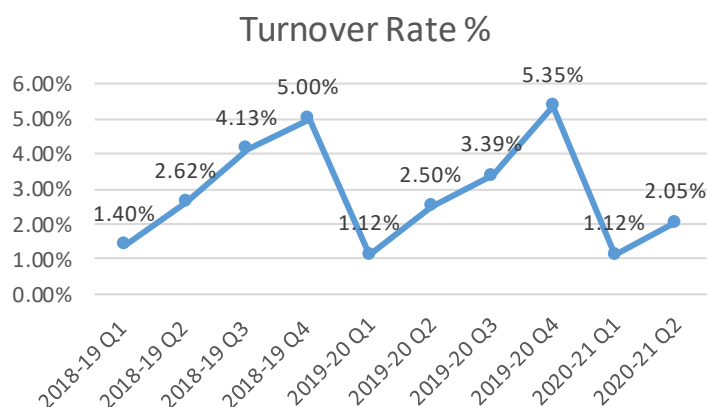
- Waste Care continue to deal with increased levels of both recycling and residual waste. The booking system introduced at the Household Waste & Recycling Centre to ensure the safe reopening of the site after lockdown continues to operate well, with the capacity monitored and increased where possible.
- We are continuing to see increased levels of fly-tipping across the Borough. Street Cleansing are working tirelessly to remove the dumped waste and Waste Enforcement Officers carry out investigations where evidence exists in order to pursue prosecution. CCTV cameras are also being looked into for specific hotspots. Licensing liaised with the Environment Agency to arrange the removal of two ex-Sainsburys trailers that were dumped at the side of the road in the Lye Valley Industrial Estate, Bromley Street, Lye filled with landfill waste.
- Waste Care have launched a new recycling locator tool on the Council website which shows residents where they can recycle other items locally that are not included in the kerbside scheme – <https://www.dudleyrecycles.org.uk/recyclinglocator>.
- Officers within Waste Care have undertaken further research into providers of In Cab Waste Management and Environmental Solutions during the quarter, engaging in soft market testing with leading suppliers. We have had demonstrations, finalised a specification with IT and spoken to customers from each of these suppliers. Following this work, the formal procurement process will commence in quarter 3.
- Fleet and Waste Care have trialled the use of an electric-powered collection vehicle, using it on several rounds. The Council is currently working in partnership with the Midlands Energy Hub on a scheme to obtain funding to cover the gap in cost between electric and normal vehicles (around £400,000 per vehicle compared to around £180,000), which would allow Dudley to purchase two of them.
- The Ryemarket car park in Stourbridge was forced to close following a fire in the shopping centre electrical room.
- The Travellers Transit Site at Budden Road was completed during quarter 2 and formally handed over to Corporate Landlord with operating arrangements in place for its future use.
- The programme of highway improvement work is progressing well with the support of term contractors and internal highways teams.
- The roll out of street lighting LEDs on main roads across the Borough is progressing well and nearing completion.
- Engineers within the Traffic & Transportation Team continue to work in partnership with Transport for the West Midlands and other West Midlands local councils to develop and deliver a range of infrastructure projects to support improved regional connectivity. These include:
  - Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro
  - Dudley Interchange
  - A4123, A461 and A456 multi-modal corridor improvements
  - Stourbridge to Brierley Hill – public transport corridor study
  - Rail network capacity improvements
- New cycle stands started to be rolled out across the Borough during the quarter. These are being funded through the successful bid to the Governments Emergency Active Travel Fund. The stands are being introduced in towns, parks and open spaces.
- Road Safety programmes continue to be delivered where Covid-19 measures allow. Some examples are the new starter packs that have been delivered to all reception age children and some cycle training. Road Safety have developed a number of virtual resources where face to face delivery is not possible. The Operation Park Safe initiative was launched, which aims to make streets outside schools safer.
- Green Care's grounds maintenance programme continues to operate across the Borough.
- Work is progressing well on the new Saltwells Wardens Base. Completion of the project is due in December 2020.
- The tender evaluation process has been completed for the Stevens Park Quarry Bank HLF Project, with the successful bidder Speller Metcalfe. It is hoped that work will be able to commence on site in November.
- As a result of Community Forum funding, benches and bins have been installed at Pensnett Coppice which, with the changes to the grass cutting regime, will further formalise the area as a local park





## Workforce Metrics

Directorate Headcount (Excl.Casual Staff)	Total	FTE
Headcount & FTE as at 30/09/2020	1067	986.14
Gender	Headcount	%
Female	221	21%
Male	846	79%
Disability	Headcount	%
Disabled	63	5.90%
Not Disabled	485	45.45%
Undisclosed	519	48.64%
Ethnicity	Headcount	%
BME	53	4.97%
Undisclosed	47	4.40%
White	967	90.63%
Turn over	% Rate	
2020-21 Q2	2.05%	



extended beyond mattresses to the collection of bed bases, carpets and underlay, all for a much lower cost to residents than the Council's traditional bulky waste service and with all materials collected recycled rather than being sent to landfill. The LARAC (Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee) annual conference, which includes the annual awards ceremony, was held virtually on 14th and 15th October, where Waste Care were announced as winners of the award.

## Opportunities for Improvement (information relating to service complaints / compliments and learning from these.

- Public Realm received **157 complaints** during quarter 2
- 139 of these complaints (88.5%) were responded to within the corporate timeframe of 20 working days
- Following investigation 44 (28%) of the complaints received were upheld
- Of the 44 complaints upheld, 29 related to waste collection issues, 4 to the condition of the highway / footway, 3 to tree issues, 4 to other green care matters, 2 to litter and street cleansing issues, 1 to parking enforcement action and 1 to a street lighting issue
- Any issues or service failures identified during the investigation are addressed and changes made where required
- 6 complaints were directly related to service changes as a result of Covid-19. One due to the closure of parks / open spaces and 5 in relation to the HWRC. None of these were upheld
- The Directorate received **40 compliments** during quarter 2. 9 of these related to waste collections, 9 to street cleansing services, 9 to the work undertaken by highways crews, 6 to the service provided at the HWRC, 5 to green care services, 1 for Pest Control and 1 in relation to the Traffic team.

## Any additional information relevant to Corporate Scrutiny

- No further comments.



**Directorate: Adult Social Care****Date:** Quarter 2 performance reporting (1/4/20 – 30/6/20)**Performance Evaluation****Corporate Performance Measures (KPI's)**

PI No.	Description	Quarter outturn		All England (2018/19)	Score
		Actual	Target		
PI 501	ASCOF2B (P1) - Prop of 65+ at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement services	90.0% (234/259)	83.0%	82.4%	★
PI.2131	% of Delayed transfers of care as percentage of occupied beds	Delayed			
PI.2132	% of contacts to adult social care with an outcome of information and advice/signposting	9.8% (1087/11128)	11.0%	N/A	▲
PI 2133	% of working age service users (18-64) with a primary support reason of learning disability support, who are living on their own or with their family	66% (582/882)	60.0%	77.4%	🥇
PI.2134	% of the conversion of safeguarding concerns to enquiry	3.9% (56/1446)	20.0%	39.0%	🥇

**Benchmarking** (with local authorities/nearest neighbours)

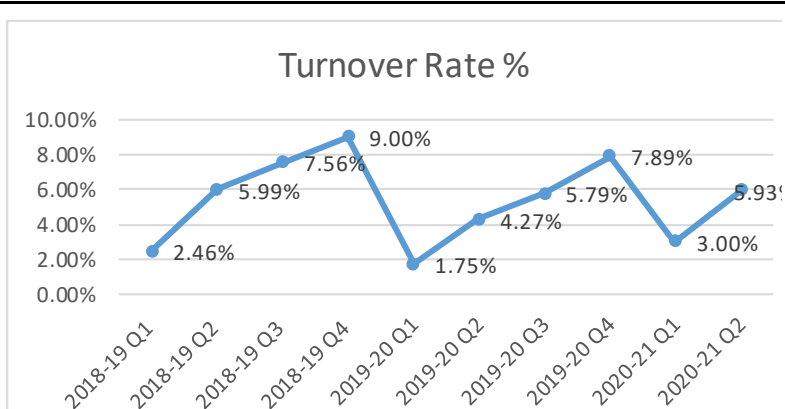
- Benchmarking during the Covid '19 period is complex due to limited data availability. The major point of comparison is the Care Act Easements.
- Dudley MBC did not enact any of the Care Act Easements during the pandemic and maintained a full statutory service.
- Dudley MBC's Adult Social Care Team has been short-listed nationally by Laing and Buisson for "Excellence in responding to Covid '19" as is the only Local Authority to have been short-listed in this category nationally.

**Overview of Service Delivery** (include any issues / risks)

- Protect vulnerable members of the Public throughout the Covid' 19 Period. Avoid implementing as many Care Act Easements as possible.
- Ensure sufficient supply of Social Care; protect the social care workforce
- Ensure an effective Hospital avoidance and discharge service to protect acute capacity for the critically ill.
- Ensure the most effective usage of Adult Social Care resources across the Covid '19 period.
- To work in partnership with individuals, our communities, the voluntary sector and other statutory and private organisations
- Develop and enhance the Adult Safeguarding and Mental Health Offer.
- Ensure the most effective usage of Adult Social Care resources

**Workforce Metrics**

Directorate Headcount (Excl.Casual Staff)	Total	FTE
Headcount & FTE as at 30/09/2020	849	714.86
Gender	Headcount	%
Female	708	83%
Male	141	17%
Disability	Headcount	%
Disabled	65	7.66%
Not Disabled	348	40.99%
Undisclosed	436	51.35%
Ethnicity	Headcount	%
BME	121	14.25%
Undisclosed	42	4.95%
White	686	80.80%
Turn over	% Rate	
2020-21 Q2	5.93%	



**Service Achievements** (report of any external accreditation, nomination for awards, positive publicity, during the past quarter)

- Successor our new Liquid Logic Case Management System went live 7th Sept 2020.

### Access and Prevention

- Pleased to meet you continues to provide support:
  - 550 contacts have been received relating to bespoke shopping, essential medication, food bank vouchers and more generalised areas of support.
  - 2887 welfare visits/telephone calls have been made to people who regularly have contact with the service.
  - 30 referrals made for people living with dementia, but not known to dementia services. Crystal Gateway who have put in sessional support in the person's own home, which has reduced demand on community care providers.
  - Crystal Gateway has provided 741 support visits to people in their own homes to enable carers to have respite from caring.
  - 819 telephone contacts have been maintained with carers whose relatives are currently unable to attend day time respite.
- Increased uptake in technology:
  - 10 people being visited by staff from Crystal Gateway have been using RITA as part of their support activity in their own home.
  - Two individuals who are currently being cared for at home in bed have been using YouTube to exercise their upper body, which means they are remaining independent in eating a meal.
  - Queens Cross has introduced virtual activity sessions for people currently not able to attend the day facilities, 5/6 people per session join these opportunities.

### Dudley Disability Service

- Urgent assessments undertaken – all non-essential work and assessments via the phone.
- Regular check in calls taking place to assure well-being and identify any urgent issues.
- Safeguarding cases remained on track and waiting lists appropriately risk assessed during the crisis.
- Delivery of statutory Legal casework in line with children's CP undertaken.
- Duty service provision continued throughout lockdown
- Partnership/Stakeholder work streams and service development have been maintained as appropriate via digital mechanisms

### Assessment & Independence

- Transfers of care continued from hospital to enable critical care capacity to manage Covid 19
- Calls taken place regularly to ensure the PPE position is properly managed.



- On call rota planned over the weekend as demand in the community has increased

### **Adult Safeguarding & Mental Health**

- We have successfully managed all Safeguarding referrals. Demand is now at pre- Covid19 levels
- Domestic abuse levels do not appear to be increasing in Dudley at the same rate as other areas. Local campaign underway to raise awareness and a single point of contact established via Safe and Sound for referrals. Safe places will be utilised in supermarkets.
- Mental health service continues, all met within the current infrastructure. There has been no increase in MH Act assessments. Increased costs in packages of care are coming through.
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard cases were managed down during the crisis.

### **Integrated Commissioning Performance & Partnerships**

- Daily reporting on PPE availability in care provision from this point forwards.
- Self- contained accommodation identified for people (six units) for people with cognitive impairment/substance misuse issues.
- Additional in-reach support for Care Homes with Care Providers without impacting on existing care capacity.
- All Care Homes and a number of Extra Care/Supported Living schemes were given access to an iPad (paid for by the Council) to ensure family interaction during lockdown.
- Infection Control Monies and additional payments were made to care providers to support the viability and safety of care homes throughout the Covid '19 period.

### **Opportunities for Improvement** *(information relating to service complaints / compliments and learning from these.*

- We held an engagement session with people who use care and support and carers. Lessons learned are all captured in this independent report produced by Dudley Healthwatch

<https://healthwatchdudley.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Adult-Social-Care-Peoples-Network-Aug-20-Final.pdf>

### **Any additional information relevant to Corporate Scrutiny**

- The challenge in the next quarter will be sustaining the care market given the significant financial and staffing challenges facing the care sector. We will be working closely with all care providers in the borough to manage the ongoing impacts of Covid '19 as carefully as possible.



## Directorate: Regeneration & Enterprise

**Date:** Quarter 2 performance reporting (1/4/20 – 30/6/20)

### Performance Evaluation

#### Corporate Performance Measures (KPI's)

PI No.	Description	Quarter outturn		DCGL ranking (June 2020)	Score
		Actual	Target		
PI.1691	% of Major applications determined within 13 weeks	100	60.0%	1 <sup>st</sup>	🟡
PI.1692	% of Minor Applications determined within 8 weeks	100	65.0%	4 <sup>th</sup>	🟡
PI.1693	% of other applications determined within 8 weeks	99.46%	80.0%	4 <sup>TH</sup>	🟡
PI.1705	Number of adults 19+ participating in learning (3500)	489	650	NA	🔴
PI.1709	Number of employers supported with ACL funding streams	107	20	NA	🔴

#### Benchmarking (with local authorities/nearest neighbours)

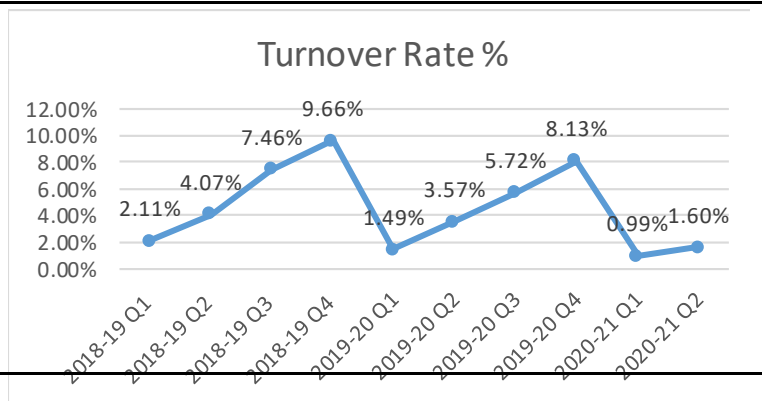
- The service is continuously benchmarking in all sectors Planning, Building Control, Cultural services and Leisure

#### Overview of Service Delivery (include any issues / risks)

- All staff across the service were enabled to WFH (where possible) and if staff were unable to WFH they were reallocated to support other services such as DBF, Public Health, School meals
- Planning, Building Control and Enforcement applications have risen by 30%+ during the Covid period and this trend is continuing. The service have adapted working practices to continue providing a service within restrictions and maintained performance through out. WFH does not allow for all tasks to be performed at a point in the future a backlog of certain tasks will need to be addressed. Some project works have been delayed as 3<sup>rd</sup> party companies have furloughed staff and project funds are being reconsidered.
- DBF have worked alongside Business Rates Team to ensure small business grants were advertised and paid in a timely manner.
- Some Education Services were suspended for a period, but most services are now reopened but with reduced numbers – this will have a long term reduction in income.
- Cultural services have determined innovative ways of working and adapted usual practices to accommodate social distancing restrictions.
- All service areas are concerned about long term health implications to staff.

#### Workforce Metrics

Directorate Headcount (Excl. Casual Staff)	Total	FTE
Headcount & FTE as at 30/09/2020	797	537.35
Gender	Headcount	%
Female	609	76%
Male	188	24%
Disability	Headcount	%
Disabled	37	4.64%
Not Disabled	304	38.14%
Undisclosed	456	57.21%
Ethnicity	Headcount	%
BME	62	7.78%
Undisclosed	62	7.78%
White	673	84.44%
Turnover	% Rate	
2020-21 Q2	1.60%	



<b>Service Achievements</b> <i>(report of any external accreditation, nomination for awards, positive publicity, during the past quarter)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the period the service have been awarded UNESCO status and received praise both delivery of business grants and catering services.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b> <i>(information relating to service complaints / compliments and learning from these.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More robust ICT infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Any additional information relevant to Corporate Scrutiny</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No further comments.</li> </ul>



**Directorate: Childrens Services****Date:** Quarter 2 performance reporting**Performance Evaluation**

## Corporate Performance Measures (KPI's)

PI No.	Description	Quarter outturn		Score
		Actual	Target	
PI 1466	Number of early help assessments started	534	600	▲
PI 432	Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the population	90.9	85	▲
PI.426	Timeliness of Single Assessments - % Completed Within 45 Working Days (Assessment service only)	96% (621/646)	95	●
PI 433	Number of children subject to child protection plan per 10,000 of the child population	59	50	▲
PI 1447	% of agency social workers	17.8% (44.31)	10	▲
PI 2129	% of eligible children who take up a 'Time for Two's' place in the Dudley Borough	87.6% (1141)	85.0%	★

**Benchmarking** (with local authorities/nearest neighbours)**Overview of Service Delivery** (include any issues / risks)**Children's Buildings**

- Plans were put in place to reopen all five family centres, both contact centres and Corbyn Road. For Corbyn Road, this also included children in care staff from Mary Stevens Park.
- All buildings were risk assessed and received a COVID secure notice from Health and Safety.

**Successor**

- Despite continued lockdown arrangements due to Covid, the service went live on Liquid Logic, Early Help Module and ContrOCC on 16<sup>th</sup> November.
- An extensive training programme was delivered via online learning and virtual classrooms.

**Social Care**

- From the 10<sup>th</sup> August Gary Lamb, ex HMI Inspector, will be spending 3 weeks in both Children and Families and Children in Care to carry out a test of assurance. The findings and actions of which will be included in our improvement plan. We will also review the quality and scope of our training plan in light of any findings.
- MASH agencies have continued to operate throughout COVID remotely.





- There had been a significant drop in contacts from schools, which is usually the highest source of contacts, although we started to see schools contacts increasing as more children were returning to school prior to the summer break, although these increased as schools started to receive more children.
- The social work teams continue to operate 'business as usual' assessing and supporting children and families on both Child in Need and Child Protection Plans.
- Recruitment continues at pace across children's services and we are concentrating on ensuring that the front-line teams have the correct establishment in place in anticipation for the increase in demand in September when schools re open. This will also help address high caseloads that exist in some parts of the service.
- The use of technology has been positive and has enabled interagency working to continue for example, virtual attendance at conferences and reviews. Programmes of training and development have continued to support the ongoing development of the workforce.

### Early Help

- Dudley's Early Help system is swiftly adapting to open our Family Centres as we approach the COVID-19 lockdown transition.
- Multi-Agency Action Meetings have continued effectively using technology during this period with partners contributing well in this format.

### Youth Offending

- Dudley continues to work during the COVID-19 pandemic following guidance by the Youth Justice Board (YJB)
- The YJB also issued Local Authorities with details of an early release scheme relating to the secure estate. It remains the case that no Dudley young people have been eligible for this scheme as it did not include the remand cohort, focussing rather on young people at the end of their sentences.

### Safeguarding

- All children protection conferences and looked after children reviews are being held virtually using technology. For many parents this has been positive as they feel less intimidated by having to sit in a conference room with a range of professionals.

### Education

- The key educational focus for Dudley during the COVID-19 outbreak has been to ensure that schools have been open, initially for the children of critical workers and vulnerable pupils, and then for those in the targeted cohorts of reception, year 1, year 6, year 10 and year 12.
- Our schools have worked tirelessly to support children, young people and their families throughout a sustained and very challenging period and, as the data below shows, the attendance of our most vulnerable pupils increased steadily from April to July.

	Average Number of Pupils Attending					Proportion of Specified Cohort Attending				
Month	All Pupils	Pupils with an EHCP	Pupils with a CiN Plan	Pupils With a CPP	Pupils who are Looked After	All Pupils	Pupils with an EHCP	Pupils with a CiN Plan	Pupils with a Child CPP	Pupils who are Looked After
Pre - Lockdown %	--	--	--	--	--	95%	90%	86%	86%	95%





<b>April *</b>	627	32	18	28	19	1%	2%	7%	13%	8%
<b>May</b>	800	39	31	31	37	2%	2%	12%	14%	15%
<b>June</b>	4726	145	59	69	106	10%	9%	23%	31%	43%
<b>July **</b>	6731	195	86	77	137	14%	12%	34%	35%	55%

*\* Data from the start of the Dudley Schools Attendance Survey which began on the 9th of April 2020*

*\*\* Data up to and including 15th of July 2020*

- For the majority of young people, education has been provided remotely by their school, to enable them to learn at home. Most schools have provided online learning but, where necessary, physical learning packs have been produced for families.
- Dudley, along with other local authorities across England, has been part of the DfE's program to provide devices to support children and young people with remote learning. We received approximately 1100 laptops and devices, the majority of which have been distributed either to children who are looked after (CLA) or children who have significant involvement with a social worker.
- Dudley Virtual School is also delivering a range of provision, including;
  - The Challenge Tuition Programme
  - Artslink Awesome Arts Programme
  - Literacy & Numeracy Programme - Spy School 2020 - The Lockdown Legend
  - Careers – Be Inspired
- Then, finally this summer, Dudley Performing Arts is organising two weeks of events, again targeted at children and young people who are likely to find it difficult to re-engage with school in September.

#### **SEND**

- The SEND Oversight Group continued to meet to monitor progress against the improvement plan.
- DfE are happy with the progress being made
- Full team of permanent staff have been recruited during the pandemic
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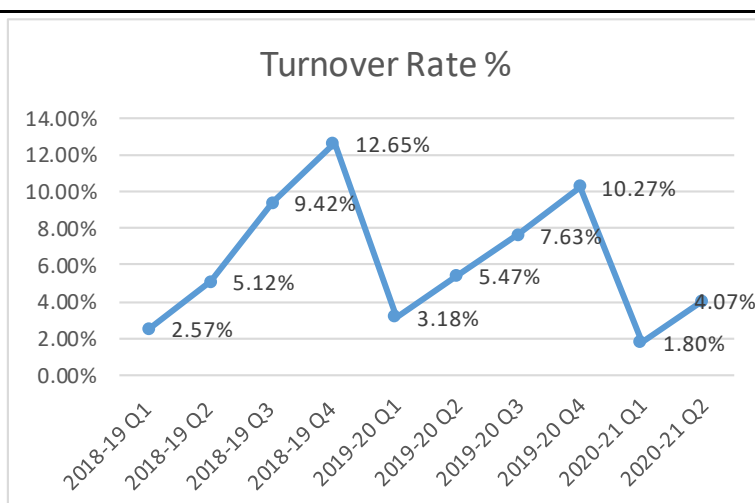
#### **Workforce Metrics**



Contract Type (All Positions)		
Row Labels	No of Positions	%
Casual	107	11%
Full time	481	51%
Part time	361	38%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>100%</b>

Directorate Headcount (Excl.Casual Staff)		
	Total	FTE
Headcount & FTE as at 30/09/2020	922	691.68
Gender	Headcount	%
Female	706	85%
Male	128	15%
Disability	Headcount	%
Disabled	66	7.91%
Not Disabled	395	47.36%
Undisclosed	373	44.72%
Ethnicity	Headcount	%
BME	142	17.03%
Undisclosed	71	8.51%
White	621	74.46%
Turn over	% Rate	
2020-21 Q2	4.07%	



**Service Achievements** *(report of any external accreditation, nomination for awards, positive publicity, during the past quarter)*

- There has been an increase in compliments from our young people and carers in regard to staff

**Opportunities for Improvement** *(information relating to service complaints / compliments and learning from these)*

The 8 key areas as described in the Ofsted letter will be the areas of focus in the strategic plan. They are as follows:

**Area for priority action:** The local authority needs to take swift and decisive action to address the delays in identifying and ensuring permanence for children, including:

- timely application of the pre-proceedings stage of the Public Law Outline (PLO), where risks for children are not reducing through child protection planning
- The timeliness and quality of decision-making in the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)
- The case transition points across all service areas to prioritise the needs of children and reduce unnecessary changes of workers
- The pace of progress in the development of responses to non-familial abuse and child exploitation
- The quality of assessments and child-focused plans
- The effectiveness of supervision, quality assurance arrangements and senior management oversight
- The quality and impact of education for children in care at key stage 4, and post16 qualifications and attainment

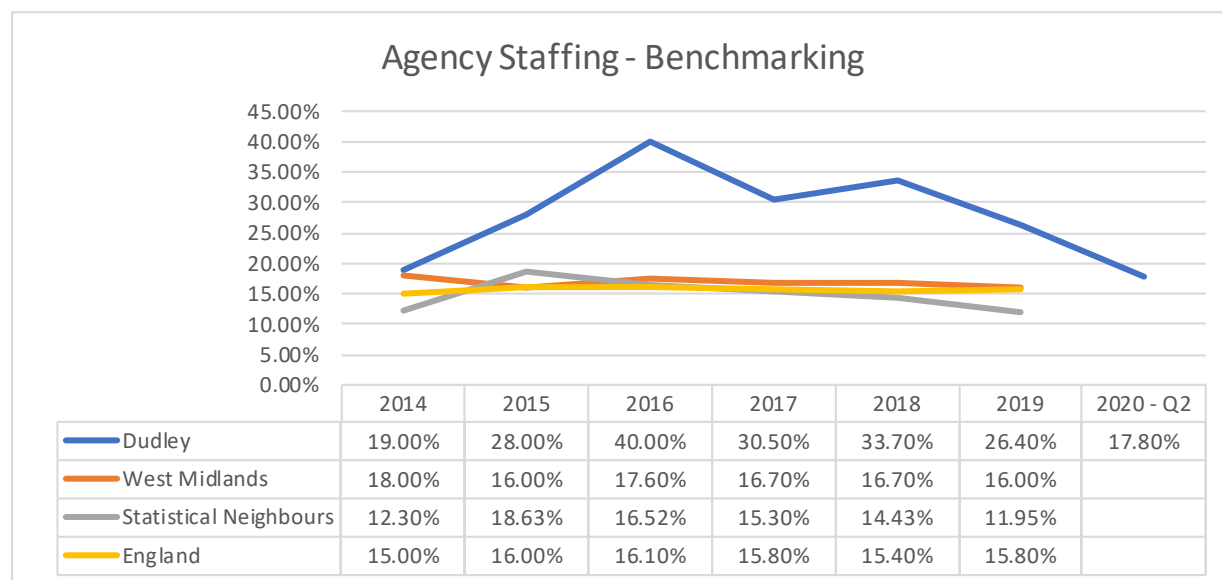


**Any additional information relevant to Corporate Scrutiny (*i.e. workforce data/service delivery statistics*)**

- 



## Benchmarking (with local authorities/nearest neighbours)



Statistical neighbours: Wigan, North Lincolnshire, Rotherham, Telford and Wrekin, Doncaster, Nottinghamshire, Lancashire, Bolton, Tameside and Medway

## Overview of Service Delivery (include any issues / risks)

- **Workforce strategy**
- **Agency to perm conversion**
- **COVID – recruitment challenges**
- **Career pathway**

To increase the number of Permanent Staff and reduce the number of Agency Workers, the service has introduced the following initiatives:

- There is a career progression offer for social workers to complete Practice Educators awards and progression from Grade 8 to Grade 10 social worker. We are now proposing an additional grade in Care Management for Advanced Social Work practitioners.
- Target existing Agency Workers to encourage them to become Permanent Employees
- Utilise Social Media Platforms for Social Worker Advertisements
- Review the wording of Recruitment Advertisements to attract Applicants
- Procure the services of two Recruitment Agencies to provide permanent applicants for consideration
- Review and enhance the learning offer from the Centre for Professional Practice
- To consider and act on the contents of Exit Interviews to help the retention of staff
- Provide regular quality supervision with the emphasis on reflective practice

- Enhance the current career progression scheme to develop an Advanced Practitioner Career Development Scheme
- To Grow our Own Social Workers by:
  - Utilising the Social Worker Frontline Placement Scheme to provide a specialised route into social work for students who already have a degree.
  - Utilising the ASYE programme for newly Qualified Social Workers
  - Utilising the ASYE programme for newly Qualified Social Workers
  - Utilising the Apprenticeship Levy for existing Council Staff to become Qualified Social Workers

However, it is clear that the COVID pandemic is having a significant impact on recruitment and we have experienced a significant reduction in the number of applications and new starters. It is also important to note that this is both a regional and national issue. Social workers are being enticed into authorities outside of the region through the use of golden handshakes. Additionally, we have also experienced an increase in the number of staff that have left which has resulted in an increase in the number of agency staff. Table below provides comparative data for the period April – November across both 2019 and 2020::

	Starters	Leavers	Net Effect
2019	21	9	+12
2020	9	20	-11

We are utilising the apprenticeship levy for a range of qualifications for non social worker staff to achieve additional accreditation in their post. Early help are currently utilising this to support their staff to achieve Level 5 CMI management awards. There are also 2 early help practitioners who are due to start Apprenticeship levy funded Social Work courses in February 2021 and we have an additional 2 early help practitioners who are also doing their social work degree using the Apprenticeship route supported by the directorate.



Apprenticeships in  
Childrens services v3.



**Dudley**  
Metropolitan Borough Council

Working as One Council in  
the historic capital of the Black Country

