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**BRIERLEY HILL AREA COMMITTEE – 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2007**

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

**DUDLEY LOCAL IMPROVEMENT FINANCE TRUST (LIFT)**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To inform the Area Committee of progress on the LIFT Scheme in Brierley Hill.

**Background**

2. As part of the NHS Plan published in 2000, funding was made available for investment in primary health care facilities. One of the funding methods available to Primary Care Trusts (PCT's) and Local is through a Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT).
3. The principle is similar to PFI or a Public Private Partnership with the private sector partner providing capital investment and facilities management through a joint venture company (LiftCo), which grants leased facilities to PCT's and/or Local Authorities for 20-25 years.
4. Dudley PCT obtained approval to create the Dudley LIFT in August 2002 and sought public sector partners to participate in this initiative.
5. The Council at its meeting on 20 January 2003, agreed the involvement of Dudley MBC on limited terms.
6. There were three initial schemes:
  - A learning disabilities assessment and treatment at Ridge Hill, that opened in October 2006;
  - A Health & Social Care Centre at Stourbridge (on the former Corbett Hospital site) that is expected to open in September 2007;
  - A Health & Social Care Centre at Brierley Hill on the former Brier's School Site. The Older People's Team and the district Housing Office will be co-located in the DACHS accommodation at the Brierley Hill Centre.
7. More recently, the PCT is considering new LIFT proposals for community health facilities at Colley Gate and Lye; these schemes have been reported to the

respective Area Committees but are at a very early stage of development. Public consultation is expected to start in the early autumn.

8. During early 2005 it became clear that there were a number of problems relating to the Brierley Hill scheme. In particular, the site required major re-remediation works owing to the presence of old mine workings. The cost of re-remediation could have made the project unaffordable.
9. The PCT and the Council worked closely with the Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership and Westfield plc, the owner of the land, on the preparation and submission of an application to Advantage West Midlands (AWM) for funds to remediate the site.
10. AWM gave approval for a grant of £5M, and the Strategic Health Authority finally approved the scheme in April 2007. The Council had previously secured the necessary approvals in December 2006.
11. To enable the Council to procure the development of the Brierley Hill Centre through LIFT Co, the Council had to enter into a Lease Plus Agreement for the accommodation it is going to lease from LIFT Co. This Agreement sets out the conditions agreed between the tenant (DMBC and the PCT) and the landlord (LIFT Co).
12. Cabinet also agreed at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December that the Council should enter into the Strategic Partnering Agreement by way of a Deed of Accession so that it becomes a member of the Strategic Partnering Board (SPB) of Dudley LIFT and can procure other schemes through LIFT Co, though it is not obliged to do so.
13. The legal agreements took some months to negotiate owing to the complexity of the issues. These issues included the negotiation of access to the LIFT site across the parallel route in Brierley Hill. Financial close was eventually achieved on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2007.
14. The annual lease cost of the scheme to DMBC will be £256,968.
15. Work on construction began at the end of June and the facility is expected to open in February 2010.
16. The new building will provide excellent office accommodation for 35 staff from the District Housing Office in Cottage Street and 45 staff from the Older People/Physical Disability Team (including Homecare) currently located at Cranham House, Tiled House and a porta-cabin at Cottage Street. DACHS staff will be co-located with GPs, community nurses, other health specialists, pharmacy etc, thus maximising the advantages of partnership working.

## **Law**

17. Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 enables the Council to do anything that it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the social, environmental, or economic well being of its area.
18. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to or incidental to, the discharge of its statutory functions.

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## **Equality Impact**

19. Integration of services and new or improved facilities will support equal access to services for people from different ethnic groups, disabled people and other groups, such as young people.

## **Recommendation**

20. It is recommended that the Area Committee notes that financial close of the Brierley Hill LIFT scheme has been achieved and that construction work is under way with a view to completion in February 2010.
21. A further updating report will be brought to Area Committee closer to the date of completion.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Sanders". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large loop at the beginning of the word "Linda".

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**Linda Sanders**  
**Director of Adult, Community & Housing Services**

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