

**Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education – Tuesday 6 March 2007**

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

**Dudley Borough Economic Strategy 2007/08**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide the Select Committee for Regeneration, Culture & Adult Education with a report on the Council's Economic Strategy, revised for 2007/08.

The report is supported by a copy of the presentation that was given to the Economic Regeneration Working Group on 23 January 2007 to provide the group with an overview of the draft Economic Strategy as part of the consultation process.

**Background**

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

The five Strategic aims are underpinned by an action plan with key objectives, actions, milestones and timescales.

4. The Economic Strategy supports the aspirations set out in the 2033 Black Country Study Vision 'Looking Forward: The Black Country in 2033', and its four key objectives, which are:
  1. Reverse the trend of people leaving the Black Country
  2. Raise income levels by ensuring better skills and types of jobs

3. To attract and retain people with higher level skills (change the socio-economic mix)
4. Protect and enhance the environment and create a safe, attractive and healthy place to live and work.
5. The Economic Strategy also continues to recognise that successful implementation depends on joint working, strong partnerships, and input of resources from a variety of public and private sector organisations at regional, sub-regional and local level.
6. The Strategy reflects cross directorate working within the Council. Other Directorates, in addition to the Directorate of Urban Environment, have contributed to the Economic Strategy, and will also contribute directly to the implementation of the Strategic Aims. These include the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Directorate of Children's Services.

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

7. The draft Economic Strategy was issued for consultation in December 2006 through to January 2007, both within the Council and to external organisations and stakeholders. The draft Strategy was presented for consultation to the Economic Development and Regeneration Partnership on 15 January 2007 and to the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education (Economic Regeneration) Working Group on 23 January 2007.

The final strategy will be submitted to Cabinet for approval on 21 March 2007 and full Council on 16 April 2007.

8. When the final strategy is approved by Cabinet and Council, a copy will be placed in the Members' Room.

### **Finance**

9. There are no direct financial implications contained within this report.

### **Law**

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

## **Equality Impact**

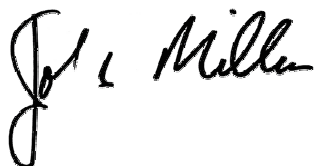
11. The Strategy aims to bring increased prosperity across the Borough. In addition, Strategic Aim 1, optimising opportunities for local people to obtain local jobs, is primarily aimed at residents, including children and young people, and wards that are recognised as being disadvantaged in economic and social terms.

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

## **Recommendation**

12. It is recommended that:-

- Members note the report and comment accordingly.



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## **List of Background Papers**

Draft Economic Strategy for Dudley Borough, 2007/08