

DRAFT

Refresh of Community Cohesion Strategy

2009/11

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Background

1. In December 2007 a report from the Chief Executive and Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services in Dudley outlining a proposed framework for the development of a partnership Community Cohesion Strategy, was presented to Cabinet. A draft Community Cohesion Strategy for Dudley was also included setting out the local vision, demographic information, analysis and priorities¹.
2. Since that time there have been a number of developments, which have led to the need to refresh Dudley's Community Cohesion Strategy. Principally, the Department for Communities and Local Government² published a detailed response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's report **Our Shared Future**² setting out how the Government was following up the Commission's 57 recommendations. During this period there have also been developments both nationally and locally which have considerable impact on the borough including for example the economic downturn and the emergence of groups such as the English Defence League.
3. Locally the overarching Dudley Community Strategy has provided a vision of strong communities to ensure that everyone will be proud to say that Dudley is 'my borough – our borough' a theme which has been carried forward within the Dudley Pledge³.
4. The following document represents a 'refreshed' Community Cohesion Strategy for 2009/11 including an update on the actions outlined in the 2007 strategy and detailed action plans for 2009/11.

Definition of Community Cohesion

5. The Commission's definition and government's subsequent development is outlined at Appendix 1. Essentially, Community Cohesion is about human relationships, how well people get on together. In Dudley it is recognised that Community Cohesion is vital for the creation of a safe and peaceful community where:

- People **interact and engage** with each other in a positive way
- People are **committed** to what **we have in common** rather than focusing on things that make us different

¹ Report to Cabinet 12th December, 2007 Development of a Community Cohesion Strategy for the Borough

² In June 2007, the Commission on Integration and Cohesion delivered a report to government based on in depth consultation '**Our Shared Future**' using evidence and analysis rather than intuition to try to gain an understanding of cohesion. The report identified practical ways to build cohesion locally. The Commission's approach, like that of the Government is based on the principle that cohesion is something that can only be understood and built locally.

³ The Dudley 'One Borough' Pledge was initiated by the Interfaith Network signed by faith leaders, members of the community and others it was launched in March 2010. This gives commitment to foster a strong sense of community which is respectful, safe and fair to all people – 'We are one borough, we are Dudley borough'.

- **Mutual respect, fairness and justice** are actively sought
6. Although racial harmony is at the core of cohesion it isn't the only issue that needs to be addressed. Economic exclusion and inter-generational issues also have a major bearing on cohesion.
 7. Research⁴ has shown that how cohesive an area is will depend upon a series of interacting factors:
 - The characteristics and history of an area
 - Residents' personal socio-demographic characteristics
 - Residents' attitudes
 8. Local perceptions of national or events in other communities will also influence cohesion. Therefore at the heart of any attempt to build or improve cohesion will be the necessity to influence attitudes and behaviours.
 9. 'Material' considerations such as employment, income, health, education and housing allocations have a major impact on people's life chances. The Council and its partners work to ensure that basic needs are met. However, deprivation promotes competition for limited public resources and creates divides where people perceive someone from a different group is getting special treatment. It is crucial then that people have trust in institutions to act fairly and feeling able to influence local decisions is a strong positive indicator for cohesion.
 10. Tackling material considerations alone will not achieve cohesion where there is a lack of respect for social, cultural and religious differences. The Council has a **duty to promote good relations** between groups and the actions identified within a variety of strategies and plans across the Authority and partners contribute to and underpin this goal. For example the work of the Dudley Borough Interfaith Network in bringing together people of different faiths aims to achieve mutual understanding and respect between religions, without undermining the distinctiveness of the different traditions.
 11. The existence of the Far Right in the borough is not a new phenomenon and given that the EDL have stated that they will be returning in July 2010, there is considerable concern about the potential impact this will have on cohesion in the Borough. The costs to business, the Council and its partners are also of concern. A wide variety of actions will be undertaken in order to:
 - ensure that law and order is maintained during these protests
 - that local people are reassured and safe
 - that minimum disruption is caused to businesses in Dudley Town

⁴ Analysis of the Citizenship Survey, by Laurence and Heath (2008)

- relationships between groups are strengthened to withstand attempts to bring division and disharmony between people
12. In view of the above in order to achieve cohesion the need to address multiple issues simultaneously is clear.

Information about Cohesion

13. It is recognised that community cohesion is particularly difficult to measure and, although the government has identified a number of general performance indicators work continues on developing improved ways of doing this, both nationally and locally.
14. In Dudley NI 1 '**Percentage of People from different backgrounds who believe they get on well together in their local area**' is the chosen indicator within the New Generation Local Area Agreement. This is measured by the Place survey. Performance to date is set out below:

NI 1	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Target		75.2%	78.2
Actual Performance	72.4%		

15. The tables below illustrate Dudley's performance in context with all other England authorities and Metropolitan Borough Councils (Mets). The latter is thought to be a better way of comparison as metropolitan districts are more demographically similar.
16. Whilst Dudley appears in the bottom quartile nationally, it is within the second quartile amongst the 36 Mets, marginally above the median of 72.2%. The following table details the borders of the quartiles.

	Score	Percentiles			Quartile
		25 (lowest)	50 (median)	75 (highest)	
Dudley MBC Place Survey Scores compared with England Mets (where 1st is good performance)	72.4	66.8	72.1	74.6	2nd
Dudley MBC Scores compared with 152 Unitary Authorities, Metropolitan Borough Councils, London Boroughs and County Councils	72.4	72.5	76.4	80.1	4th

17. Black Country Comparisons

Dudley 72.4%, Sandwell 64.8%, Walsall 70.9%, Wolverhampton 74.5%

Other indicators which relate to cohesion are shown in the chart below.

NI004 % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality			
Target	Not set		Not set
Actual Performance	26.5%		
NI005 Overall/general satisfaction with local area	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Target	Not set		Not set
Actual Performance	77.3%		
NI006 Participation in regular volunteering			
Target	Not set		Not set
Actual Performance	16.8%		
NI007 Environment for a thriving third sector			
Target	14.0%		17.6%
Actual Performance	13.4%		
NI035 Building resilience to violent extremism			
Target			3.75
Actual Performance	2.2%	2.8	

18. 'Feeling the Difference' is a West Midlands Police Survey in which amongst other things people are asked whether they feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously. Agreement with this statement was highest in Coventry, Sandwell and Wolverhampton (95%) and lowest in Dudley (92%). This question ceased to be a KPI as of 2009/10.

19. The situation in Dudley as set out in the original strategy remains broadly the same in that communities in the borough appear stable, with strong local bonds and associations⁵ and that overall Dudley offers a high standard of well being though clearly the current national economic situation presents difficulties at local level.

20. In terms of ethnicity statistics gathered from the mid term analysis show little difference from those gained from the 2001 Census. For example in 2001 93.6% of people living in the borough were white, in 2007 that figure was 91.3%. Black & minority ethnic groups made up 6.3% of the total population in 2001 and in 2007 accounted for just 8.7% of the population⁶.

21. It remains the case that although the percentage of the population from black and minority ethnic groups is low for the borough as a whole there are small areas where the concentration of specific groups is much higher. Nationally there has been some controversy about why some groups cluster in certain areas. Research indicates that rather than groups becoming 'self segregating' people usually gravitate to certain areas because they are employed in specific industries (so for example, in the Lye area people from Pakistan were recruited by local industries in the 1950s and 60s to work in local factories. Research also indicates that people, especially with growing young families don't have the means to move out of a particular area and that of fears of racism are also a factor in people wishing to remain close to family and friends⁷.

22. Results of the Place survey in respect of NI 1 show that there is significant difference between results in different wards and between the periods 2006 to 2008 (see chart below) some wards have seen an increase in those agreeing that they get on well with people from different backgrounds in the locality whilst others have seen a deteriorating picture⁸. However, it is difficult to ascertain the causes of these changes since the numbers once broken down to ward level are relatively small.

⁵ At the BME Community Consultation Event in November 2008 attendees agreed that there was a general feeling of harmonious relationships in the Borough

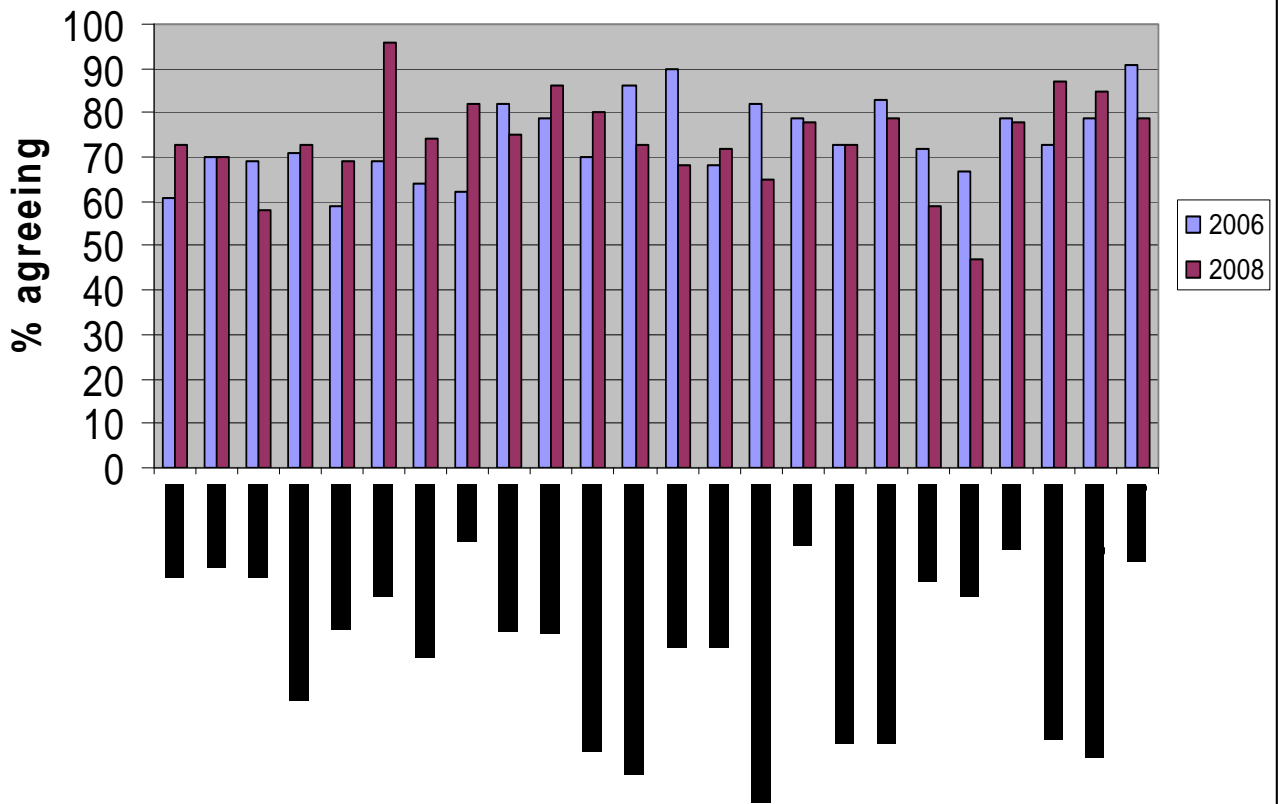
⁶ Source: Mid year population estimates by ethnic group from ONS

⁷ Ludi Simpson University of Manchester researched the notion of Muslims self-segregating themselves looking particularly at Bradford his research demonstrated that it was other factors at work i.e employment, estate agents selecting properties to offer, policies of local government, people fearing racism

⁸ Extract from Ipsos Mori Report

'The highest level of agreement concerning this issue is found among the residents of Dudley North (85% compared with 73% overall). The residents of Dudley Central registered greatest levels of disagreement (38% compared with 27% overall).'

NI1 Comparison between 2006 and 2008



23. In terms of perceptions in local areas these are often closely related to the characteristics of the population. National evidence shows that there is a very strong relationship between feelings of cohesion and qualification levels. This does not prove that one causes the other but the evidence does seem to show that there is a strong correlation⁹.
24. The work of the Strategic Research and Intelligence Team provides comprehensive demographic, socio-economic and geographical analysis of the borough and helps to enhance our understanding of underlying issues and trends.
25. Allied to this is a new means to identify vulnerable communities the 'Vulnerable Localities Index' (VLI). This was developed by the Jill Dando Institute in order to help identify priority areas for attention. The VLI is a

⁹ Article from Local Government Chronicle, 'Changing Perceptions' by Bobby Duffy 9th July 2009 looking at results from IPSOS Mori 's analysis of local authorities Place Survey 2. He maintains that the perceptions of the local quality of life can be predicted very accurately without the need for surveys from only five basic characteristics of the local population. These are:

- The proportion with degrees
- The proportion who are under-occupying their homes
- The deprivation level
- The proportion aged under 21
- The region concerned

composite measure that includes a wide variety of indicators around deprivation, anti-social behaviour, disorder, socio economic conditions and demographic characteristics in order to identify neighbourhoods most in need. The six indicators chosen in Dudley are:

- two crime-based (burglary dwelling and criminal damage to a dwelling)
- two deprivation variables (income and employment)
- Educational attainment
- The population of young people

26. Using the VLI those neighbourhoods deemed in most need at the time of writing this refresh of the strategy (October, 09) are:

- Wren's Nest Estate (Castle and Priory ward)
- Dixon's Green, Blowers Green and Kate's Hill (St Thomas' Ward)
- Lye (Lye & Wollescote ward)

27. Clearly, any measure that is based on statistics is partial and in order to interpret the issues that exist in neighbourhoods, qualitative information must overlay this. The work of Community Renewal, Neighbourhood Policing Teams, Dosti and many other agencies and groups have a wealth of qualitative information which is crucial to analysis and gaining a real understanding of what is happening locally. It is crucial then that effective communication and information sharing is ongoing.

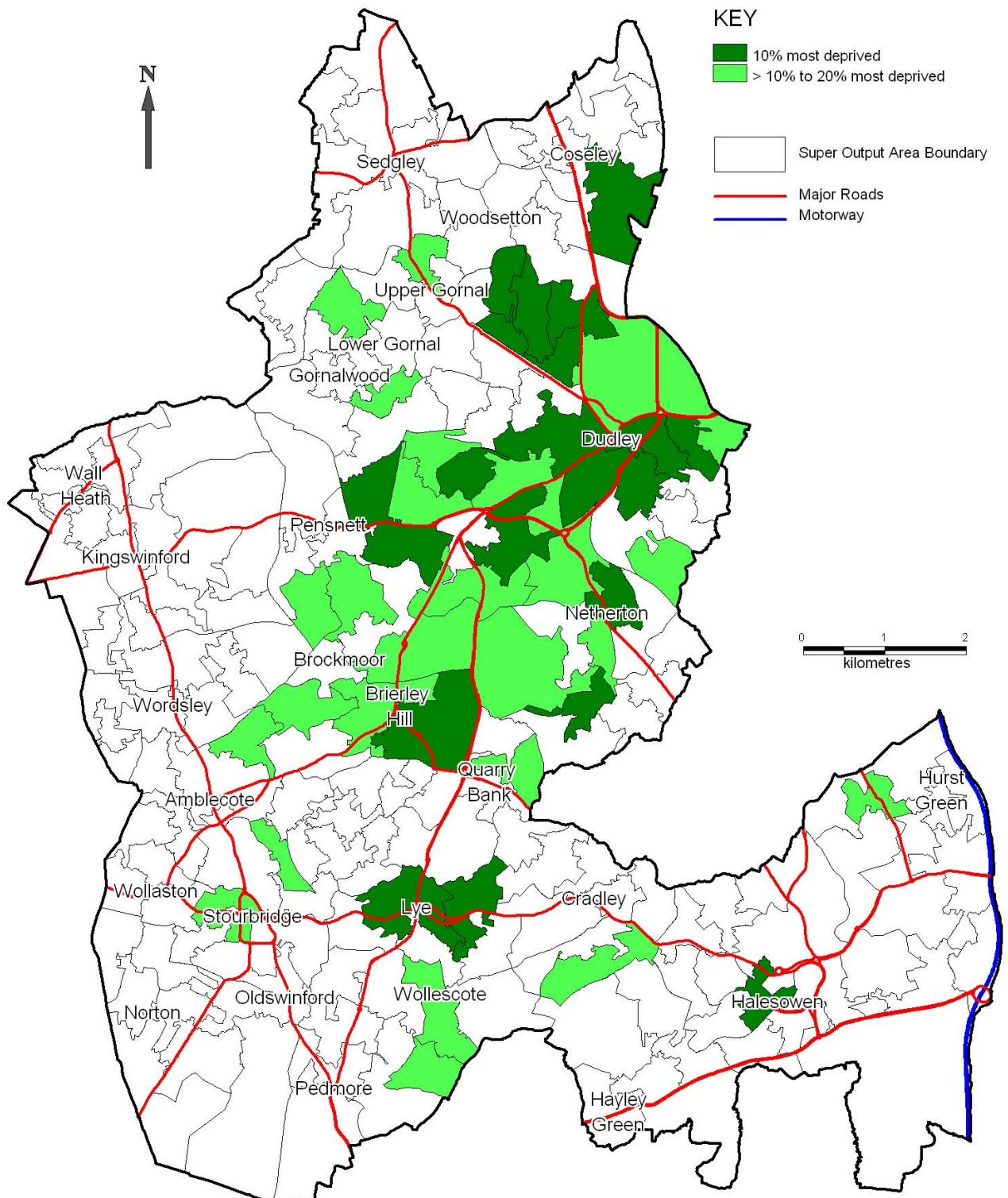
Key Influences

a) Equality and Disadvantage

28. The original Community Cohesion Strategy noted that the experience of disadvantage is not consistent across residents and that there are a number of wards where there is significant deprivation. The Commission on Integration and Cohesion identified deprivation as a key influencer of cohesion, but also noted that some areas have high deprivation and high cohesion, and that local action can build resilience to its effects.

29. The map below shows those areas within the borough which were the most deprived in 2007.

Super Output Areas in the 20% Most Deprived in England, Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007, Dudley Borough



Source: Index of Deprivation 2007

Produced by: NL, 07/12/2007, Strategic Research & Intelligence Team, Dudley M.B.C.

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30. Dudley's Community Strategy has made a commitment to promoting equality, tackling inequality and improving the life of all people living and working in the borough.
31. The Council's '**Equality and Diversity policy**' provides the overall framework for meeting its commitment to promoting equality and diversity and recognises the need to tackle discrimination and to promote equality between different groups in the community whilst also addressing the diverse needs of individuals. The policy covers the Council's own employment policies and practices, the provision of services and its wider community leadership role. This is supported by the Council's Equality Scheme which covers age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and transgender equality.
32. A number of activities included within the NI1 (Community Cohesion) action plan contribute to trying to address inequality. However, it is recognised that further work in this area needs to be undertaken and also that the economic recession is likely to add to existing concerns.

b) The Local Economy

33. Although the depth and duration of the current recession can not be predicted, figures show that job vacancies fell by 27.3% in the West Midland Region during the period January to March 09 compared with the same period in 2008. In the Black Country this figure increased to 27.5% whilst the national average was 24.1%. This means that the Black Country is one of the worst hit areas of the country. Young people in particular have been hard hit. In Dudley from January 2008 to January 2009, there was a 51.9% (6,148 to 9,342) increase in Jobseekers' Allowance claimants. Through the Future Jobs Fund, 203 training opportunities will be created between October 09 and March 2010. The Future Skills and Employment Team will provide training for young people aged 18 to 24 and for adults living in 'unemployment hotspot' areas.
34. Over the past ten years, the borough has consistently had the highest number of VAT registered businesses compared with other metropolitan areas in the Black Country. A Strategic group '**Dudley Means Business**' chaired by the Chief Executive works with a wide variety of partners to ensure that help and advice is available to individuals and businesses in the current economic downturn. See the dedicated website for further information: <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/business/dudley-means-business>

c) Integration of new migrants and existing communities

35. The link between migration and cohesion is not a simple one. Government research has shown that in many cases increased diversity is a positive predictor of cohesion once levels of deprivation and other factors have been

accounted for.¹⁰ The Commission identified rapid changes in some areas and the increasing complexity of identities in Britain; they reasoned that there is a need for a much greater sense of shared futures and mutual interdependence, rather than the trend towards a society defined strongly in terms of competing separate group identities. A chart below gives information from the Office for National Statistics for international migration into the Borough over a six-year period:

International migration mid year figs	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
In	680	720	810	770	630	650
Out	730	630	1,370	470	510	850
Net	-50	90	-560	300	120	-200

Source: Office for National Statistics International Passenger Survey

As part of the Connecting Communities Programme work is being undertaken by Housing Options to establish a baseline of Castle and Priory residents' perceptions of housing allocations. Once the results are known there will be a programme of work undertaken to address any issues and a further survey to evaluate the outcomes. This work is a pilot and if successful will be rolled out to the rest of the borough.

36. The Borough's citizenship provision has been positively received to date and potential improvements are being considered by inviting Primary schools to take part in the ceremonies held at Priory Hall. Work is also being undertaken to add local information to the welcome packs provided by the Home Office.
37. The Commission identified a series of barriers to integration including the lack of language or employment skills and difficulties accessing English classes to meet migrants' needs. There is also a need for this service from those established communities where people have lived in the borough for a number of years. Feedback from consultation shows that this remains an issue particularly for older Asian women and has significant impact, for example in respect of access to health care. Adult learning provision including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) has been recognised not only addressing the needs of individuals but having a wider value "for the physical, intellectual and emotional well being of our society and for community cohesion". In Dudley the Adult and Community Team provide a wide range of adult education including language skills, cultural awareness sessions, family learning, IT and craft. These courses allow people to gain skills and integrate more fully into their locality.

¹⁰ Government Response to Commission on Integration and Cohesion p 27

38. The government have recently outlined a new approach to ESOL allowing local authorities to have more say over who has priority for funding. From September 2009 the government expects all local authorities to be working in identifying currently excluded groups.
39. A four strand Impact Framework is used to plan provision in the borough this aims to:
 - Promote individual wellbeing and personal enrichment;
 - Strengthen Communities
 - Support Families:
 - Enhance Employment Prospects.
40. Appropriate partnership arrangements are currently being considered in order to ensure strategic co-ordination of ESOL provision across the borough.

d) Youth Provision

41. The ways in which young people relate to each other and engage with the wider community are important factors in determining whether communities are cohesive or otherwise.
42. Young people make up almost a quarter of the people population in Dudley (The total population from the 2007 mid year estimate was 305,400 of this 74,100 were children and young people aged between 0 and 19).

The 2001 census findings showed that:

- 88.5% of children and young people living in the borough are white British
 - The age profile of the black and ethnic minority population is much younger than the white population, especially within the mixed categories.
 - 1,179 children and young people provide unpaid care to family members or friends. Of these, 20 come from the 5 – 7 age group.
43. It is clear that young people's experience at school will be one key element in helping them shape their understanding of the world and their place within it.
 44. All maintained schools are required to 'promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and of society, and prepare pupils at school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'.¹¹ Schools also have a duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups.¹²

¹¹ Education Act, 2002, Section 78

¹² Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

45. From September 2007 schools have also had a duty to promote community cohesion¹³ and their compliance is reported through Ofsted inspections. In Dudley all schools have been provided with policy advice and guidance on their responsibilities. This is built into their primary strategic planning document on equality and diversity: 'Dudley Schools Single Equality Plan'. The plan is supported by written guidance. Further guidance has been presented to schools and a range of support activities have taken place and are ongoing. These include regular training sessions for senior school staff and a range of governor training initiatives. Some schools have bought in extra training from the LA and elsewhere.
46. Training around the SEAL (social and emotional aspects of learning) initiative has been undertaken by Dudley MBC and in some instances by specialist consultants commissioned by the Council. Some 90% of primary schools and three quarters of secondary schools are actively involved in the implementation of SEAL. Integral to the SEAL approach is 'peaceful problem solving' (conflict resolution). Schools will need to adopt SEAL as a school wide initiative in order to fully impact on community cohesion.
47. Evidence of the success of SEAL is measured through a self-evaluation framework, so that a reduction of poor behaviour including racist and bullying incidents, improved attendance and attainment should result.
48. **Dudley Children's Trust** has led the development of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). The Children's Trust is a multi-agency partnership including partners in the public and voluntary and community sectors. Its vision is for all children and young people in Dudley to be happy, healthy and fulfilled. Their work undoubtedly impacts on community cohesion.
49. The Children's Trust leads the Targeted Youth Support Plan. The Plan sets out how Dudley's reforms to target youth support are intended to improve the range and coherence of services that support **vulnerable** young people in their pivotal teenage years.
50. Effective Targeted Youth Support helps build vulnerable young people's resilience to risk factors and can help avert and address a range of problems, including:
- Youth offending/anti-social behaviour
 - Drug or alcohol misuse
 - Under 18 conceptions and poor sexual health
 - Poor outcomes for teenage parents and their children
 - 16 – 18 year olds not in education, employment and training (NEETS)
 - low attainment
 - running away and youth homeless
 - poor mental health
 - entry into care

¹³ The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002 introducing a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion.

51. Integrated Youth Support covers four key elements including:

- Targeted Youth Support
- Community and Volunteering
- Information, Advice and Guidance
- Positive Activities

52. A wide range of targeted youth support is delivered to the Five Dudley townships. The CYPP sets out 14 key priorities for all partners working with children, young people, parents and carers. These include:

- Raise standards and improve outcomes for children in care
- Support children and young people to enjoy growing up in Dudley and to acquire the skills to live successful lives
- Support children, young people and families to make a positive contribution to their communities and the environment
- Support children and young people to achieve economic and social well being
- Narrow the gaps between the performance and outcomes achieved by under performing and under privileged groups in Dudley and the national average.

53. **Further Education and Sixth Form colleges**

Work in Colleges has been ongoing to produce action plans for the promotion of Community Cohesion and Preventing Violent Extremism. For example, over the last year Dudley College formed a working party including directors from each area of the college and other partners including the Police to consult on and deliver outcomes set out within 'The Learning together to be safe' toolkit produced by the Association of Colleges. This guidance identifies ways in which colleges can play a more active role in furthering cohesion building on work already ongoing in Colleges for example around:

- Promoting the Every Child Matters outcomes for all students
- Promoting student well-being, equalities and community cohesion
- Building the resilience of the college, working with partners, to prevent students becoming the victims or causes of harm
- Working with other agencies and building community networks of support for the college

Practical advice is given to colleges in five areas which are:

- Understanding the issues
- Leadership and values
- Teaching, learning and the curriculum
- Student support and challenge
- Managing risk and responding to events

Along with the Colleges the Local authority and partners will continue to look for opportunities to promote cohesion and build resilience to violent extremism.

Youth Offending Service (YOS)

54. The Youth Offending Service works on a multi agency basis with children and young people between the age of 10 -17(sometimes beyond 17 if they have been sentenced close to that age and their sentence carries them over their 18th birthday) who have committed one or more criminal offences. Referrals come from either the Police or through the Courts. YOS work with young people who have committed a range of offences including racially aggravated/motivated offences. Evidence shows that some of the young people who come to the services as offenders have themselves been victims of crime or harassment because of their cultural background.
55. One of the national indicators is to monitor "disproportionality" this means that the service monitors the representation of young people from minority ethnic backgrounds to identifying if they are over represented within the different layers of the criminal justice system. Currently figures suggest that young Black/Black British boys are over represented in the system within Dudley. However, this a reducing figure, numbers are very small and do not represent a statistical significance. Research is being undertaken currently across the West Midlands Region to identify key issues. The service also provides targeted groups to support particular minority groups, for example Asian young men.
56. Although there is no apparent clear and present threat of violent extremism in Dudley, we are not immune from the potential for this to develop and the next section outlines measures to combat such a threat.

e) Community Cohesion and Safety

57. Good community relations cannot simply be taken for granted or left to chance and identifying tensions at an early stage is vital in order to prevent escalation, reduce conflict and avoid undermining community cohesion.
58. Ideally, it is preferable to prevent tensions arising in the first place and mainstream community cohesion work is essential in moving towards this goal.
59. The Department for Communities and Local Government require local authorities and partners to report tensions monthly to regional government offices. Local Authorities are required to put in place a framework for managing community tensions. The Authority and its partners must have in place plans to address:
- Fears in the local community/local agencies
 - Evidence of preparation for disorder
 - Hostilities (between and within groups)
 - Serious offences committed – hate crime
60. In Dudley the definition of tension is:

“A situation arising from acts or events that cause Dudley people to feel negative towards one another and/or services provided, putting at risk public order or threatening the peace and stability of local communities.”

61. Dudley’s approach has received national recognition as good practice and covers two key areas:

1. Critical incident management which is contained in the ‘Dudley Borough Community Cohesion Contingency Plan’

- Enables the partnership to plan for, react and communicate effectively during community tension that has been assessed as critical.

2. Proactive management of community tensions, including day-to-day activities and developing community cohesion

- To identify any issues that may give rise to tensions early and to take appropriate actions to avoid or diffuse those tensions.

62. The overall community tension risk in Dudley Borough since recording began has been assessed as low. However, there is a potential for heightened tension give the English Defence League’s intention to return to Dudley (see page 5).

f) The Building Resilience Programme

63. The Community Cohesion and Tension Monitoring Executive (see under Partnership Governance below for further explanation) oversees The Building Resilience Programme, which covers a wide variety of activities incorporating work to stop people becoming or supporting violent extremists. In Dudley the National Indicator chosen to report against for this area of work is NI 35, Building Resilience to Violent Extremism.

64. The focus of this programme is to work directly with local communities to:

- challenge the ideology behind violent extremism, and support mainstream voices
- disrupt those who promote violent extremism
- support people who are vulnerable to being recruited by terrorists
- help communities who could be targeted by terrorist groups
- address the issues that fuel extremism

65. This work contributes to cohesion by creating an environment for people where they can live in safety; it protects the vulnerable and helps to limit harmful behaviours. All violent extremism is addressed within this programme which does not exclusively target Al-Qaeda inspired ideology but also for example, that of the far right. Partnership activity focuses on identifying where violent extremism may manifest in the borough and takes appropriate actions to deal with such activities.

Partnership Governance

- 66. The Dudley Community Partnership (DCP)** brings together many partner organisations including health, the police and the council, with businesses and the voluntary and community sector. An overall strategy has been developed by the DCP and sets out the vision for the borough up to 2020.
- 67. The Safe and Sound Partnership (SSP)** is the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, which works towards enhancing community cohesion, by:
1. Building upon the PACT meetings across the borough to engage all local communities in making local neighbourhoods safer
 2. Targeting hate crime to ensure that all local communities are protected from crime and anti-social behaviour
- ii. **The Community Cohesion and Tension Monitoring Executive** provides a strategic multi-agency lead with a remit to:
- understand local community dynamics and identify potential or actual tensions
 - support and promote community cohesion
 - minimise the potential negative affects of tension, prevent escalation and reduce conflict
 - consider and plan interventions – short, medium, and long term
 - Inform and support the management of critical incidents
- iii. The rationale and process for tension monitoring together with its relationship to community cohesion is outlined in more detail at page 13.
- 68.** This Community Cohesion Strategy sits within the framework of other strategies and plans shown at Appendix II.

2007 Community Cohesion Strategy: Achievements to date:

- The Community Cohesion and Tension Monitoring Executive provides a strategic multi-agency lead, which meets on a regular basis to maintain an understanding of tension levels in the Borough (this model has been recognised nationally as an exemplar).
- Developed existing information sharing protocols in order to gain information in respect of community tensions – to date the overall level of tension within the borough has been assessed as low.
- Considered and planned interventions which have reduced and or resolved tensions within the borough.

- The formation of the **Faith Leaders' Network (FLN)**¹⁴ brings together faith leaders and leaders from the statutory and voluntary sectors for the purpose of interacting, challenging and influencing each other, local strategy and policy and the wider community. Building trust and enhancing understanding between faith communities. It aims to focus on practical issues. For example, the network has agreed that a series of recession focused events will be developed. These events will also provide practical advice and support to local people, whilst providing the opportunity for the faith groups involved showcasing their services, and providing a pastoral/chaplaincy style support where accepted.
- Dudley, as part of the City Region has secured £1million of funding for training for unemployed young people and adults which will provide a six-month programme for young people aged 18 to 24 and to some adults. The programme creates placement opportunities and implicit in this is that those attending will gain skills to help them to secure employment. The work is focussed in priority wards where unemployment and deprivation levels are highest.
- Volunteering activities have been identified as a key way in which to provide people from different backgrounds with shared goals to foster meaningful interaction. Dudley Council for Voluntary Service is supported by the Council and acts as an umbrella body for the community and voluntary sector in the borough. It promotes effective voluntary action by promoting voluntary activity, recruiting volunteers and referring them to relevant organisations. Over the last year.....(Caroline Webb is sending me the figs)
- The Kashmir Youth Forum provides an example of voluntary activity within the borough. The forum works with young people to provide positive sporting activities and to bring all cultures together with the aim of building good relations and bringing communities together. The Forum has recently launched its own 'You Tube' page.
- Updated the Key Individual Network (KIN) this represents a development of the Community Contacts List and represents an important mechanism for community engagement. Key individuals who have been identified within the community and who form the network can comment on the impact and effectiveness of strategies and tactics being adopted. They give advice and feedback on specific issues; discuss issues that may have implications for trust and confidence in local services and advise about changes in community tension.

¹⁴ The FLN is a constitutional part of the Dudley Borough Interfaith Network and brings together faith leaders and strategic leaders from the statutory sector for the purpose of interacting, challenging and influencing each other, local strategy and policy and the wider community through joint events, engagement and widening awareness. The network's official launch is scheduled for autumn 2009.

- Ongoing support for the work undertaken within the Building Resilience Programme (formerly PREVENT) including the Channel Project and Partnership Resilience events.
- The annual BME Community Consultation Events are held in order to :
 - empower communities, informing them about services available to them
 - Build quality networks, strengthening partnerships with the community and service providers
 - Consulting with communities by engaging in a dialogue about the services and the needs of communities.

The 2008 event was held in the market place and has been judged as being very successful. Feedback from workshops indicated that attendees felt that the event was well organised. A wide variety of issues were covered and recommendations taken forward. For example, engagement with the young was though to be key and less likely through traditional routes.

- This year's BME Consultation Event took place on November 14th 2009. People attending were able to choose to attend workshops on Health topics, safeguarding or a workshop specifically for women. The event attracted 280 people and demonstrated the commitment from Dudley's BME communities to work with the council and their appreciation of services provided. Both young as well as more mature people attended giving a good range of views.
- A 'question time' event for young people took place in March 2009 with over 100 attendees. The panel included the Major, MP for Dudley North, and Dudley Council's Chief Executive who answered questions from the floor and took forward issues raised for further action where necessary.
- Contributed to the Muslim Women's Network conference which took place in May 2009 with over 400 women attending, this was a highly successful event.
- Contributed to Radio Ramadan, providing speakers and interviewees. In particular Citizenship programmes were broadcast in 2009 including:
 - Discussions on Jihad, Forced Marriage
 - Interviews with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive
- Additional funding was made available by DCP for informal English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training. The training includes language skills and cultural awareness sessions, enabling those who do not necessarily wish to take formal qualifications to gain these skills and integrate more fully into their locality.
- A Private Sector property condition survey was undertaken in 2008 and identified that the worst properties were being occupied by the most vulnerable in society. To address this a Landlord and property

accreditation scheme has been developed to provide training for landlords to ensure that they are aware of their obligations.

- In addition to the above, funding has been secured to provide a private sector tenancy sustainment team. The team provides support to tenants including improving cohesion and working to prevent tension in communities. Help and support is provided to vulnerable groups and individuals for example migrant workers.
- Development of equality pages in the Council website including a diversity calendar and details of community events.
- A campaign to promote the substantial amount of work going on in the borough aiming to encourage mutual respect and understanding between different generations was undertaken in summer 2009. This work is lead by the **Intergenerational Themed action Group**.
- Communications play a key role in ensuring that the public get timely and reliable information and that any 'myths' either do not arise or are countered effectively. In 2009 Dudley Council took part in research by the Institute of Community Cohesion. This report made a number of recommendations, which are included within the action plan at Appendix III.
- In October, 2009 the Children's Charity Barnados ran an anti-racism youth football tournament. Children and young people from a wide variety of backgrounds will be involved.
- In Dudley the number of Police recorded hate crimes in 2008/09 was 176 with a detection rate of 35.8%. The detection rate target for the West Midland Police Service is 37%. We will work with our partners to tackle hate crime in all its forms, by supporting victims and taking robust enforcement action against perpetrators where appropriate.
- Black History Month in October 2009 provided opportunities for people to take part in events including reading stores and sharing the memories of those people who have moved to the West Midlands from other parts of the world. Events included an exhibition at Dudley archives on the life of George Cousens, the first black minister in the borough in the mid 19th century. There were also story telling sessions and steel band performances at the borough libraries and reminiscence workshops with Caribbean food and poetry at neighbourhood learning centres.
- In April 2010 the English Defence League¹⁵ came to Dudley, stating that they wished to oppose the new Central Mosque. All political groups on

¹⁵ EDL are a far right group who claim that their aim is to democratically and peacefully protest against Muslim extremism. They also claim to be multi ethnic and multi faith. However, the reality is that

Dudley Council opposed this visit. The Council, Police and other partners worked together to ensure the safety of local people and the Interfaith Network demonstrated solidarity by signing the Dudley Pledge. The group known as Unite Against Fascism came to Dudley to demonstrate their opposition to the EDL. On the day the UAF event was a peaceful celebration of multi-culturalism. Overall, the response of the partners was successful compared with similar events which have taken place throughout the country in that:

- It was the first occasion where the two groups have been sited at completely different locations
- No serious injuries were sustained and very few arrests were necessary
- There was highly positive inclusion of local groups in the preparation

69. A number of actions were also set out in the 2007 Community Cohesion Strategy. A chart at Appendix IV shows what progress has been made to date.

What we will do in 2009/2011

69. Four major objectives are included within the action plan at Appendix V. These are:

71. **Outcome 1: Identifying and removing tensions**
Outcome 2: Addressing Disadvantage
Outcome 3: Improving the capacity for groups to make active contributions to community cohesion
Outcome 4: Interaction to a common vision and to enhance understanding and build good relations

72. Our approach to achieving these objectives will be to:

- draw on National guidance and good practice from other localities where appropriate to Dudley's circumstances
- engage and work with a wide variety of public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations and the public
- draw on the experience of local people using existing mechanisms for engagement
- draw on a wide variety of research including quantitative and qualitative evidence
- strive to enhance accountability and transparency wherever possible

wherever they demonstrate there has been serious disorder and in many instances violence. Their behaviour is akin to football hooliganism.

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