

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC REGENERATION**

**6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2005**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT, COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES**

**WELL BEING, INDEPENDENCE, CHOICE AND IMPROVEMENT**

**DISABILITY AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION**

**Purpose of Report**

1. For the Committee to reflect on a range of local circumstances for disabled people in the light of national initiatives to improve the life chances of disabled people.

**Background**

2. National Context

The Committee will be aware of the national interest that has developed over a number of years in promoting better access for disabled people to mainstream society in terms of, for example:

- Buildings and physical environment
- Leisure
- Educational opportunities and
- Jobs, etc.

Examples of national initiatives that support this agenda are:

- Report of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit Report, "*Improving the Life Chance of Disabled People*", published in January 2005, which includes consideration of issues relating to attitudes towards disabled people and that they are more likely to be the victim of discrimination. Appendix 1 is a table of actions that the Government want to develop in response to this analysis.
- Adult Care Green Paper *Independence, Well-Being and Choice* that focuses on positive outcomes for all adults but particularly the most vulnerable, amongst whom some disabled people might be included.

- *Health, work and well-being – Caring for the future. A Strategy for the health and well-being of working age people.* This Report was published in October 2005 by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP,) Department of Health (DH) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE.) This Strategy will lead to the appointment of a national Director to encourage all employers to focus and support the individual to protect and improve their own health and remove through, for example, removing any barriers to work or returning to work that an individual may encounter as a result of health problems or disabilities.
- *Improving Services, Improving Lives Evidence and Key Themes –* Interim Report of the Social Exclusion Unit on the experience of people who experience disadvantage in their use of public services and which can include disabled people.
- *Valuing People – A new Strategy for Learning Disabilities* was launched as a White Paper in March 2001. This gave a clear direction to promoting the interests of adults with learning disabilities in relation to employment such as that all employers do more to ensure access to employment of adults with a learning disability.

### 3. Local Context

There are three main headings under which the Committee may wish to develop their influence in relation to disabled people in Dudley involving the Council as:

- an employer
- a service provider
- an enabler

#### As employer

The Council oversees a variety of actions in relation to its responsibilities as an employer:

- Recruitment e.g. the Council guarantees an interview to all disabled people who apply for a post for which they meet the criteria as part of its “Positive about Disabilities” initiative
- For employees:
  - changes can be made to work-base where a person’s physical ability to fulfil their tasks alters through work-base assessments
  - provision of a Staff Counselling service to help staff manage personal issues which may have arisen at home or within the workplace

- Other personnel initiatives such as the Management of Absence policy enables staff to make a gradual return to work after an extended period of sick leave
- availability of an Employees with Disabilities Group which meets four times a year and provides a focus for any staff with a disability in relation to their employment as people with a disability working within the Council
- Launch of the Carers Charter in December 2004 that, among other things, formally recognises the role of Carers as employees. This provides a context for support to both carers and the person they care for.
- The work of the Council's Access Officer allows the Council to adapt its premises to meet the access needs of disabled people to both services and jobs.
- The Committee also considered a Report on 19 October 2005 on the Council's Disability Access Strategy. This identified a number of themes through which it would meet its two approaches to improving access: (1) by changing the way the Council provides its services; and (2) by changing the buildings from which the Council provides its services.

At 0.68%, the Council currently has a relatively low number of people who are registered as disabled amongst its workforce. Reasons for this include the need to re-fresh data but in addition it may be that continued efforts need to be made to ensure that we are doing as much as we can for any one with a disability.

#### As service provider

Through the provision of its care services in the Directorate of Adults, Community and Housing Services and the Directorate of Children's Services, the Council plays an important part in supporting many disabled people in a number of ways.

There are a number of initiatives relating to employment and training to which the Council contributes through these initiatives:

- Learning Disability Services - Black Country Green Team – is a European Social Fund (ESF) project run by the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services in partnership with the Black Country Museum as part of a wider sub-regional partnership to provide training places for adults with learning disabilities. This is part of a wider development in applying an employment strategy for adults with learning disabilities so that we can build on the work placements available to adults with a learning disability for whom there are currently about 55 placements.
- Mental Health Services – schemes to encourage access to employment by people with mental health problems have been

developed by the Directorate of Adult and Community Services through a Service Level Agreement with Re-think, a voluntary organisation working with people with mental health needs. Employment for people with mental health problems is also the subject of national interest cf. *Mental Health and Social Exclusion – Report of the Social Exclusion Unit* (June, 2004,) that will continue to be developed locally through the newly integrated mental health service. To promote the access of adults with mental health problems to employment, the numbers of people of people with mental health problems gaining access to employment is also to be a Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) target.

- Physical Disability Services: The Queens Cross Centre provides a range of community and centre based day opportunities. These can be whatever the client wishes to undertake and achieve, they may be leading towards volunteering or work based activities, for others they may wish to improve their life skills or increase their involvement in the community. The centre has a user committee that oversees the running of the centre and makes decisions on the things that affect the users.

#### As enabler

- Dudley Social Business Partnership (DSBP) – the Council contracts with DSBP as an independent organisation committed to developing opportunities for adults with disabilities. For example, through the Directorate for Adult, Community and Housing Services it purchases training hours for adults with learning disabilities in a print firm, 'Quality Print Plus.' In addition, under the auspices of DSBP, Building Bridges in Employment (BBEC) also works to identify employment opportunities for adults with learning disabilities using a "buddy" system.
- The Council's Access Officer provides a consultancy service relating to building regulations and planning legislation to both the Council and private sector to advise and influence on new development schemes which allows disabled people to access both jobs and services as appropriate.
- Future Skills Dudley (FSD), which is part of the Economic Regeneration Division of DUE, has for over 16 years recruited, trained and supported many 1000's of local unemployed adults into work. Funded through a variety of non-council bodies such as Advantage West Midlands (AWM), Jobcentre Plus and GO West Midlands, it delivers a range of initiatives/contracts that has and continues to support some of the most vulnerable people, which includes those with disabilities.

#### 4. Summary

As employer, service provider and enabler, therefore, it can be seen how the Council is modelling good practice in the arena of economic regeneration in many ways e.g. in its partnership with disabled people themselves seeking to improve their own life chances through continuation in and access to employment. These initiatives are also 'cross-cutting' in the way that they address other issues such as health inequalities. Nevertheless, in seeking to continually improve services, the Council also recognises that much still needs to be done to seek further improvements e.g. through continued application of the Disability Discrimination Act.

#### Finance

5. There are no direct financial implications of this Report that summarises a range of activities into which resources are already invested.

#### Law

6. Services to disabled people by the Directorate of Adult and Community and Housing Services continue to be provided through the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1976 and the NHS and Community Care Act 1990. The Disability Discrimination Act 1996 also applies, and in particular requires the Council to make reasonable adjustments in order to ensure that those using its services and its employees are not disadvantaged because of their disability.

#### Equality Impact

7. Through this Report, the Committee is exercising its interest in the lives of local disabled people and the activity of the Council as an employer, service provider and enabler. It can be seen that in all these ways the Council is contributing to improving the lives of disabled people but needs to continue working – including together with its partners – to do improve the lives and opportunities of disabled people still further.

#### Recommendation

8. It is recommended that the Committee note the wide-ranging content of this Report and comment as appropriate.



.....  
(for) **Linda Sanders**  
**Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services**

Contact Officer: Ron Sims – Assistant Director  
Telephone: 01384 815005  
Email: [ron.sims@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:ron.sims@dudley.gov.uk)

Brendan Clifford – Head of Policy and Performance  
Telephone 01384 815889  
Email: [Brendan.Clifford@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:Brendan.Clifford@dudley.gov.uk)

### **List of Background Papers**

- *“Improving the Life Chance of Disabled People”, published in January 2005, Report of the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit Report,*
- *Independence, Well-Being and Choice – April 2005*
- *Health, work and well-being – Caring for the future. A Strategy for the health and well-being of working age people. by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP,) Department of Health (DH) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE.) October 2005.*
- *Improving Services, Improving Lives Evidence and Key Themes – Interim Report of the Social Exclusion Unit October 2005.*
- *Mental Health and Social Exclusion – Report of the Social Exclusion Unit (June 2004)*
- *Valuing People – A new Strategy for Learning Disabilities - a White Paper ( March 2001.)*

## APPENDIX

### Improving the Life Chance of Disabled People – Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit Report, January 2005

Summary of recommendations	Lead Responsibility	In Support	By When	Council Implications
Chapter 4: Independent Living				
(4.1) Modelling good practice Government departments should model good practice in involving disabled people.	Government departments	ODI	2005 onwards	
(4.2) User involvement protocols should be developed by public bodies, in consultation with disabled people.	Government departments/service providers	ODI	By 2006	✓
(4.3) User-led organisations Each locality should have a user-led organisation modelled on existing CILs.	DH and ODPM		By 2010	✓
(4.4) Supporting independent living Work towards a new approach that delivers support, equipment and/or adaptations according to the principles set out on page 77.	DH	DWP, DfES, ODPM	By 2012	✓
(4.5) Piloting individualised budgets Develop an evidence base for individual budgets which bring together sources of funding, services, equipment and adaptations.	DH	DWP, ODPM	Early 2005 onwards	✓

<b>(4.6) The role of local authorities Local authorities should have a key strategic role in delivering the new system</b>	ODPM	DH	2005 onwards	✓
(4.7) Information and advice DH should assess existing information and advice provision and consider an SR06 bid to address any gaps.	DH		By 2006	
(4.8) Supporting disabled people to help themselves DH should: a) introduce, after consultation, a more appropriate definition of 'disabled person' for community care services; b) consult on merits of a 'right to request' not to live in a residential or nursing care setting; c) analyse costs and benefits of amending charging policies for residential care; d) consider an 'invest-to-save' SR06 case for community-based resources for those otherwise placed in residential care	DH		a) As soon as possible b) In 2005 c) By end 2006 d) By 2006	✓
(4.9) Improving the DFG ODPM should consider reform to the DFG in the light of the forthcoming review.	ODPM		By 2005	✓
(4.10) Including disabled people in housing initiatives ODPM should work with organisations of disabled people and	ODPM		2005 onwards	



others to ensure housing initiatives include disabled people.				
(4.11) Lifetime Homes Review the effect of the 1999 guidance on access to dwellings, and consider the feasibility of incorporating Lifetime Homes standards into Building Regulations.	ODPM		By 2006	✓
<b>(4.12) Transport and independent living</b> <b>Encourage local authorities to include transport and mobility needs of disabled people in assessments within the new system of individualised budgets</b>	DH		2005 onwards	✓
<b>(4.13) Transport and local authorities</b> <b>Encourage local authorities to play a strategic role to ensure that disabled people do not experience barriers on journeys.</b>	DfT		2005 onwards	✓
Chapter 5: Early Years and Family Support				
<b>(5.1) Individualised budgets</b> <b>Individualised budgets should, in principle, be extended to families with disabled children.</b>	DH	DfES, DWP, ODP, M	By 2012	✓
(5.2) Childcare and early education a) All 3-4 year old disabled children should have access the free part-time early education provision and providers will have access to a fullv-support	a) DfES b) Sure Start Unit c) DfES		a) By 2010 b) By 2015 c) As this is rolled out.	✓

<p>early years SENCO.</p> <p>b) Families with a disabled child under 5 years to be able to access high quality, flexible childcare.</p> <p>c) Extension of 'wraparound' care to be fully accessible to disabled children over 5 years.</p>				✓
<p>(5.3) Evaluation of children's services</p> <p>a) National evaluations of children's services to assess impacts on families with disabled children.</p> <p>b) Guidance should be issued on local and regional evaluations of children's services to ensure they take account of the needs of disabled children.</p>	<p>a) DfES</p> <p>b) DH and DfES</p>		<p>a) 2005 onwards</p> <p>b) 2005 onwards</p>	
<p>(5.4) Keyworkers</p> <p>a) Provision of a keyworker to families should be considered as a key performance indicator.</p> <p>b) Children's Trusts should ensure that all families have access to clear information about local support.</p>	<p>a) DfES and DH</p> <p>b) DfES</p>		<p>a) 2006 onwards</p> <p>b) 2006 onwards</p>	✓
<p>(5.5) Early intervention</p> <p>Phase one: Identify mechanisms that enable local authorities to switch spend from later intervention to early intervention.</p> <p>Phase two: Depending on Phase one outcomes, assess the case for an invest-to-save pilot for early</p>	DfES	DH	<p>1) By 2006 with follow up studies.</p> <p>2) 2006 onwards</p>	✓

intervention.				
<p>(5.6) Equipment</p> <p>a) Assess whether community services are able to deliver the NSF recommendation on children's equipment, and, if not, make recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>b) Equipment services should be considered as a key performance indicator of council social care and education services.</p>	<p>a) DH</p> <p>b) DfES and DH</p>		<p>a) By 2006</p> <p>b) 2006 onwards</p>	✓
<p>(5.7) Housing</p> <p>Recommendation 4.9 should also apply to families with disabled children and disabled parents.</p>	ODPM	DfES	By 2005	✓
<p>(5.8) Workforce</p> <p>The children's workforce should be capable of meeting the needs of disabled children.</p>	DfES	DH	Incorporate into current work	✓
<p>(5.9) Children's Trusts</p> <p>Local authorities, PCTs and Children's Trusts should work together and with partners to commission services for all disabled children.</p>	DfES and DH		Incorporate into current work	✓
<p>(5.10) Joint Area Reviews</p> <p>Consider how disabled children can be reflected in the Joint Area Reviews of children's services and in the CPA.</p>	DfES and DH		2006 onwards	✓
<p>(5.11) Data collection and information sharing</p> <p>a) Coordinate basic data on the number and needs of disabled</p>	<p>a) DfES and DH</p> <p>b) DfES and DH</p> <p>c) DfES and DH</p>		<p>a) 2005 onwards</p> <p>b) Incorporate into current work</p>	

children in local areas. b) Include disabled children in the Children Act databases. c) Include disabled children in the Common Assessment Framework.			c) Incorporate into current work	✓
Chapter 6: Transition to Adulthood				
(6.1) Continuity in delivery from child and adult services a) Different models of multi-agency transition should be evaluated and disseminated. b) Children's Trusts should be encouraged to work as necessary with young disabled people up to the age of 25. c) Pilots should assess how individualised budgets could cover the transition period.	a) DfES b) DfES c) DH	c) DWP, DfES, ODP M	a) By 2006 b) 2005 onwards c) By 2012	✓
(6.2) Adult programmes extend self-directed control to young people when they are ready a) Collate and disseminate good practice examples, including Expert Patient model. b) Investigate how ICES initiatives can ensure they include children and young people. c) Support for young people developing individual budget plans (as per recommendation 4.3)	a) DH b) DH		a) By 2006 b) By 2006	✓
(6.3) 'Universal' services assessed on meeting	a) All government departments	e) DH and	c) 2006/7 and onwards	

the needs of disabled young people and their families Facilitating evaluation of new model of service delivery through better evidence via the new public sector duty, improving collection of information, better inspections, and clearer performance indicators, and targets.	b) DRC c) DWP d) Ofsted and Healthcare commission e) DfES f) DfES	DCM S	e) by 2006	✓
(6.4) Family support that bridges transition a) Review remit of Family Fund Trust. b) Individualised budgets (as per recommendation 6.1) should support young people and their families across transition.	a) DfES b) DH	a) Famil y Fund b) DWP, DfES, ODP M	a) By 2006 b) By 2012	✓
(6.5) Access to good quality local information Disabled young people and their families should receive local and national information at transition.	DfES	DH and DWP	By 2008	✓
(6.6) Disabled young people should be included in planning that is centred on their own needs a) Good practice models for subcontracting most specialist transition support provision should be disseminated. b) DfES and DH should consider mapping youth centred approaches to transition planning, evaluating different models, and informing the development of Individual Learning Plans.	a) DfES b) DfES and DH		a) 2006 onwards b) 2007 onwards c) By 2010	✓

c) Promotion of person-centred planning practice nationally.				
(6.7) Ensuring advice and guidance is tailored to meet the needs of disabled young people DfES should ensure that arrangements for providing advice and guidance to young people, including Connexions, meet the needs of all disabled young people.	DfES		From 2005	
(6.8) Individualised learning and vocational pathways into employment a) New arrangements from Tomlinson group's recommendations to include disabled young people. b) Good practice examples should be issued to employers and ACAS on Health and Safety and child protection. c) Lifelong Learning UK should develop career structures and skills of staff working with young people with SEN.	a) DfES and LSC b) DfES c) DfES and LSC		a) 2006 onwards b) 2006 onwards c) 2006 onwards	
(6.9) Access to leisure and independent living needs to be ensured a) Code of practice on public sector duty to include increasing opportunities for participation of disabled young people. b) Research on meaningful life options for young people with highest level of needs.	a) DWP b) DH		a) 2005 onwards b) 2005 onwards	✓

Chapter 7: Employment				
<p>(7.1) Rehabilitation</p> <p>a) A set of arrangements for vocational rehabilitation available and accessible for both employers, employees and benefit claimants. b) Joint working between DH and DWP through the Health Safety and Productivity Workforce(c) Invite the Academy of Royal Medical Colleges to examine how to increase attention to work as a positive driver for good health.</p>	<p>a) DWP and DH</p> <p>b) DH and DWP</p> <p>b) DH</p>		a) By 2008	✓
<p>(7.2) Occupational health</p> <p>a) Encourage increases in the quality and quantity of OH provision.</p> <p>b) Encourage employers to provide OH services to their employers.</p>	<p>a) DH and DWP</p> <p>b) DH, DWP and HMT</p>		<p>a) 2008 onwards</p> <p>b) 2008 onwards</p>	✓
<p>(7.3) The role of GPs</p> <p>Identify, and assist GPs to adopt, best practice in patient care.</p>	DWP and DH		By 2007	
<p>(7.4) Benefits assessments</p> <p>a) Review the processes of assessing eligibility for disability-related benefits.</p> <p>b) Identify whether the PCA is nearest the optimum point or can be further repositioned.</p>	<p>a) DWP</p> <p>a) DWP</p>		<p>a) By 2008a</p> <p>b) By 2006</p>	
(7.5) Capability Report	DWP		2005 onwards	

Roll out the Capability Report nationwide, subject to evidence, and over time widen its scope.				
(7.6) Mainstreaming in the LSC The LSC should aim to increase the proportion of disabled learners in education and training.	DfES	LSC	2006 onwards	
(7.7) 'Welfare to Workforce Development' Recommendations from this report should be implemented as a matter of priority.	DWP		2005 onwards	✓
(7.8) Employer Training Pilots (ETPs) a) Ensure New Deal for Skills and ETPs meet the needs of disabled people. b) Develop evidence to explain why disabled people appear to fare less well in ETPs and work with LSC on impact measures for disabled people in Apprenticeships.	a) DWP and DfES b) DfES		a) 2005 onwards b) 2005 onwards	
(7.9) Connexions and IAG Should have the ability to provide specialist advice to disabled people.	DfES		2005 onwards	
(7.10) In-work support through AtW A new system of in-work support through AtW which aims to increase recruitment and retention rates of disabled people.	DWP		By 2010	✓
(7.11) Linking rules and incentives to work	a) DWP b) DWP		a) 2006 onwards	



a) Provide better guidance to benefit claimants on the linking rules and financial incentives to return to work.b) Deliver changes to the current permitted work rules system, and further investigate the 5-16 hour issue.			b) In 2006	
(7.12) Job broker activity Improve referral arrangements to NDDP Job brokers and develop the role of Job brokers.	DWP		By 2006	
(7.13) Supported Employment Increase the flexibility of budgets within the current supported employment programmes.	DWP		2006 onwards	
(7.14) Employer awareness Employers should lead a campaign promoting the business benefits of employing disabled people.	DWP and DTI		2006 onwards	✓
(7.15) Advice for employers A single, well known, point of information and advice for employers to be considered.	DWP, DH		By 2006	
(7.16) Jobcentre Plus and employers Develop 'reference sales' products on disability issues for SMEs.	DWP		By 2008	
(7.17) Investors in People and the disability symbol a) Review the	a) DWP b) DfES c) DTI	b) liP	a) By 2007 b-c) Between 2005 and 2007	

effectiveness of the disability symbol. b) Consider including employment of disabled people in accreditation criteria and monitor through three year review process. c) Consider consulting with business and trade unions on potential employment standard.				✓
(7.18) Impact of the public sector duty Public Authorities should take the lead in demonstrating, promoting and reporting on best practice on the recruitment and retention of disabled people.	Government departments, government agencies, local authorities		2006 onwards	✓
(7.19) Online directory of services National online directory of service providers should be developed to inform disabled people of the services offered to them and a national helpline.	DWP	DfES and DH	2008 onwards	
(7.20) Employment advice Explore and test options for placing vocational advisors in healthcare and other settings.	DWP and DH		Testing from 2006. Rollout from 2008	
Chapter 8: Towards Improved Delivery <a href="#">[327]</a>				
(8.1) An evolving strategy The strategy for improving the life chances of disabled people should be fully developed and timetabled with milestones.	Government departments	ODI	Initial activity by 2006, then ongoing	✓

communicated widely, and aimed at steady progressive reform to 2025.				
(8.2) A review of provision Provision for disabled people should be reviewed and a new mix of mainstream, specialist and integrated provision derived from the strategy.	Government departments	ODI	Initial activity by 2006, then ongoing	
(8.3) Standards More coherent and explicit standards should be developed bringing legislation and other rights into a coherent framework.	Government departments	ODI	Initial activity by 2006, then ongoing	
(8.4) Incentives for effective delivery A review of provision should address ways of incentivising effective delivery of services which meet the needs of disabled people.	Government departments	ODI	Initial activity by 2006, then ongoing	
(8.5) Government leadership of reform A strong focus is required within Government to ensure that priority is given to disability issues, and to provide oversight of a process to reform delivery in line with the public service reform agenda.	Government departments	ODI	Initial activity by 2006, then ongoing	
(8.6) Participation New arrangements should be established for securing participation of disabled people in policy design and delivery at all levels.	Government departments	ODI	Initial activity by 2006, then ongoing	✓
Chapter 9:				

Implementation				
(9.1) Developing measurables Develop specific, outcome-based indicators to enable progress on the recommendations in this report to be measured.	ODI		From 2005	✓