

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

**Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 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 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2021 as a correct record.
6. Public Forum
7. Corporate Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 3 (1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020) (Pages 1 – 34)
8. Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Arrangements within the Council (Pages 35 – 72)
9. Social Value Policy for Dudley MBC – Consultation (Pages 73 – 84)
10. Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2020/21 (Pages 85 – 90)
11. 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: 10<sup>th</sup> March, 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.
- Members of the public can view the proceedings by clicking on the link provided on the agenda.
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- Confidential papers should be securely disposed of. If you choose to retain the documents you should ensure that the information is securely stored and destroyed within six months.
- 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 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2021 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:**

M Williams – Acting Deputy Chief Executive, C Blunn - Portfolio Partner, J Branch - Head Of Human Resources and Organisational Development and J Martin – HR Manager and A Paul - Corporate Operations Manager (Chief Executive's Directorate); J Catley – Head of Customer Services (Directorate of Commercial and Customer Services); I Newman – Director of Finance and Legal, S Beckett - Head of Revenue and Benefit Services, S Griffiths – Democratic Services Manager and K Taylor – Democratic Services Officer (Directorate of Finance and Legal); J Black – Public Health Manager (Directorate of Health and Wellbeing).

**Also in Attendance:**

Councillor S Clark – observing in his capacity as Cabinet Member for Finance and Legal  
Councillor S Phipps – observing in his capacity as Cabinet Member for Commercial and Customer Services.

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20     **Declarations of Interest**

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

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21     **Minutes**

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2020, be approved as a correct record and signed.

## **Medium Term Financial Strategy**

A joint report of the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Legal and Acting Deputy Chief Executive was submitted on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2023/24, with emphasis on those proposals relating to the Committee's terms of reference. Items directly relevant to this Committee were those in relation to the Chief Executive, Finance and Legal and Commercial and Customer Services.

In presenting the report submitted, the Director of Finance and Legal gave an overview of the report, and in doing so, stated that the budget had been developed around unprecedented uncertainty caused by COVID-19, and that the financial position continued to change. The final version of the report would be considered by the Cabinet in February and Council in March 2021.

The Government continued to award additional funding to Local Authorities in response to COVID-19, and a further £5.1m of Contained Outbreak Management Funding was expected over and above the amount that was reflected in Appendix A of the report submitted.

The Director of Finance and Legal confirmed that following receipt of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22, the budget was forecasted to be better than expected, in that resources would be £263m rather than the predicted £259m. However, further spending pressures were expected in Adult Social Care and Children's Services which would be reflected in the final report.

In summary, it was recognised that in the short term the Council had received significant funding to support the response to COVID-19 and therefore reserves were better than expected. However, given the Council's underlining position as a low taxing and low spending Local Authority, there remained challenges to financial sustainability that needed to be addressed in the long term.

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

- In responding to a question by the Chair, it was confirmed that there were two levels of qualified opinion on Value for Money that could be issued by the External Auditors: namely, an adverse qualified opinion or an "except for" opinion (with the latter being less severe). The External Auditors originally intended in September to issue an adverse opinion, but reduced this to an "except for" opinion in light of improvements in forecasts. However, concerns remained to the Councils future financial sustainability.

The Director of Finance and Legal further stated that in the long term, the low levels of income generated by the Council could not meet the level of spend, therefore in recognising that spend was low, the Auditors suggested the need to increase Council Tax rates to be closer to the average level.



- It was also noted that referendum limits on Council Tax rises had been extended which allowed Local Authorities to increase Council Tax rates to 4.99% without triggering a referendum, if needed.
- In responding to a question by a Member, the Director of Finance and Legal confirmed that as a result of the positive financial response from Government in relation to additional funding awarded to Local Authorities, Dudley's reserves were higher than anticipated. It was further noted that the Accountancy Team were providing updates to Government on a monthly basis, and any grants that were made available were automatically applied on a regular basis.
- It was noted that spending pressures identified within the Directorate of Commercial and Customer Services in relation to software contracts related predominately to upgrades to corporate systems such as Microsoft. Individual bespoke software programmes that were service based were funded by the respective Directorate.
- A Member referred to the changes in the way the Council operated arising from the pandemic, in particular home working and queried whether there had been a significant financial pressure in ensuring employees were resourced with the correct equipment, and whether it could result in savings going forward.

The Acting Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that £800,000 had been invested in laptops, and that COVID-19 had 'fast-tracked' the Councils long term ambition to enable more agile working. It was further noted that the report included proposed savings from rationalisation of estates and buildings.

- The possibility of providing local facilities to enable employees to work remotely near to their homes was suggested. The Acting Deputy Chief Executive stated that three emerging areas were evident for the Council, namely, workforce, estate and technology, and that focus would be given to adapting existing facilities to enable and encourage agile working. It was recognised that a healthy balance was needed and the possibility of utilising libraries and community centres could be explored further.
- A Member, although acknowledging comments made, raised concerns of the potential impact to local businesses in town centres as a result of an increase of people working from home, and subsequent reduction in footfall. In responding the Acting Deputy Chief Executive agreed with the comments made and suggested that a balance was needed in order to consider local economy and the benefits to employees working remotely. It was also suggested that the adoption of the agile working policy would enable employees to return to the office and town centres when required.
- In responding to a question raised by a Member, the Director of Finance and Legal undertook to provide additional information on the proposed savings in relation to the restructure of Mental Health Team and efficiencies from exit of the Section 75 agreement between 2022 and 2024.



- Concerns were raised in relation to the potential long-term impact to families, following redundancies, and the local economy changes in view of the increased number of empty shops. Despite the additional funding allocated by Central Government, a number of families and businesses had not received any further financial support during the pandemic, and it was queried whether plans had been developed in relation to the costs involved going forward.

The Director of Finance and Legal confirmed that future budget forecasts recognised the potential sustained increased rates in unemployment and acknowledged that the recovery period following COVID-19 could be prolonged. It was therefore expected that more households would be eligible for Council Tax support. It was further noted that the current increase in applications were being managed effectively by the Revenue and Benefits Team, and allowances had been included in the budget accordingly, alongside sustainability of Business Rates income.

- In responding to concerns raised with regard to the wellbeing of residents arising from increased rent arrears, the Director of Finance and Legal confirmed that a report on the review of Housing Revenue Account would be considered by the Place Scrutiny Committee.
- A Member commented on the significant impact of COVID-19 to residents and communities and the subsequent pressures on local Food Banks.

### **Resolved**

That, subject to the points listed above, the proposals for the Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2023/24, as set out in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted be noted.

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

A report of the Director of Finance and Legal was submitted on the various elements of support provided by Dudley Council and an update on work specifically relating to COVID-19 and the work and future plans of the Corporate Welfare Reform Group.

In presenting the report submitted, the Head of Revenue and Benefit Services provided an overview of the report and statistical and financial information on the number of residents receiving help with council tax and housing costs. It was noted that an increase in unemployment rates during the COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in a surge of applications for Council Tax Reduction.



It was noted that demand for Discretionary Housing Payments had increased significantly in recent years following a number of welfare reform changes. It was noted that nearly £1m of discretionary housing payments had been awarded in the current financial year, which was predominately funded by Central Government but supplemented by the Housing Revenue Account by an additional £550k each year to accommodate demand.

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

- In responding to a question raised by a Member, the Head of Revenue and Benefits Services confirmed that prior to the lockdown, there had been a gradual increase in demand for Universal Credit in Dudley and managed effectively. However, it was evident that the number of working aged persons that were eligible for Universal Credit had increased significantly as a result of the pandemic. The Head of Revenue and Benefits Services undertook to provide statistical information to the Committee for information.
- It was noted that the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) scheme covered shortfalls between rental liability and payment of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit and used to support the most vulnerable customers in financial need. Discretionary Housing Payments were primarily used to assist claimants with rent and associated housing costs.
- In responding to a question by the Chair, the Head of Revenue and Benefits Services confirmed that regular discussions had been undertaken with Housing in relation to the increasing number of Universal Credit recipients and areas of concern including rent arrears, however it was understood that Dudley's Housing service were managing effectively.
- The Committee were informed that Universal Credit was predominately paid direct to recipients, however greater flexibility had been given under the housing benefit and universal credit rules, to enable payments to be made directly to Landlords. It was noted that this exception was being applied to more cases within Dudley.

The Head of Revenue and Benefit Services then provided an overview of work undertaken and financial support available associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, including Business Grants, Emergency Assistance Grants scheme and Isolation payments. The exceptional work undertaken by the Revenue and Benefits Team and the challenges faced during the pandemic, in addition to their regular duties, was acknowledged.





It was noted that since Spring, 2020, 5,000 business grants had been awarded totalling £60m during that period, and following the introduction of a revised grant scheme in November 2020, 2,600 grants had been awarded totalling £7.3m to date. 2,000 applications had been received in relation to the Emergency Assistance Grants scheme, with 800 awarded totalling £195k. With regard to Isolation Payments, 2,000 applications had been received to date with over 600 payments granted totalling £300k. The Committee was assured that each application received was assessed on an individual basis.

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

- In responding to a Member in relation to the Covid Winter Support Grant, in particular the difficulties faced in providing recipients with fuel vouchers, it was confirmed that discussions were being held with customers and meter companies to ensure all recipients would be awarded with vouchers for both food and fuel. Discussions were also being undertaken with the Citizens Advice Bureau and Family Centres to assist in evaluating needs and ensure that wrap around support was available.
- The Head of Revenue and Benefit Services commented on the eligibility criteria in relation to Isolation Payments, and the discretionary scheme applied by Dudley Council for those that were not entitled to the state benefits outlined in the criteria. Claimants for the discretionary payment would be required to provide evidence of low income and financial hardship as a result of self-isolating, which could be difficult in some cases. It was confirmed that Dudley had initially received Government funding to grant 171 awards, however this had since been increased.
- Reference was made to the Local Authority Additional Restrictions Grants Fund (ARG) implemented by Dudley for the allocation of grants to businesses, and that phase 2 was currently being finalised which focused on support to businesses that did not operate from a fixed business premises and did not pay business rates.
- In responding to comments made, concerns were raised on the ability and additional work asked of the Citizens Advice Bureau, and it was suggested that the Local Authority liaise with the Department for Work and Pensions regarding qualifying benefits that were being claimed.

The Public Health Manager confirmed that a pilot would be undertaken with Citizens Advice Bureau to establish whether it was successful and effective. It was also noted that grant relating to Covid Winter Support was due to expire at the end of March, 2021.



A Welfare Reform Group had been re-launched comprising representatives from across the Council including Finance, Housing, Children's Services, Adult Services and Public Health, focussing on the effects and impacts of welfare reform and other associated issues. A mitigating poverty project led by Public Health was also being considered together with collating efforts to make the journey to benefits awareness and claiming more straightforward and coordinated.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, expressed thanks for the level of commitment shown by officers in providing the pivotal service and support, arising from challenges faced by the pandemic. It was also suggested that an e-mail be circulated to all Elected Members outlining the process in claiming benefits and circulated amongst communities.

Following the information presented, the Committee also requested that the Cabinet consider additional staffing resources to accommodate the exponential increase in applications received and support required for Dudley residents.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the work undertaken to date, the ongoing work and planned future work be noted and supported.
- (2) That an Annual Report on Benefits be included on future Work Programmes for this Committee.
- (3) That the Head of Revenue and Benefits Services be requested to provide supplementary information on the number of recipients of Universal Credit in Dudley.
- (4) That the Head of Revenue and Benefit Services be requested to e-mail all Elected Members outlining the process in claiming benefits.
- (5) That the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, be requested to write a letter to the Revenue and Benefits Team in recognition of work undertaken.
- (6) That the appropriate decision taker be requested to consider allocating additional staffing resources to accommodate the exponential increase in applications received and support required for Dudley residents

### **Attendance Management**

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on the current sickness absence levels and the application of the Attendance Management Policy within the Directorates.

In presenting key information through presentation slides, the HR Manager provided statistical information in regard to sickness absence recorded between April 2020 and September, 2020, in particular that figures had significantly reduced in comparison to the previous year, with an average of 4.35 days lost per full time equivalent.

It was noted that the reasons for increased sickness absence were predominately relating to Work Related Stress, Mental Health, Cancer related and Bereavement, however Post Operation Recovery and general flu/cough/cold illnesses had decreased.

The Attendance Management Policy was revised from 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2018 with the introduction of attendance triggers as a management tool in highlighting and managing employees attendance, including, Bradford Factor Score, four weeks of continuous absence and identifying patterns or trends.

It was also reported that between October, 2019 and September, 2020, attendance triggers had been raised for 331 employees, 162 of which had no recorded actions by the line manager, together with 90% of return to work interviews completed.

Adjustments to the Attendance Management Policy had been applied in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in line with government guidance, including full pay to employees that were required to self-isolate, and absence recorded for COVID-19 would not be included in the assessment of absence triggers or targets. It was noted that 446 employees had been recorded as absent with COVID related symptoms and unable to work remotely. It was noted that 440 employees that were isolating were able to work remotely.

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

- In responding to a question regarding statistical data post September, 2020, the HR Manager confirmed that figures appeared to be increasing and in some cases, employees were experiencing implications from long-COVID. It was expected that an increase of Mental Health related absences would occur as a result of the difficulties experienced by employees during this period including home-schooling, bereavement and isolation.
- The Staff Counselling Service provided advice and support for employees on how to manage difficult situations particularly regarding stress and mental health during COVID-19 pandemic, together with a dedicated Dudley support phonenumber and an external phonenumber operated by the Mental Health Trust for support. It was reported that a large number of health and wellbeing sessions had been organised and accessed by employees.



- During consideration of Attendance Management at the Corporate Scrutiny Committee in 2019, it was apparent that further work was needed in developing communication between managers and HR. The HR Manager confirmed that communication had improved and regular reports identifying trends from managers had been submitted, however it was acknowledged that there had been some challenges during the pandemic.
- In responding to a question by a Member in relation to the high number of no recorded actions by the line manager where an attendance trigger had been met, the HR Manager acknowledged the concerns raised, however, it was evident that Managers had difficulty in addressing absence and employment contracts with employees during lockdown.
- In responding to a question by the Chair in relation to identifying employees that worked effectively and continue working remotely in the future, the HR Manager referred to an employee survey that had been undertaken during 2020, and undertook to share the results with the Committee for information.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, expressed thanks for the level of commitment shown by officers in providing pivotal support to managers during this challenging and unprecedented time.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the current sickness absence levels and the application of the Attendance Management Policy within the Directorate, be noted.
- (2) That the HR Manager be requested to share the results of the Employee Survey with the Committee for information.
- (3) That the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, be requested to write a letter to the Human Resources and Organisational Development Team in recognition of work undertaken.

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

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on the Quarter 2 Corporate Quarterly Performance report covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> September, 2020. Following a previous request, additional data relating to the percentage of agency social workers had been appended to the report submitted.



In presenting the quarter two performance report, the Portfolio Partner referred to the modified performance report, following suggestions made at a previous Committee, to include trend graphs, service exception reports and actions taken to improve future performance. Directorate Service Summary documents had also been appended to the report submitted, providing an overview of service delivery and achievements during the given quarter.

Following a review by an external assessor, the performance indicator in relation to procurement had been withdrawn, and with regard to the percentage of delayed transfers of care, arising from COVID-19, the National Health Service had temporarily ceased collection and publication of data.

The Portfolio Partner made particular reference to the fourteen performance indicators that were below target, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report submitted, and it was evident that the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact on services regardless of short-term trend. A detailed account of the performance indicators was provided at the meeting.

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

- The Chair expressed thanks for the work undertaken in developing the performance report and incorporating suggestions made by the Committee and suggested that the information presented should be shared with other Scrutiny Committees for their information. In responding to a question raised by the Chair, the Portfolio Partner stated that although heavily resourced, service areas were happy to continue with the detailed summary sheets should the Committee consider the information useful.
- Members commented positively on the revised format and the detailed summary sheets, and further acknowledged that although COVID-19 had affected services, it was evident that services continued to operate.

Following further discussion, and in light of the detailed performance data, it was agreed that the Portfolio Partner would present two or three service areas each quarter, and invite the respective Directors if needed.

## **Resolved**

That the Quarter 2 Corporate Quarterly Performance report covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> September, 2020, be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.15pm

CHAIR



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C/36

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## **Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

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

### **Corporate Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 3 (1st October 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020)**

#### **Purpose**

1. To present the Quarter 3 Corporate Quarterly Performance report of the financial year 2020/21 covering the period 1st October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

In addition, further data relating to directorate service delivery are included as appendices to the report. This quarter features Finance & Legal Services and Digital, Customer and Commercial Services.

#### **Recommendations**

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 3 Corporate Quarterly Performance report highlights performance for the financial period 2020/21 covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 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 the report, Directorate Service Summary Documents are included, these provide an overview of service delivery, achievements during the given quarter. The committee agreed at the last meeting this would reduce from 8 to 2 per quarter, therefore this quarter features Finance & Legal Services and Digital, Customer & Commercial Services.

## Performance Summary

4. Of the 33 KPI's to be monitored in Quarter 3, 16 are on target, 4 within tolerance and 13 are below target. Of the measures below target 5 have an improved short-term trend and 8 worsening, a breakdown of the 13 measures below target are detailed within the quarterly report (page 9).

The quarterly report also compares the latest performance against the previous financial year, (Qtr. 3 2019-20 comparing Q3. 2020/21) this provides a slightly different picture to the short-term trend above. Of the 27 measures that provide comparable data, 12 have improved, 2 remain consistent and 13 are showing a worsening trend compared to that of Qtr.3 2019-20. A breakdown of these measures can be found within the report (page 10).

The following provides a snapshot of some of the measures that are below target together with the respective exception report.

- **PI 2027 Satisfaction with the way your anti-social behaviour complaint was handled** (pg. 14)

This quarterly result represents all residents & shows 58 residents were satisfied out of 81 who responded to this question. Overall, 201 surveys were to be carried out for this quarter with 83 completed with a return rate of 41.3%. We are some way off target, but we continue to run the service during difficult times and with the slightest of increases put figures going the right way I draw positives from.

- **PI.1899 FP02 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings)** (pg. 15)

The rent loss is comparable to the previous quarter at 1.5%. and continues to be partly due to Covid-19 impacting on the reduction in lettings. Other reasons for rent loss in the Q3 period are (snapshot at end of Q3):

- Investment in sheltered housing = 75 units /£203,457.38 rent loss.
- Being used for decant = 11 properties/ £23,239.78 rent loss
- Stock Investment decision 37 Properties / £85,330.83 rent loss

- **PI 432 Number of children looked after (LAC) per 10,000 of the population** (pg. 19)

Fewer reunifications/adoptions took place due to Covid-19, because the courts would only prioritise certain meetings i.e. interim care orders. Therefore, figures have remained stable, with a slight rise to 91.2 compared to 90.9 end of Q2. This means tested special guardianship policy prevented foster carers and connected people to apply for permanent orders, these children remain in care longer.

- **PI.426 Timeliness of Single Assessments - % Completed Within 45 Working Days (Assessment service only)** (pg. 20)

We have seen a fall in timelessness of assessments since the adoption of Liquidlogic in November. However, there have been issues with the system in terms of categorisation of new assessments and reassessments so not fully

confident in this measure at this point. There is also an anomaly in the way that assessments are being recorded in the new system, which needs to be resolved as recording practice.

- **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 (pg.22)**

Performance is lower than normal and below target. In addition to the low number of clients with an learning disability on Liquidlogic Adults System (Main case management system in adults) due to incorrect Primary Support Reason being migrated/recorded, the number of clients with an accommodation type is also missing, this has therefore had a significant impact on performance.

It is evident to see the recent pandemic is still having an impact on services across the directorates regardless of short-term trend. The exception being (PI 426 & PI 2133) the implementation of the new Liquidlogic system impacts on the short-term trends in Q3. For a more detailed analysis please refer to their respective scorecards within the report.

Inclusive to the report Directorate Service Summary documents provide a detailed account of service delivery. (refer to the appendices within the performance report for further 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**

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 are no implications to consider in this report

### **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 Background Documents**

Corporate Quarterly Performance report – Quarter 3 (1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020) Briefing Summary



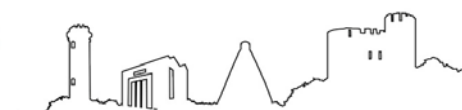
## Corporate quarterly performance management report **2020-2021**

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Quarter 3 (1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020)



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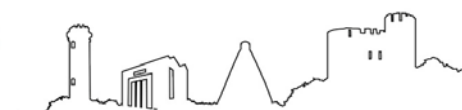
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## Section 1: Introduction

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This Quarterly Corporate Performance Management Report highlights performance for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> December. 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;

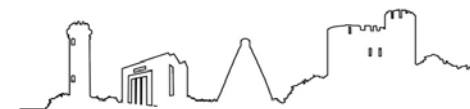
- ★ Where performance exceeds the target tolerance
- 🟡 Where performance is on target and in the upper half tolerance
- 🔴 Where performance is below the target tolerance

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



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## Section 2.1: Performance Summary

There is a total of 33 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 2 comparing Quarter 3)

**Overview:** Quarter 3 reported performance indicators

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

### Performance Indicators status

(see Chart 1)

★ 16

Exceeds target

● 4

On target upper tolerance

▲ 13

Below target

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

### Short term trend status

(see Chart 2)

↗ 15

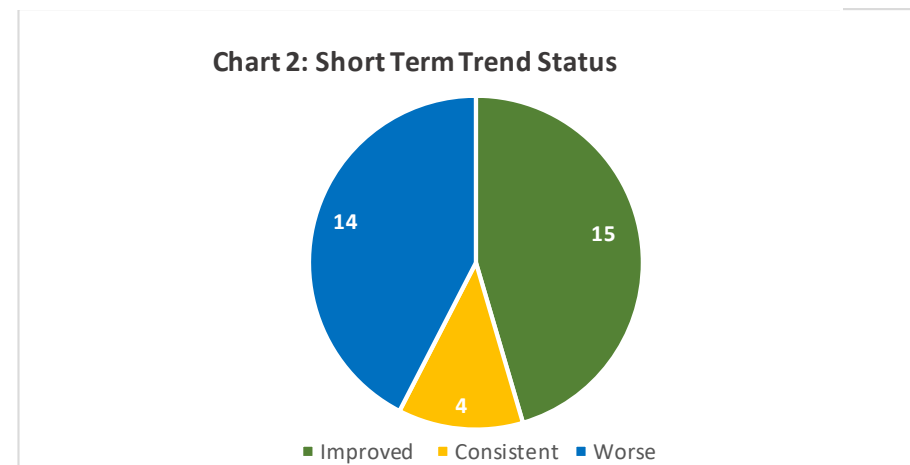
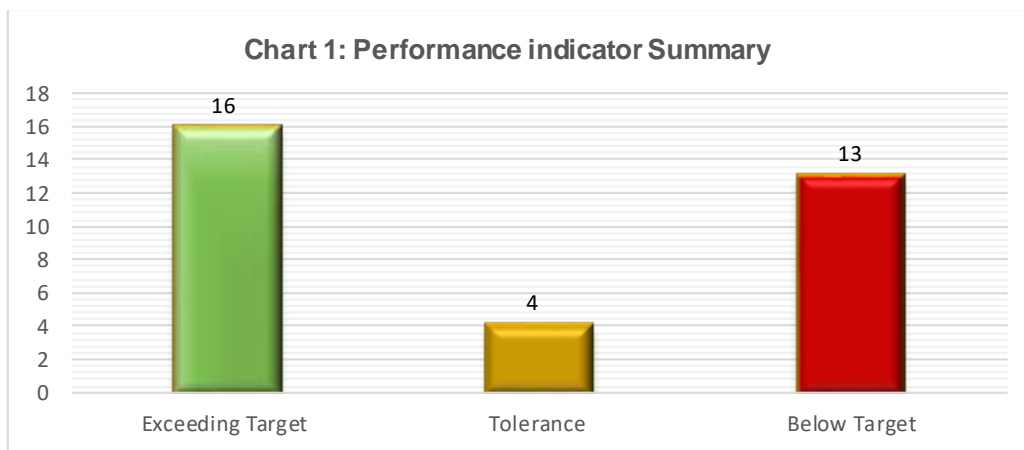
Short-term trend  
**Improved**

→ 4

Short-term trend  
**Consistent**

↘ 14

Short-term trend  
**Worse**

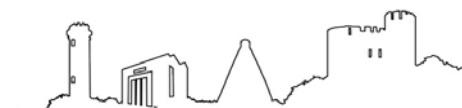


Of the 13 performance indicators below target for this quarter, the trend values are as

↗ 5 are improving: → 0 consistent: ↘ 8 worsening

















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## Section 2.2: Performance Summary Cont'd

The following table shows the **13 performance indicators** where the score status is **below target** for the reporting quarter, including its respective short-term trend status.

Table 1: Performance indicators below target  (refers to chart 1)	Q3 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 11 - 12)
PI.2079 Number of Corporate Complaints received (Replaces PI 46 from Qtr.1)		
PI.2027 Satisfaction with way your anti-social behaviour complaint was handled		<b>A Cleaner greener place to live</b> (Pages 13 - 16)
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 17 – 23)
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 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		
PI 1798 % of eligible people receiving a health check (coverage)		<b>Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs</b> (Pages 24-25)
PI.120 16 to 18-year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)		
PI.1705 Number of adults 19+ participating in learning (3500)		
PI.1709 Number of employers supported with ACL funding streams		



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### Annual comparison

This section compares the latest performance indicator results for Qtr. 3 against the previous year's Qtr.3 2019-20. There are 27 performance indicators where comparisons against the previous year's performance are available.

#### Annual Comparison status

(see table 2 & 3)



One Council Building an effective and Dynamic Organisation	Status	Stronger and Safer Communities	Status
PI.352 Working days/shifts lost per FTE due to sickness absence		PI 1466 Number of early help assessments started	
PI.370 Long-term sickness absence per FTE		PI.426 Timeliness of Single Assessments - % Completed Within 45 Working Days	
PI.371 Short-term sickness absence per FTE		PI 1447 % of agency social workers	
PI.2078 Number of Customer Compliments received		PI 501 ASCOF2B (P1) - Prop of 65+ at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement services	
PI.47 % of Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days		PI 432 Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the population	
PI.2036 Number of new customers onto the revolution traded services portal		PI 433 Number of children subject to child protection plan	
PI.2079 Number of Corporate Complaints received		Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs	
A Gleaner Greener Place to Live		PI.120 16 to 18-year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	
PI.2027 Satisfaction with way your anti-social behaviour complaint was handled		PI.863 Proportion of children and young people who attend a good or outstanding school	
PI 1319 Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent due		PI.1691 % of Major applications determined within 13 weeks	
PI 1323 Former tenant arrears at the end of the year as a % of rent due		PI.1692 % of Minor Applications determined within 8 weeks	
PI.1396 ST10 Overall, satisfaction with the repairs service		PI.1693 % of other applications determined within 8 weeks	
PI.1899 FP02 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings)		PI 1705 Number of adults 19+ participating in learning (3500)	
PI.1499 Percentage of municipal waste land filled		PI.1709 Number of employers supported with ACL funding streams	
PI.1498 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting			



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## 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

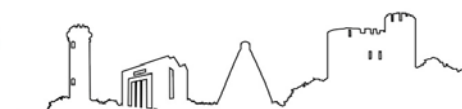
 1  
On target upper tolerance

 2  
Below target

Performance Indicator	2019-20 Comparator Qtr. 3 Actual	2020-2021 Financial Year					Score	Trend	Benchmarking Comparator Data	
		Qtr.1 Actual	Qtr. 2 Actual	Qtr. 3 Actual	Target					
<b>PI.352</b> Working days/shifts lost per FTE due to sickness absence (excluding schools) – Cumulative Calculation	9.16 Days	2.06 Days	4.35 Days	<b>6.95 Days</b>	<b>7.875 Days</b>			8.53 Days (English Met)	6.84 Days West Midlands Employees	
Sickness as a % of FTE Days	5.5%	3.72%	3.92%	4.17%						
<b>PI.370</b> Long-term sickness absence per FTE (excluding schools) - Cumulative calculation	6.77 Days	1.65 Days	3.51 Days	<b>5.76 Days</b>	<b>5.625 Days</b>			5.81 Days (English Met)	4.35 Days West Midlands Employees	
Long-term sickness as a % FTE Days	4.07%	2.98%	3.17%	3.46%						
<b>PI.371</b> Short-term sickness absence per FTE - Cumulative calculation	2.39 Days	0.41 Days	0.83 Days	<b>1.19 Days</b>	<b>2.25 Days</b>			2.69 Days (English Met)	2.75 Days West Midlands Employees	
Short-term sickness as a % FTE Days	1.44%	0.74%	0.75%	0.71%						
<b>PI.47</b> % of Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days	64.0%	80%	71.0% (292)	<b>79.0%</b>	<b>85.0%</b>			Local trend data		
<b>PI.2078</b> Number of Customer Compliments received	292	324	302	<b>324</b>	<b>150</b>			Local trend data		
<b>PI.2079</b> Number of Corporate Complaints received.	282	289	413	<b>463</b>	<b>275</b>			Local trend data		
<b>PI.2036</b> Number of new customers onto the revolutiontradedservices portal	9	0	0	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>			Local trend data		



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## 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 11)

**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, the quarterly trend has improved. Directorates review outstanding complaints before this KPI is reported and respond to advise some of the complaints have an agreed extension beyond 20 days due to their complexity/certain staff needing involvement or a legal process not being able to take place within the given period

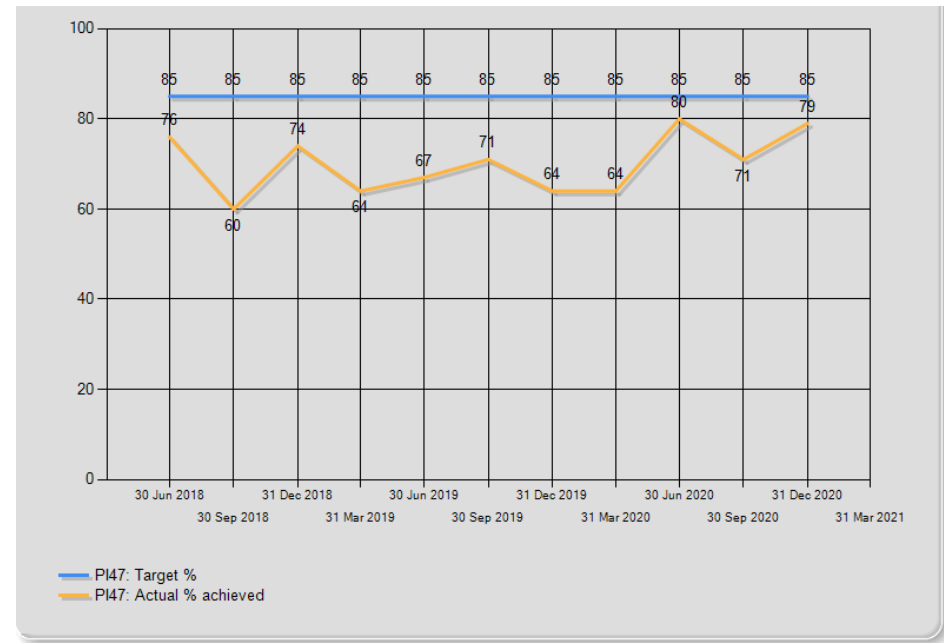
Of the number of ‘Corporate Complaints’ for DMBC in Q3 (PI 2078), Whilst this figure is an increase by 50, put into context the council has received/processed/delivered hundreds of thousands of services/requests/grants etc. for the quarter, therefore complaints reflect a tiny percentage of the work volumes undertaken across the whole council in the same period.

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

- 21% (88) upheld / Justified
- 22% (92) Partially Upheld
- 47% (198) Not upheld
- 11% (45) Other Outcomes

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.

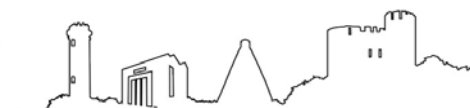
% of Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 Working Days



For more information on service delivery see Appendices: [Commercial Digital & Customer Services](#)



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## Section 3.2: A cleaner greener place to live

Summary Status

 3  
Exceeds Target

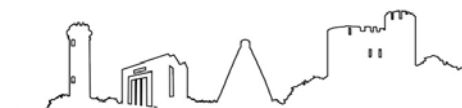
 0  
On target upper tolerance

 2  
Below target

Performance Indicator	2019-20 Comparator Qtr.3 Actual	2020-2021 Financial Year						Benchmarking Comparable Data
		Qtr.1 Actual	Qtr. 2 Actual	Qtr. 3 Actual	Target	Score	Trend	
<b>PI.2027</b> Satisfaction with way your anti-social behaviour complaint was handled? (ASB) Star-T Tasb5 (CP) [C]	80.9%	84.1%	76.8% (113/147)	<b>75%</b> (171/228)	85.0%			<b>80.6%</b> HouseMark Median
<b>PI 1319</b> Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent due - Housemark Dwellings (Strategic PI)	1.34%	1.94%	1.54% (V=£1,339,112)	<b>2.25%</b> (V= £1,951.908)	2.5%			<b>2.83%</b> HouseMark Median
<b>PI 1323</b> Former tenant arrears at the end of the year as a % of rent due	3.01%	1.87%	1.93% (V=£1,680,698)	<b>1.95%</b> (V=£1,698,860)	2.8%			<b>1.41%</b> HouseMark Median
<b>PI.1396</b> ST10 Overall, satisfaction with the repairs service?(various Responsive Repairs)Star-T HMark (Strategic PI)	98.1%	98.1%	95.3% (162/170)	<b>100%</b> (13/13)	98.0%			<b>92.6%</b> HouseMark Median
<b>PI.1899</b> FP02 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings) (HouseMark CP & Strategic PI)	2.15%	1.81%	1.89% (V=£856,076)	<b>1.88%</b> (V=£1274,039)	1.5%			<b>0.91%</b> HouseMark Median



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## 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 13)

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

#### Exception Report:

This quarterly result represents all residents & shows 58 residents were satisfied out of 81 who responded to this question. Overall, 201 surveys were to be carried out for this quarter with 83 completed with a return rate of 41.3%.

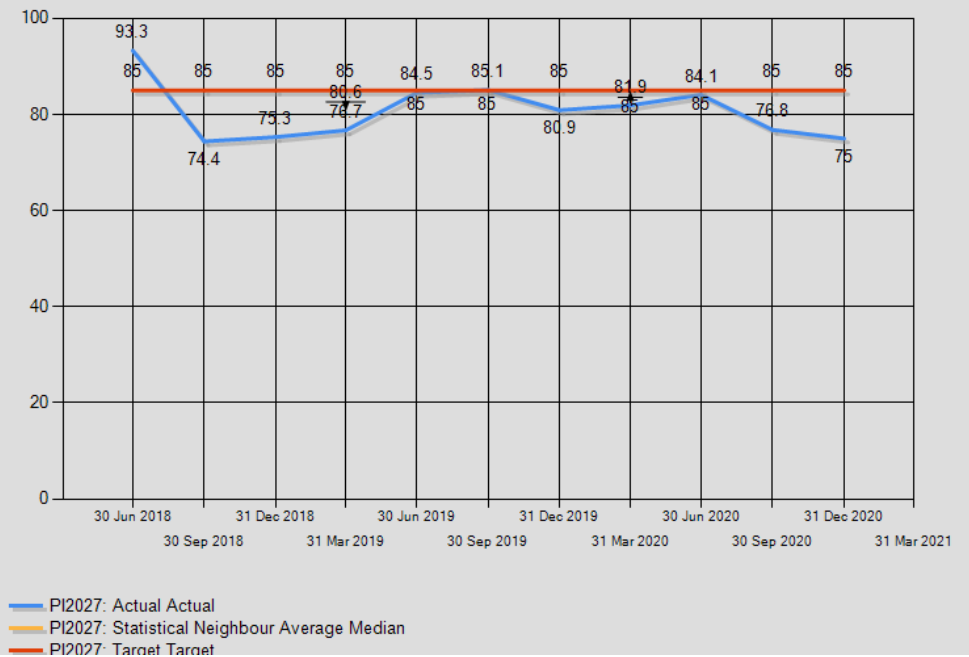
- Satisfaction for DMBC tenants only = 72.7% (32 out of 44 were satisfied)
- Satisfaction for other tenures = 70.3% (26 out of 37 were satisfied)

The slightest of increases put figures going the right way I draw positives from. We are some way off target, but we continue to run the service during difficult times.

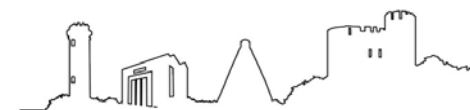
Closure letters ask complainants to complete an online survey or contact the ASB team to complete a survey over the phone. A chase up exercise to boost return levels are carried out by email and telephone.

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.2027 Satisfaction with way your anti-social beh



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

### PI.1899 FP02 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost (Dwellings) (HouseMark CP & Strategic PI) (Scorecard Pg 13)

#### Exception Report:

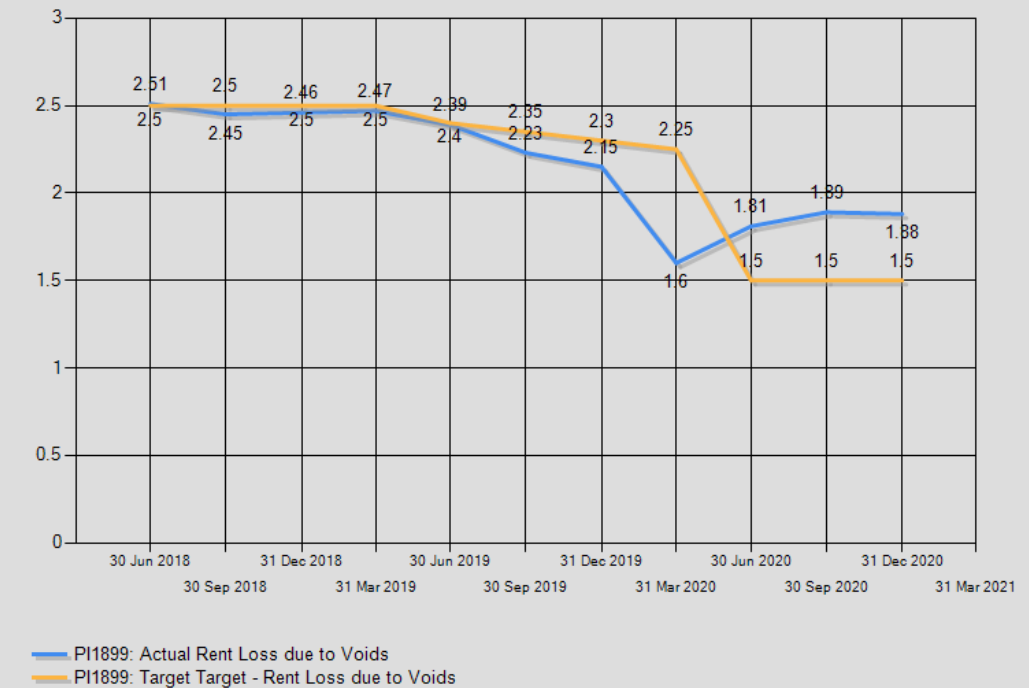
The rent loss is comparable to the previous quarter. As in Q2 this is partly due to the reduction in lettings due to Covid19. Other reasons for rent loss in the Q3 period are (snapshot at end of Q3):

- Investment in sheltered housing = 75 units /£203,457.38 rent loss.
- Being used for decant = 11 properties/ £23,239.78 rent loss
- Stock Investment decision 37 Properties / £85,330.83 rent loss

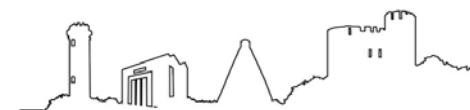
The void process will continue to be monitored and reviewed. Issues with low demand are being addressed through our Asset Management Strategy as well as allocation and management initiatives.

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.

PI1899 Rent loss- % of potential rent receipts lost



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## 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 2 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 3 data presented in Quarter 4 following WDF validation.

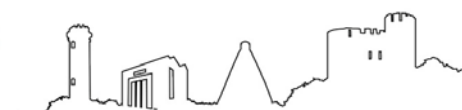
★ 2
🟡 0
🔴 0

**Summary Status**
**Exceeds Target**
**On target upper tolerance**
**Below target**

Performance Indicator	2019-20 Comparator Qtr.2 Actual	2020-2021 Financial Year					Benchmarking Comparable Data
		Qtr.1 Actual	Qtr. 2 Actual	Target	Score	Trend	
PI.1498 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)	46.6% (15,687.11)	43.5% (15,095.31)	<b>42.0%</b> (14,329.22)	<b>35.0%</b>	★	↓	<b>38.6%</b> CIPFA Family Group Average (Quarter 1 20/21)
	Measured in tonnes						
PI.1499 Percentage of municipal waste land filled (NI 193)	2.31% (1,316.38)	4.1% (1,569.01)	<b>1.0%</b> (382.59)	<b>5%</b>	★	↗	<b>6.44%</b> CIPFA Family Group Average (Quarter 1 20/21)
	Measured in tonnes						



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

Summary Status

 1  
Exceeds Target

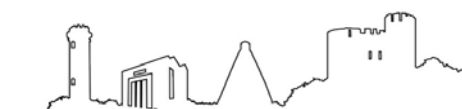
 1  
On target upper tolerance

 4  
Below target

Performance Indicator	2019-20 Comparator Qtr.3 Actual	2020-2021 Financial Year						Benchmarking Comparable Data
		Qtr.1 Actual	Qtr. 2 Actual	Qtr. 3 Actual	Target	Score	Trend	
<b>PI 1466</b> Number of early help assessments started	600	609	534	415	600			Local Measure
<b>PI 432</b> Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the population	88.9	90.3	90.9	91.2	85			<b>85.3</b> (Statistical Neighbours 19/20)
<b>PI.426</b> Timeliness of Single Assessments - % Completed Within 45 Working Days (Assessment service only)	96.0%	93%	96% (621/646)	<b>50.3%</b> (76/151)	95.0%			Local Measure
<b>PI 433</b> Number of children subject to child protection plan per 10,000 of the child population	47.2	58	59	51.2	50			<b>52.6</b> Statistical Neighbours (19/20)
<b>PI 1447</b> % of agency social workers	27.4	17.3%	17.8% (44.31)	<b>19.3%</b> (48.31)	10			<b>12.0%</b> Statistical Neighbours (18/19 latest)
<b>PI.2129</b> % of eligible children who take up a 'Time for Two's' place in the Dudley Borough	New Measure	85.4%	87.6% (1141)	<b>80.4%</b> (1048/1303)	75.0%			Local Measure



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

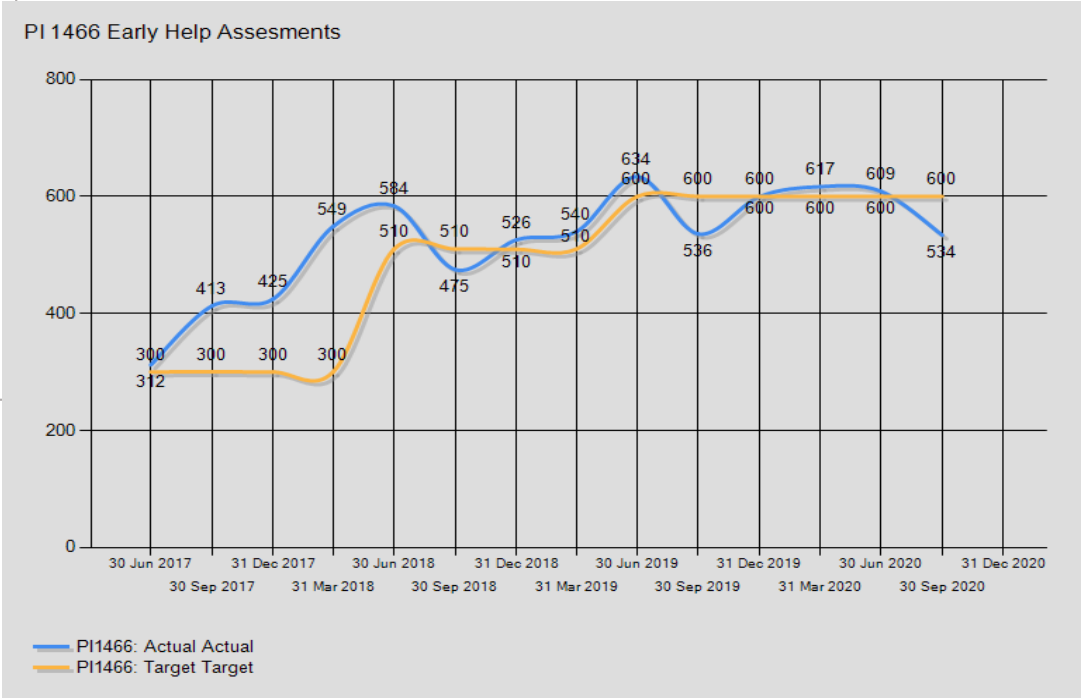
The Information below provides historical trend data against the performance indicators below target aligned to the council priority **Stronger and Safer Communities**.

KPI's below target against priority: **4**  
(scorecard page 17)

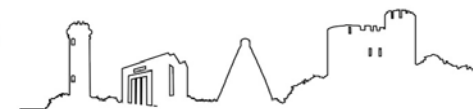
#### PI 1466 Number of early help assessments started

##### Exception Report:

The implementation of Liquidlogic during Q3 has impacted on the recording of Early Help Assessments by external organisations. Issues related to recording and process are being addressed through a task and finish group on Early Help data.



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

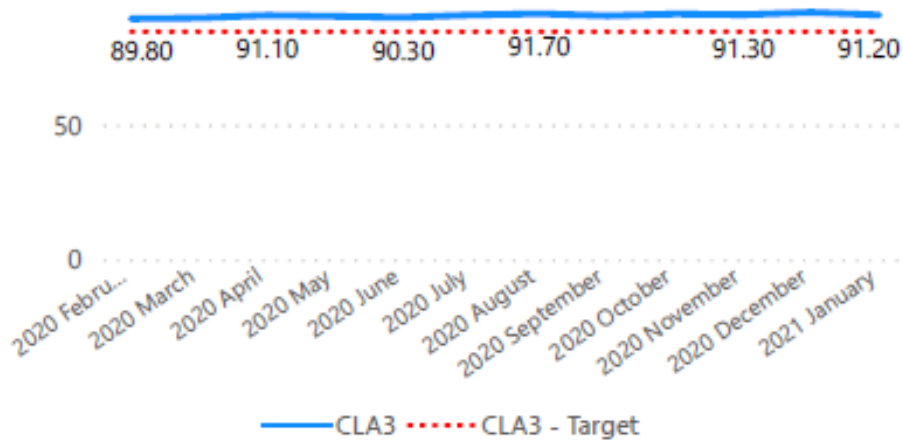
### PI 432 Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the population

(scorecard page 17)

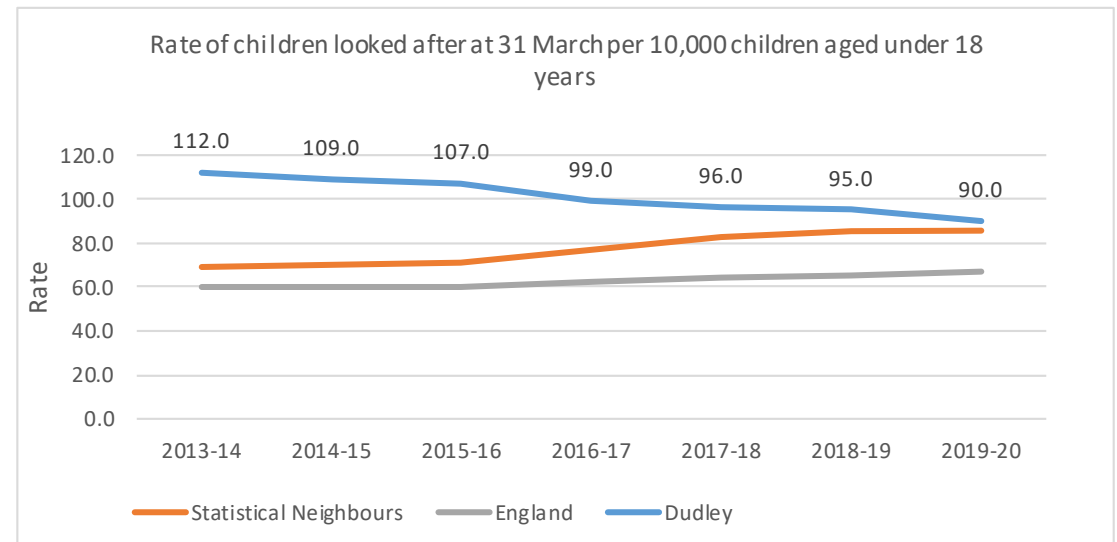
#### Exception Report:

Fewer care proceedings were finalised and fewer reunifications/adoptions took place due to Covid-19, because the courts would only prioritise certain meetings i.e. interim care orders. Therefore, figures have remained stable, with a slight rise to 91.2 compared to 90.9 end of Q2. This means tested special guardianship policy prevented foster carers and connected people to apply for permanent orders, these children remain in care longer.

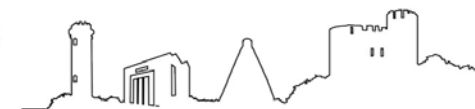
#### CLA03: Children looked after per 10k population



Current Value	Target	WM Average	SN Average	Nat Average	Success	Reporting Period
91.2	85.0	82	85.4	65	Smaller is better	As at



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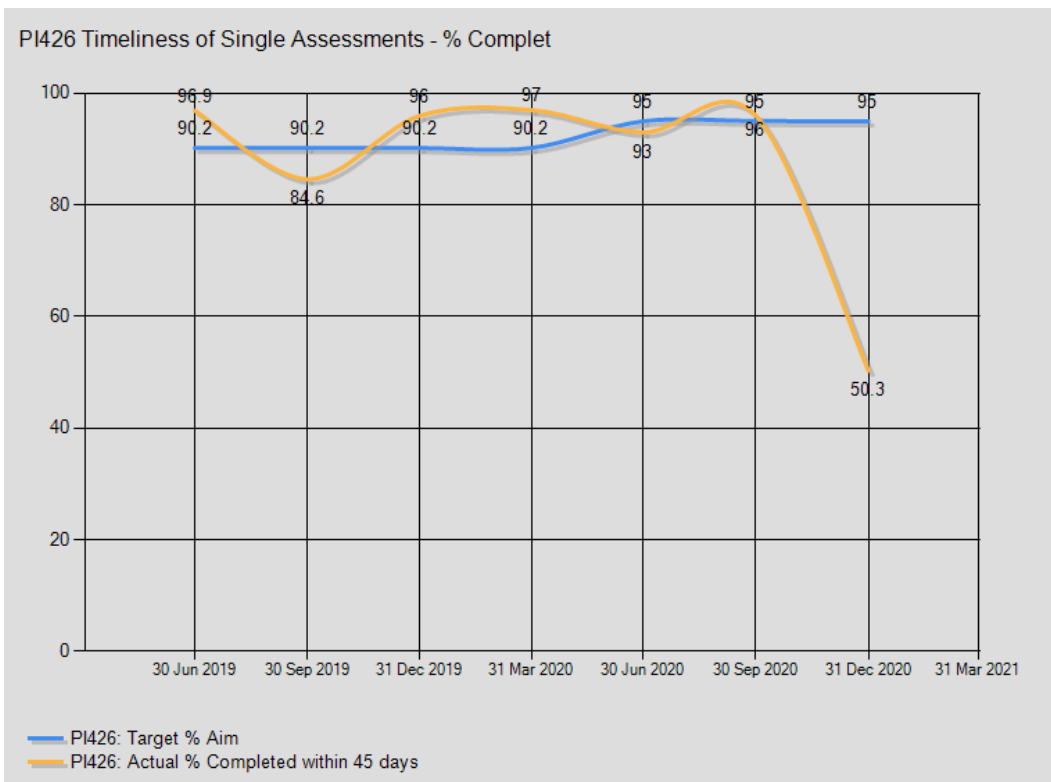
## Section 3.3: Stronger and Safer Communities – Children Services

### PI.426 Timeliness of Single Assessments - % Completed Within 45 Working Days (Assessment service only)

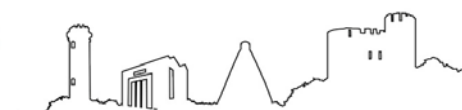
(scorecard page 17)

#### Exception Report:

We have seen a fall in timelessness of assessments since the adoption of Liquidlogic in November. However, there have been issues with the system in terms of categorisation of new assessments and reassessments so not fully confident in this measure at this point. There is also an anomaly in the way that assessments are being recorded in the new system, which needs to be resolved as recording practice.



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

#### PI 1447 % of agency social workers

(scorecard page 17)

##### Exception Report:

Q3 shows a further increase in the proportion of agency staff and continues to increase. 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.

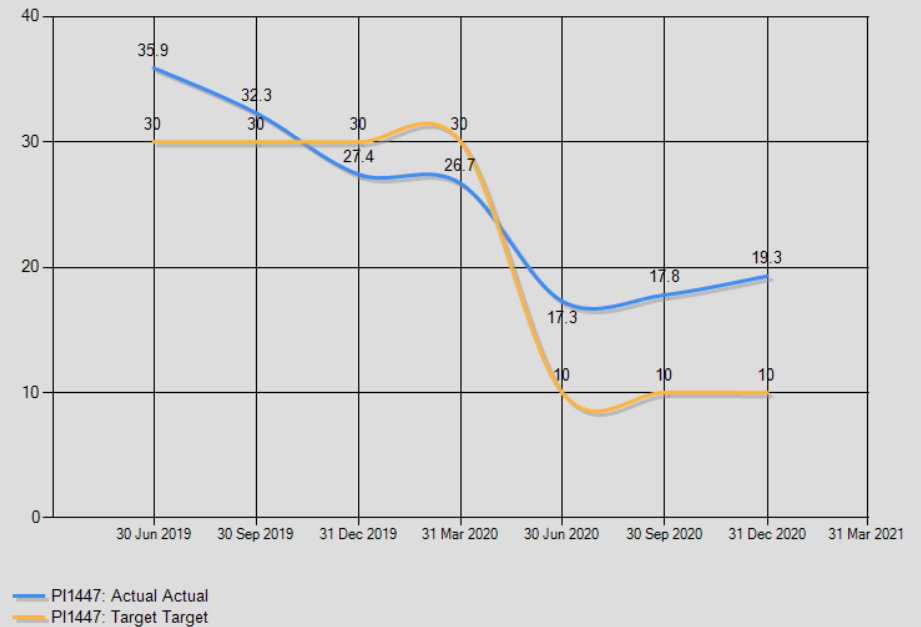
##### Staff breakdown:

Budgeted FTE:- 250.45  
 Current Agency FTE:- 48.31  
 Agency Percentage:- 19.3%

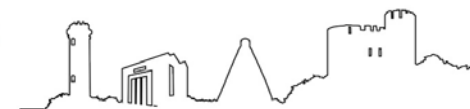
Analysis of demand in care management and care teams being conducted through Childrens Services Improvement Plan.

Work is currently underway to identify agency staff who would like to become permanent and this will have a positive impact on the rates.

PI.1447 % of agency social Workers (childrens)



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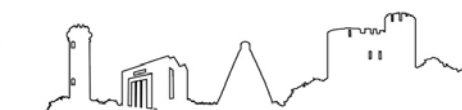
## Section 3.3: Stronger and Safer Communities – Adult Social Care

Summary Status ★ 3 Exceeds Target ● 0 On target upper tolerance ▲ 1 Below target

Performance Indicator	2019-20 Comparator Qtr.3 Actual	2020-2021 Financial Year						Benchmarking Comparable Data
		Qtr.1 Actual	Qtr. 2 Actual	Qtr. 3 Actual	Target	Score	Trend	
<b>PI 501</b> ASCOF2B (P1) - Prop of 65+ at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement services	88%	84.0%	90%	<b>94.0%</b>	<b>83.0%</b>	★	↗	Local Measure
<b>PI.2131</b> % of Delayed transfers of care as percentage of occupied beds	New Measure N/A	Delay with data	Delay with data	Delay with Data (latest Feb 2020 at 3.9%)	<b>3.7%</b>			4.9% (Feb 2020)
<b>PI.2132</b> % of contacts to adult social care with an outcome of information and advice/signposting	New Measure N/A	11.4%	9.8%	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	★	↗	Local Measure
<b>PI 2133</b> % 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 N/A	65.0%	66.0% (582/882)	<b>40.0%</b>	<b>60.0%</b>	▲	↘	<b>77.4%</b> England 18/19
<b>Exception Report:</b> Performance is lower than normal and below target. In addition to the low number of clients with an learning disability on Liquidlogic Adults System (Main case management system in adults) due to incorrect Primary Support Reason being migrated/recorded, the number of clients with an accommodation type is also missing, this has therefore had a significant impact on performance. <i>(No trend data available)</i>								
<b>PI.2134</b> % of the conversion of safeguarding concerns to enquiry	New Measure N/A	11.0%	3.9% (56/1446)	<b>3.0%</b> <b>(45/1482)</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	★	↗	<b>39%</b> England 18/19



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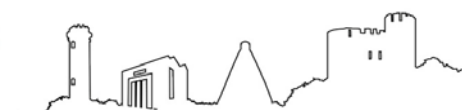
## Section 3.3: Stronger and Safer Communities – Public Health & Wellbeing

Summary Status ★ 0 Exceeds Target ● 1 On target upper tolerance ▲ 1 Below target

Performance Indicator	2019-20 Comparator Qtr.3 Actual	2020-2021 Financial Year						Benchmarking Comparable Data
		Qtr.1 Actual	Qtr. 2 Actual	Qtr. 3 Actual	Target	Score	Trend	
<b>PI 1798</b> Percentage of eligible people receiving a health check (coverage)	41.3%	0.0%	6% (267)	<b>22.0%</b>	<b>33.0%</b>	▲	↗	<b>77.4%</b> England 18/19
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 (October – December) equating to 22% (No.?)								
<b>PI.2074</b> Proportion of premises in the borough that are compliant with food hygiene law	New Measure N/A	86.7%	86.6%	<b>84.0%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	▲	↘	<b>39%</b> England 18/19
There has been a backlog of newly registered food businesses awaiting their first inspection. A new business is counted as non-compliant until it has received its first inspection. The back log is due to the food inspection programme being suspended nationally from April to Sept 2020, EHOs being engaged on covid outbreak and enforcement work and more recently due to many of the businesses awaiting their first inspection having to close due to the current national lockdown.								



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## Section 3.4: Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs

Summary Status

 3  
Exceeds Target

 1  
On target upper tolerance

 3  
Below target

Performance Indicator	2019-20 Comparator Qtr.3 Actual	2020-2021 Financial Year						Benchmarking Comparable Data
		Qtr.1 Actual	Qtr. 2 Actual	Qtr. 3 Actual	Target	Score	Trend	
<b>PI.120</b> 16 to 18-year old's who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	2.1%	3.3%	3.3%	<b>2.6%</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	74.38%	76.4%	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> (10/10)	<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%	100%	100%	<b>100%</b> (52/52)	<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%	99.43%	99.46%	<b>99.55%</b> (225/226)	<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)	1396	112	489	<b>1091</b>	<b>1550</b>			93% against 88.3% target 17/18 Overall
<b>PI.1709</b> Number of employers supported with ACL funding streams	7	40	107	<b>50</b>	<b>15</b>			Unavailable



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### 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**

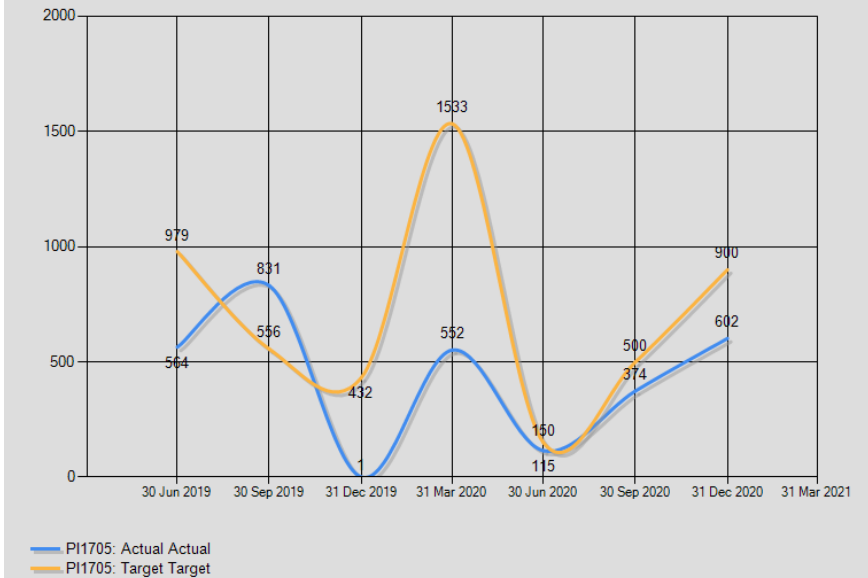
#### PI.1705 Number of adults 19+ participating in learning (SC P22) (scorecard page 24)

##### Exception Report:

Due to Covid-19 online delivery only for the first and some of the second quarter which gave us lower enrolments than expected. We returned to delivering in the classroom late in second quarter, but due to smaller class sizes because of social distancing we continued to develop a mix of face to face and blended (home) learning. However, due to the rise in cases across the borough and concerns around transmission we returned to focus on online training. Marketing for online is proving to be challenging and due to the ongoing situation, we have lost our face to face opportunities such as borough events where we would normally recruit many residents. We are migrating by utilising 7 large poster sites across the borough and by advertising in the home magazine. It is unlikely unless the situation improves that we will maximise starts in Q4.

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

PI 1705 Number of adults 19+ participating in lear



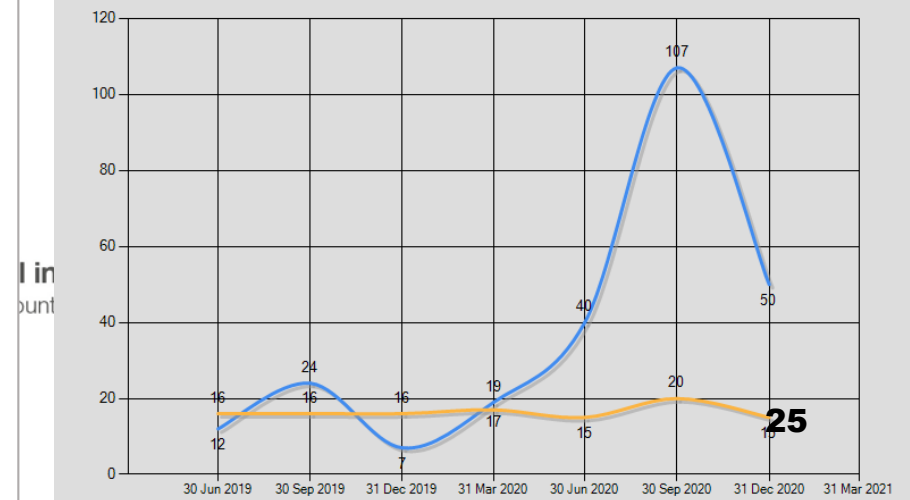
#### PI.1709 Number of employers supported with ACL funding streams (SC P22)

##### Exception Report:

Due to Covid-19, in quarter 3 we continue to experience demand from businesses. This, however, has started to decline compared to 107 in the previous quarter and at its highest compared to previous years due to the pandemic.

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

PI.1709 Number of employers supported with ACL fun



For further information with reference to the corporate quarterly performance report, please contact:

**Clair Blunn**

**Corporate Performance Lead**

Tel: 816931

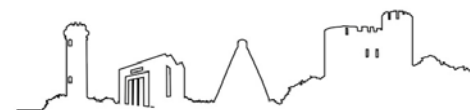
[clair.blunn@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:clair.blunn@dudley.gov.uk)

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>



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# Appendices - Directorate Summary

Directorate: Commercial & Customer Service Inc. ICT				
Date: 22/02/2021				
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	79.0%	85.0%	
PI.2078	Number of Customer Compliments received	324	150	
PI.2079	Number of Corporate Complaints received	463	275	
PI.2036	Number of new customers onto the revolution traded services portal	6	2	
PI.1902	Average data network availability	99.63	99.5	
PI.1903	Average key ICT systems availability	99.99	99.75	
PI.1904	ICT Incidents resolved within agreed resolution times	86.89	90	
PI.1905	Use of self-service and service automation channels for raising ICT incidents and requests	81.22	80	
<p>The score status symbol employed for performance indicators as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Where performance exceeds the target tolerance</li> <li> Where performance is on target and in the upper half tolerance</li> <li> Where performance is below the target tolerance</li> </ul> <p>Short term trend status symbol employed as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Performance is improved against previous reporting frequency</li> <li> Performance is consistent against previous reporting frequency</li> <li> Performance is worse against previous reporting frequency</li> </ul>				
Benchmarking (with local authorities/nearest neighbours)				
Customer Services				
<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>				
Digital & ICT Services				
<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>				
Commercial				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to commercial sensitivities no benchmarking data is available</li> </ul>				
Procurement				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In developing a Procurement "State of the Nation" report to SEB in Nov 2020 extensive benchmarking of Procurement performance, staffing and processes were undertaken. The recommendations of the report led to the creation of a Procurement Improvement Programme with key work streams to             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Social Value Policy to be embedded across the Council</li> <li>Improve processes including the Contract Register, clear roles and responsibilities, improve governance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				





- Develop a new Operating Model that has one procurement team and a new staffing structure with more senior roles to reflect the capabilities needed for a modern effective procurement team
- Agree definitions of savings, performance measures and compliance for procurement across the council

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

### **Customer Services**

- Corporate contact centre, council tax, benefits, switchboard and various other corporate activities including Councillor Contact, Corporate Feedback co-ordination and reporting, Local Government Ombudsman co-ordination, Tell Us Once, Blue Badge, Web Chat, via extensive contact channels.
- 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”.
- 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.
- Since March 2020, Dudley Council Plus has also picked up a number of Covid related activities including support for Business Grant processing, Emergency Assistance Grants, point of contact for welfare/food parcel matters and most recently Local Contact Tracing.
- Dudley Council Plus has remained open for business throughout the entire pandemic, including essential face to face services.

### **Digital & ICT**

- Continued to roll out laptops as more staff continued to work from home during Covid-19 pandemic
- New online forms developed for various uses during pandemic
- 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
- we supported live deployment of Successor project for Childrens social care

### **DGfL**

- Significant work to ensure schools were able to engage learners. This includes training on the use of MS Teams and support for web-based resources that pupils could access from home, setting up of Team sites and on-going technical support.
- Dudley Grid for Learning Contract negotiation is completed with the extension commencing 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 through to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025.
- With restricted access to schools, parts of the DGfL team has been redeployed – supporting track and trace, lateral flow testing and the Successor project.

### **Commercial**

- Traded Services continued during the crisis, including support to schools with a 21% increase in hits to Revolution website (397 users)
- Continued work to ensure income through Revolution for 20/21 remained high – in Q2 at 84% equivalent to total for 19/20 and at Q3 at 90% – further income still expected
- The Revolution Portal became the communication tool between the LA and Schools during COVID, with the commercial team developing and distributing daily and then twice weekly bulletin’s to schools
- Supported schools with contractual issues where they found themselves in difficult situations due to moving services to alternative providers, outside of the Council
- Work to ensure the Revolution portal meets the accessibility regulations for September 2020
- Assisted procurement in the ordering of large quantities of PPE and the subsequent payment of invoices

### **Procurement**

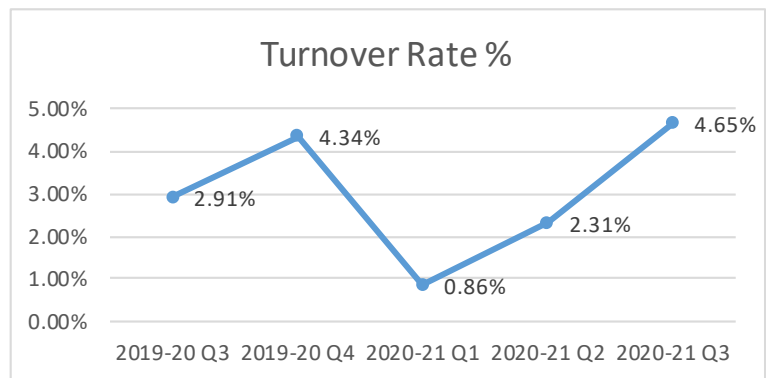
- The procurement team has been significantly understaffed for some years and resources focussed during much of addressing Covid 19 priorities.



- Under the leadership of a Commercial and Procurement Consultant and Interim Head of Procurement a new model is being developed which will allow focus on procurement needs wider than corporate.
- A major recruitment campaign is underway for a Head of Procurement, 3 Business Partners and several additional staff.
- As these are engaged then capability and capacity will enable the level of service delivery required

### Workforce Metrics

Directorate Headcount (Excl. Casual Staff)	Total	FTE
Headcount & FTE as at 31/12/2020	351	301.56
Gender	Headcount	%
Female	192	56%
Male	148	44%
Disability	Headcount	%
Disabled	25	7.35%
Not Disabled	167	49.12%
Undisclosed	148	43.53%
Ethnicity	Headcount	%
BME	39	11.47%
Undisclosed	8	2.35%
White	293	86.18%
Turn over	% Rate	
2020-21 Q3	4.65%	



### 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

#### Commercial

- No complaints have been received.
- During this quarter an audit of Traded Services / Revolution was completed, and learning has taken place subsequently to this

#### Procurement

- The Service KPIs have been suspended as they were not effective to measure meaningful outputs. Under the PIP a new suite of measures will be developed.

### 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.

#### Procurement

- Refer to the details of the Procurement Improvement Programme above

### Any additional information relevant to Corporate Scrutiny

- No further comments.



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## Directorate: Finance and Legal

**Date:** Quarter 3 performance reporting (31/12/2020) for 4 key Directorate PIs

### Vision

- Ensuring the financial viability of the Council, addressing the particular challenges that come from being a low-taxing, low-spending authority with a low level of reserves. We need to ensure that plans are relevant in our specific financial context and that we address the challenge of our low income base.
- Continuing to reform our approach to Council Tax Reduction, so that it works effectively in the context of wider welfare reforms. We will need to simplify the process so as to avoid frequent reassessment of eligibility that impacts adversely both on households and on the Council's ability to recover Council Tax. It is likely that progress will be limited as we concentrate on managing the immediate economic fallout of Covid-19 as it impacts on Dudley households.
- Building on the work we have done in the last year to improve the effectiveness of council governance

### Corporate Performance Measure (KPIs)

PI	Actual	Target	SCORE
PI.867 % Council Tax income collected	83.2	83	
PI.868 % Business Rates income collected	69.3	81	

\* Please note that whilst we expect Covid to have a considerable effect on business rates collection this year, the position as at 31/12/20 is negatively exaggerated as normal instalments including direct debit payments did not commence until June 2020 rather than April 2020. As such we expect more to be collected in January to March than would be the case in a normal year.

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


#### Council Tax collected:

Birmingham	77.09%
Coventry	81.89%
Sandwell	80.11%
Solihull	85.20%
Walsall	75.10%
Wolverhampton	73.29%

#### Business Rates collected:

Birmingham	77.53%
Coventry	77.30%
Sandwell	77.05%
Solihull	77.55%
Walsall	72.90%
Wolverhampton	70.71%

### Corporate Performance Measure (KPIs)

PI	Actual	Target	SCORE
PI.1405 Average number of weeks taken to complete a Public Law Care Case. S14(2) CFA 2014 KPI 1	<b>47.2</b>	<b>26</b>	



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

The average number of weeks in which an application under S31 CA 1989 (public law care proceedings) is a national key performance measure, KPM 1. The target is 26 weeks. KPM2 is the % of such cases concluded in 26 weeks and the target is between 65-75%.

Local KPM1 data is available for the full 2018/2019 year. As at Q4 of that year (January to March 2019) the number of weeks was DMBC 35, SMBC 38, Shropshire 26, Telford and Wrekin 31, WMBC 36 and WCC 43. The average for the Black Country was 35. The national average was 33.

Local KPM1 data is available for the full 2019/2020 year. As at Q4 of that year (January to March 2020) the number of weeks was DMBC 41, SMBC 42, Shropshire 44, Telford and Wrekin 36, WMBC 34 and WCC 40. The average for the Black Country was 39. The national average was 35.

The DMBC data by quarter across the whole 2018/2019 year was 31-31-39-35 weeks.  
The DMBC data by quarter across the whole 2019/2020 year remained stable at 40/41 weeks.

There is no available comparative data for the 2020/2021 (three quarter year) but the DMBC data is 32-48-47 weeks. The DMBC average for the three quarter year is 41 weeks.

The reasons for delay (not meeting the 26 week timescale) are agreed locally for data comparison purposes. In the 2019/2020 full year the reasons for delay were categorised as follows: Non-accidental injury cases (complex) 7, Independent social work assessment directed 6, Other expert assessment directed 6, residential assessment directed 2, incomplete local authority plans 1, delays with local authority panels 2, fact-find hearings needed (complex and needs court time) 4, local authority change of plan 3 and "other" 3. 4 cases were due to delay by the court or other agencies. The largest category at 12 is therefore as a result of external assessments being sought. The very wide spread of categories identified does make addressing delay generally more difficult.

### **Corporate Performance Measure (KPIs)**

PI 1403 Unqualified External Audit Opinion on Financial Statement of Accounts (Annual PI)

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

Statement of accounts were signed off by Grant Thornton before Christmas 2020, as of February 2021, circa 20% of Grant Thornton clients had not been completed

### **Corporate Performance Measure (KPIs)**

PI	Actual	Target	SCORE
<b>PI.12</b> % of audit plan completed at key stages of the year	<b>83</b>	<b>68</b>	★

### **Benchmarking**

There is currently no benchmarking data available to measure against other local authorities.

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

#### **Revenues and Benefits**

- Billing, collection and recovery of council tax, business rates, benefits overpayments and sundry debts.
- Assessment of council tax reduction, housing benefit, discretionary housing payments
- Scanning and indexing of incoming hard copy and electronic correspondence.
- Administrative support to a number of services areas and Revenue and Benefits.



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- Property inspection.
- Administration of formal challenges, appeals and complaints.

## Finance

- A draft MTFS (2021-2024) was approved by Cabinet in December as a basis for consultation. This was following the Comprehensive Spending Review and Local Government Finance Settlement announcements in November and December respectively.
- A draft Housing Revenue 21/22 Budget was also presented to Cabinet setting our rent and other proposals.
- Work is ongoing monitoring cost pressures and modelling future allocations of the Dedicated Schools Grant and having a particular focus on the High Needs Block.
- The 2019/20 Financial Statements were presented to Audit and Standards in September and the annual audit was finally signed off by Grant Thornton in December 2020 following a few amendments which did not impact on the usable reserves of the Council.
- Work is ongoing, especially in relation to property valuations in preparing the Financial Statements for 2020/21.
- Service teams continue to support Divisions and Directorates identifying cost pressures and shortfalls in income arising from the impact of the pandemic. The information is collated and regularly submitted to MHCLG and other government departments.
- The Council continues to receive grants to support the response to the pandemic and accountancy teams are claiming and monitoring these grants

## Law and Governance

- Law and Governance provide an integrated range of ongoing key support functions in relation to Legal Services, Democratic Services, Electoral Services and corporate Health and Safety. This includes the provision of comprehensive legal support and advice services, support to the democratic decision-making processes and advice on the Council's Constitution. Electoral Services support the statutory processes and work required to ensure the efficient delivery of local, regional and national elections. Health and Safety are responsible for the Council's corporate health and safety policies, associated procedures and the provision of support and advice to all Council Directorates.
- The main risks associated with the services of the Division relate to pressure and demands on our services from both within an outside the organisation. There are inevitably fluctuating pressures/demands on services at different times of the year. Staffing and resource levels need to be effectively managed, maintained and deployed to respond to the demands placed on the various services.

## Audit

- Work on the internal audit plan has been undertaken in a virtual way and good progress is being made although work is taking longer to complete.
- Work against the Fraud Action Plan is progressing, with a focus on investigations.
- Progress has started on revising the Council's Risk Management Strategy and amending the Risk Management System Spectrum to align with the new strategy.

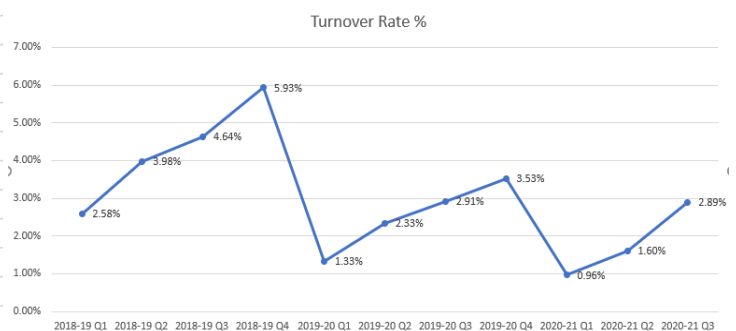
## Corporate Information Governance



- Consult, develop, communicate, review, assess, investigate and report on:-
  - Internal controls for the meeting of statutory obligations (UK DPA, UK GDPR, FOIA, EIR)
  - Information risk management and corporate information governance
  - Extent to which the Council's Information assets are accounted for and safeguarded from loss
  - Compliance with legislation, Council policy and procedures
  - Serious information related incidents requiring investigation
- Management of access requests for DPA, FOIA and EIR requests
- The Head of Service to act as the Council's statutory required Data Protection Officer (DPO) and Senior Responsible Officer for CCTV (SRO).
- Provision of a Traded Service to schools for Data Protection Officer and Information Governance support

## Workforce Metrics

Directorate Headcount (Excl. Casual Staff)	Total	FTE
Headcount & FTE as at 31/12/2020	312	262.93
Gender	Headcount	%
Female	227	73%
Male	85	27%
Disability	Headcount	%
Disabled	20	6.41%
Not Disabled	156	50.00%
Undisclosed	136	43.59%
Ethnicity	Headcount	%
BME	40	12.82%
Undisclosed	16	5.13%
White	256	82.05%
Turn over	% Rate	
2020-21 Q3	4.65%	



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

- Council tax collection regularly achieves upper quartile performance compared to other metropolitan authorities.
- During this year many managers and staff have been administering Covid related functions - business grants, test and trace isolation payments, council tax hardship payments, as well as engaging with customers in respect of council tax, business rates and sundry debts to agree alternative repayment arrangements as a result of Covid caused financial problems.
- Grant Thornton, our external auditors, have provided positive feedback within their Audit findings report. "We would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the excellent assistance provided by the finance team and other staff during our audit"
- Law and Governance has achieved the annual Lexcel accreditation over a number of years. Over the past 12 months, the Division has received recognition for maintaining seamless service provision during the Covid-19 pandemic by using remote technology to support court hearings and essential Council meetings amongst other key support functions.
- The Audit Team regularly receives compliments on the service delivered.



- The Audit Team have recently been assessed by an external consultant as meeting the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (benchmark of quality) and recognised as comparing well with both public and private sector internal audit providers.
- Two long standing fraud cases are due to be heard at court after substantial work being completed by the Corporate Fraud Manager.
- Teams fully able to work from home environment with little detriment to service delivery.
- 853 FOI Requests, 456 DPA Subject Access Requests, 125 EIR requests and 568 enquiries from schools completed in first 3 quarters.

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

- Engage with colleagues in Corporate Landlords to improve the quality of property valuations.
- The service relies on feedback from Councillors, Directorates and other key contacts to ensure that we can continue to provide responsive services and comply with legal obligations on the Council. Any complaints, comments or compliments are recorded on the council's corporate system and forwarded to relevant service managers. We are committed to continuous improvement within the constraints placed on the service and maintain regular contact with service Directorates to ensure that we can implement learning from experience and plan for future workload demands wherever possible
- Most improvements that can be made in Revenues and Benefits rely on new IT applications. We have not been able to assess and possibly take advantage of these in recent years due to lack of resources. This position should be improved part-way through 2021/22 following the allocation of additional funds to the ICT teams that support Revenue and Benefits.
- An unfortunate reality however is that debt collection may prove to be a very challenging area post Covid.
- Improve use of council facilities such as Digital Mail services.

**Any additional information relevant to Corporate Scrutiny**

- The collection performance achieved to date, that will hopefully improve by the time we get to year-end, (when collection is most typically measured), is exceptionally good considering the impact that Covid has had on the financial situation faced by council tax payers and businesses. This achievement is even more impressive, considering the Revenues and Benefits resources that have been used to administer business grants and isolation payments, etc.



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## **Corporate Scrutiny Committee - 18th March 2021**

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

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Arrangements within the Council**

#### **Purpose**

1. To provide Corporate Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the current arrangements in place for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the Council. With a specific focus on the outcomes of the independent equality review and the progress made in addressing the areas identified for further action, together with examples of how our service areas are working to ensure we close the gap in inequalities within the communities we serve.

#### **Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reviews the progress made in implementing the recommendations from the independent equality review, identifies any areas requiring additional pace or challenge and identifies any further action required.

#### **Background**

3. An independent assessment by Inclusivity Global commenced in May 2020 to ascertain Dudley Council's current position in relation to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector duty placed on the Council. The review, which was completed in July also assessed our progress in developing and embedding equality and inclusion practice across the Council.
4. The outcome of the review was presented to the Council's Strategic Executive Board in October 2020 and identified 4 key priorities for focus with a number of key



actions for progress within each of the 4 areas. Full details of the actions can be found at Appendix 1 together with an update on progress against these.

- **Priority 1** - Strengthen senior officer/political leadership and organisational commitment and capacity
  - **Priority 2** - Develop and strengthen the Council's approach and commitment to equality and Inclusion through the drawing up of a new equality and inclusion strategy
  - **Priority 3** - Review data collected and published to meet the requirements of the specific public sector equality duties.
  - **Priority 4** - Workforce
5. During June 2020 public health evidence emerged confirming a higher risk related to COVID-19 for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. As the timing of this coincided with the ongoing review of the Council's equalities arrangements, the organisation undertaking the review was asked to facilitate engagement with employees via a range of workshops over a two-week period in June. An action plan was agreed to address the concerns and issues raised from this engagement exercise.
- (See Appendix 2 – Key issues and actions from the BAME employee engagement)
6. Specific actions have been implemented to identify those more at risk and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 within Dudley borough. This being in response to national evidence of the disproportionate impact of COVID 19 on specific communities from a social, economic and health perspective. This includes the BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) communities, deprived communities, those already financially struggling on benefits or low incomes and those with existing long-term health issues that make them at higher risk of serious illness or death due to COVID-19.
7. The approach taken through the work of the Public Health and Wellbeing team in partnership with other teams across the council and partner agencies to support specific communities, has been an inclusive approach embedded into the whole COVID-19 response. Specific sub-groups have been established to ensure that specific higher-risk communities and groups are considered and included in all planning and response.

A detailed report on this work was reported to Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020 (see Appendix 3)

8. In September 2020 the Council agreed to work in partnership with our trade unions to tackle racial inequality in the workplace through an independent review into our systems, policies, processes and to understand the lived experiences of our employees. To this end, an independent organisation has been commissioned to carry out this work to undertake a whole systems review including;
- Analysis of statistical data in relation to HR procedures including:
    - Recruitment
    - Leavers
    - Redundancy
    - Discipline
    - Absence Management
    - Learning and Development
  - Consideration of how the Council's Policy framework impacts upon the employment experience of BAME employees, both that relating directly to Equality and Diversity and wider e.g. HR Policies and particularly where BAME employees report that they may be disadvantaged or adversely impacted.
  - Engagement with BAME staff and other stakeholder interviews and exploring people's experiences of working for the Council.

The work which commenced in January 2021 is expected to be completed by the end of April 2021.

9. The recent report on Dudley Council's gender pay gap confirms that the makeup of the workforce is currently 65% female and 35% male, However, with the majority of female employees being employed in the lower graded roles on a part-time basis, our overall pay gap is at 10%. Whilst this is lower than the national average and it reflects the workforce composition rather than any pay inequalities, there is much more that can be done, and an action plan is in place to this end. Particular focus will be on exploiting the opportunities provided by apprenticeships and the apprenticeship Levy, to enable employees in lower paid jobs to develop skills and gain experience to progress in their careers. As well as ensuring we have good flexible working opportunities in more senior roles, to both harness skills and enable career progression for women.

10. Work underway to develop the Council's economic strategy and its activities focused on placemaking (buildings, physical and social infrastructure, and spaced/linkages in between them – how people live in and use places), is seeking to join up and integrate with other council services, for example, public health and driving forward improvements in the wider determinants of health delivered by the build environment; access to quality homes, jobs and opportunities for outdoor activity etc. The intention is to ensure that as far as is feasible this strategy and planning is informed by data intelligence and community driven, so it meets the needs and aspirations of our residents. This in turn will enable us to begin to tackle inequalities in Dudley as a result of:
- High youth unemployment which is increasing
  - An increasing number of benefit claimants
  - Below national average in terms of skills and percentage of working age population with qualifications
  - Low paid jobs and lower median full-time wage meaning many residents experience in work poverty,
  - Benefits of economic growth that are not felt by all communities.
11. The Access and Prevention Team within the Adult Social Care Directorate have a track record of growing the range of preventative services both in house as well as with key partners to tackle the challenges faced by people with disabilities, older people, carers and BAME communities. Examples of the work undertaken and initiatives in place are detailed in Appendix 4 of the report

## **Finance**

12. Funding for new posts to support the corporate equalities was included in the Council budget agreed by full Council on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This will enable additional capacity for Project Management, Policy, Performance, Equality and Diversity.

## **Law**

13. The Equality Act 2010 provides a comprehensive framework of anti-discrimination legislation.

The general public sector equality duty under the Act requires public authorities to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations covering the



protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public authorities to publish equality information and equality objectives.

### **Equality Impact**

- 14 The outcomes of the review and developing strategies will support a workplace culture fairness, transparency and respectfulness for every member of our workforce and communities, owned by all Council Directorates. The three-year Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy should support the Council's vision and reflects our values and should go beyond legal compliance as we aspire to achieve excellence in equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do – an equality impact assessment will be required.

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

- 15 Equality and inclusion are integral to a successful modern workplace. The Council will need to review, develop and implement policies and systems that challenge discrimination and stereotypes across all aspects of our work. The work will require a dedicated cultural change programme that will benefit everyone in the Council and will be embedded within the development of a Council People Strategy – attracting, supporting and developing a diverse range of high quality staff will support the Council as a progressive and innovative workplace where equality and inclusion is promoted and integrated in all that we do.

Critical to this will be clarity of the Council's aspirations for this agenda.

### **Commercial/Procurement**

- 16 All procurements for the externally supported reviews complied with Dudley MBC's Contract Standing Orders (which are fully compliant with Public Sector and OJEU procurement rules and guidelines) and all funders requirements. There are no direct commercial implications associated with this report.



## **Health, Wellbeing and Safety**

17. Good or bad health and wellbeing is not simply the result of individual behaviours, genetics and medical care, but is also related to the wider determinants of health. These are a diverse range of social, economic and environmental factors which influence people's mental and physical health and wellbeing.

The link between social inequalities and differences in health outcomes is strong and persistent. Addressing the wider determinants of health, through promoting equality and inclusion, will help improve health equity as well as overall health.



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

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## **Appendices:**

- Appendix 1 - Key issues/actions arising from Equality Review and Progress made
- Appendix 2 – Key issues/actions arising from BAME Engagement Sessions in June 2020 and progress made
- Appendix 3 – Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (4<sup>th</sup> November 2020) report on the impact of Covid 19 on specific communities
- Appendix 4 – examples of Adult Social Care initiatives



## Appendix 1 - Key issues/actions arising from Equality Review and Progress made

Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
<b>Strengthen senior officer/political leadership and Organisational commitment and capacity</b>		
<p>1. SEB agrees that there is a need for dedicated staff and resources to take forward the council's equality work and asks the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development to identify what would be appropriate in line with other organisation of similar a size.</p>	<p>It was identified that the minimum additional resource required to lead on this work is x1 FTE Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Manager and x1 FTE Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Support Officer. Funding for this resource included as part of the resources to support corporate policy and performance in the Council budget which was approved at full Council in March 2021.</p>	<p>The Recruitment process will be progressed with the expectation that successful candidates will be in post by early summer 2021.</p>
<p>2. SEB identifies where in the organisation the new resources should sit, whilst acknowledging that equality needs to be owned by the whole organisation</p>	<p>SEB agreed in October 2020 that the responsibility for this work would sit within chief executives It was recognised however that whilst the role would sit within the centre, the responsibility is for all service areas across the organisation.</p>	<p>Work will progress via the lead officers from each directorate, who make up the Corporate Equality &amp; Inclusion leadership Group, to identify key priorities for the directorates which will inform the development of a workplan.</p>
<p>3. A new strategic Equality and Inclusion Leadership Group, reporting directly into SEB, be established, with directors committing to ensuring appropriate membership at a senior level</p>	<p>SEB agreed in October 2020 to the reestablishment of a new Corporate Equality &amp; Inclusion Leadership Group. The first meeting of this group took place 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021</p>	<p>The corporate group will initially meet monthly and a number of task and finish groups will be established to progress key areas of work and initiatives.</p>
<p>4. A member of SEB takes responsibility as the Council's Corporate Equality Champion and chairs the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Group</p>	<p>The Chief Executive now chairs the new Corporate Equality &amp; Inclusion Leadership Group</p>	<p>The Chief executive will provide strategic leadership as the Council's corporate Equality champion and ensure the Council achieves it public duty requirements and ambition in regard to EDI.</p>
<p>5. A charter/pledge on equality and inclusion be issued by the chief executive and group leaders to refresh the council's commitment to equality</p>	<p>This has been included as one of the priorities for progress by the Corporate Equality &amp; Inclusion Leadership Group.</p>	<p>This will form part of the work programme for the Corporate Equality &amp; Inclusion Leadership Group.</p>

Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
<b>Develop and strengthen the Council's approach and commitment to equality and Inclusion through the drawing up of a new equality and inclusion strategy</b>		
6. Develop a new 3-year equality and inclusion strategy through the strategic group focused more on outcomes	This has been included as a key priority for the Corporate Equality & Inclusion Leadership Group and has been reflected in the job role requirements of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion manager.	This will be progressed as part of the work programme for the Corporate Equality & Inclusion Leadership Group and the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion postholder will provide the support to develop further when in post.
7. Use the Equality Framework to inform the development of the strategy	This has been included as a key priority for the Corporate Equality & Inclusion Leadership Group	This will be progressed as part of the work programme for the Corporate Equality & Inclusion Leadership Group and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion post holder.
8. In developing the strategy make clearer links with the work being undertaken to reduce health inequalities and to mitigate poverty	Specific actions have been implemented as part of the work being led by Public health and Wellbeing together with partner agencies to tackle the disproportionate impact of COVID 19 on deprived communities, including those already financially struggling on benefits or low incomes and those with existing long-term health issues that make them at higher risk of serious illness or death..	Work will continue via the partnership working mechanisms in place and will be further supported by the Corporate Equality & Inclusion Leadership Group and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion postholder.



Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
Review data collected and published to meet the requirements of the specific public sector equality duties		
<p>9. Review the data collected and published to ensure that it meets the expectations of the equality duties</p>	<p>A recent review of how we collect and publish data confirmed that whilst we are up to date on the requirements for published the data, there are improvements we can make, and further work has been identified to implement these.</p>	<p>Work to improve how we collect and use data will progress and will include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review what we ask / currently capture</li> <li>• A review against this census to allow us to benchmark against community profiling</li> <li>• Agreed consistent reports for each protected characteristic</li> <li>• Commencement of reporting on maternity and pregnancy &amp; L&amp;D</li> <li>• A review case management reporting</li> </ul>
<p>10. Review how data is published and reported to members</p>	<p>As per action 9 above</p>	<p>As per action 9 above</p>
<p>11. Formally extend the period covered by the equality strategy 2016-19 to the end of the 2020/21 year to ensure the council has equality objectives in place whilst the new strategy is being developed</p>	<p>SEB agreed this action in October 2020 and that the work required to ensure equality objectives are in place whilst the new strategy is in place has commenced via specific initiatives led by members of the Corporate Equality &amp; Inclusion Leadership Group.</p>	<p>This will form part of the work programme for the Corporate Equality &amp; Inclusion Leadership Group.</p>

Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
<b>Workforce</b>		
12. Develop (or integrate) workforce equality outcomes into a People Strategy	Dudley Council's people strategy has been developed and includes specific priorities on workforce equality within it. It is at draft stage at present and is subject to further input by key stakeholders.	Further work to further develop the equality, diversity and inclusion provision within the people strategy will be undertaken and will involve engagement of SEB and other stakeholders alongside engagement with employees.
13. Review and develop an alternative equality impact assessment approach that is more suited to HR policies and restructures	Work is underway in partnership with trade unions via the independent reviews of our systems will help to inform this work	We will build on the outcomes of the independent reviews and implement change as identified from such.
14. Review HR strategies, policies and procedures to attract and develop diverse talent	Work underway in partnership with trade unions via the independent reviews of our systems will help to inform this work	We will build on the outcomes of the independent reviews and implement change as identified from such. Our HR policies and procedures will be updated to ensure we are able to deliver our aspirations in this area.
15. Create equality and inclusion competencies for leaders, managers and staff supported through training and integrated into existing measures e.g. My Annual Review	We have implemented Leadership accountabilities which outline the standards expected of all employees and specific includes requirements for equality.	Leadership accountabilities will be developed further, and equality will be built into the My Annual Review process and into onboarding and the new Corporate Induction process.
16. Focus on specific learning and development programmes	The recent Learning and Development review concluded that equality and diversity and inclusion be embedded in all training provision and to include inclusive leadership into future programmes and part of the compliance mandatory training	Work will progress to further embed EDI in our policies and all training provision for employees alongside the development of the programme of EDI Training for elected members to ensure members receive appropriate training as part of Member induction, as members of the Appeals and Appointments Committee and Code of Conduct standards

Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
17. Develop a number of HR&OD initiatives and interventions to create and support a more diverse, inclusive and talented workforce	Scoping work has begun to identify a range of initiatives and interventions for further development.	The programme of HR/OD initiatives will be jointly developed by the HR&OD and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion post holder.

## Appendix 2 - Key issues/actions arising from BAME Engagement Sessions in June 2020 and Progress made

Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
1. Review the Employee Covid-19 assessment to include living with extended families as a risk factor.	Reviewed the individual risk assessment to include a new category of considerations for personal living conditions. This included a specific reference to extended families. This has been consulted upon with trade unions and is available for all staff to use.	
2. Due to lack of awareness of the significant impact on BAME communities by none BAME employees, it is recommended that all staff are made aware of risks to BAME staff in respect to COVID-19, particularly as BAME employees are more likely to be frontline staff.	Communications were issued to the workforce regarding the risks of Covid. The information was strengthened by references of the disproportionate impact of Covid for BAME staff. Communications continues to be high on the agenda.	
3. A monitoring system is created to assess whether there is any disproportionate impact on BAME employees. The system would ascertain which groups are returning to the office and whether they are frontline or office based.	As part of return to work planning managers have been encouraged to hold sessions with staff, this included the production of a manager guide and presentation for re-induction back into the workplace. It included the specific reference to completion of the risk assessment referred to in point 1 above.	
4. Ensure BAME staff understand that they will not be treated unfairly because they are working from home in respect to redundancies, training and promotions.	This has been included in communication and reiterated as a council position for all staff in any temporary policies developed.	
5. Management Guidance is produced and training or support is delivered, to enable managers to assess the BAME section within the Employee COVID-19 assessment effectively.	Manager sessions have been developed and held. There was a low take up of this focus, so a new session was developed on “inclusive conversations” to address this point. The session is well attended and supports skill development beyond the completion of the risk assessment.	

Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
6. COVID-19 hotspots in Dudley are shared with all staff to help reduce staff anxiety.	A Covid dashboard has been developed and is now available to all staff and the community. It provides information and trends regarding borough hotspots for staff to use as part of their work planning.	
7. Ensure BAME staff involved in the engagement and others that did not partake are informed what action has been undertaken and that there is a general assessment in 3 months to assess what changes have come into effect and see if BAME staff anxiety has reduced.	Focussed communications were written and issued to staff. This has also included a follow up pulse survey including equality monitoring to identify further patterns, trends and gaps to undertake further work.	As part of wider planned engagement sessions there will be opportunities for staff to participate. These sessions are not Covid related therefore further work to reflect and touch base will be explored.
8. Recognise a range of cultural and diversity events by emailing staff on relevant dates, e.g. Black History Month, Eid, Diwali, Easter, Yum Kippur, International Women's Day, PRIDE and Disability Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of planned approach to employee engagement HR&amp;OD, CAPA and Health and Well-being now meet regularly to align campaigns. Work has been undertaken to source a diversity calendar, resulting in the decision to develop a Dudley edition – this has been scoped and is currently in development.</li> <li>In addition, working with ICT a new interactive employee engagement calendar has been developed, this includes a range of cultural and diversity days, as well as national recognition days.</li> <li>In addition, working with ICT we are developing a Dudley outlook calendar for all staff to import such days into the outlook calendar.</li> </ul>	Further work to establish workforce events will be developed to be embedded into an annual employee engagement programme.
9. Develop a Diversity & Cultural Awareness Handbook for Managers and staff illustrating Dudley's vibrant diverse community and identify key facts about different cultures and religions, ensuring it is relevant and inclusive.	This will form part of the work programme for the Corporate Equality & Inclusion Leadership Group and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion resource to develop when in post.	No work has yet been undertaken on this recommendation.

Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
<p>10. Design and deliver competency based Diversity &amp; Cultural Awareness training for managers, ensuring that the training is designed with managers.</p>		<p>As part of the L&amp;D review there is further work required for specialist on-going training.</p> <p>EDI is being embedded into the development of the new leadership development programmes and mandatory training will be reviewed in due course.</p> <p>It is recognised that external expertise and financial investment is required to support this development.</p>
<p>11. Ensure all staff are fully aware of how they can gain PPE and that there is corporate oversight to ensure consistency.</p>	<p>Covid specific communications have been established, including regular feedback and communication to staff and managers. This remains high on the agenda.</p>	

Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
Review data collected and published to meet the requirements of the specific public sector equality duties		
12.		
13.		
14.		

Review Recommendations	We did:	We will do:
Workforce		
15.		
16.		
17.		
18.		
19.		
20.		



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## **Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee**

**4<sup>th</sup> November, 2020**

### **Report of the Interim Director of Public Health and Wellbeing**

#### **Covid-19 – Impact on Specific Communities**

##### **Purpose**

1. This report informs and updates Dudley Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee on the work being undertaken through the Public Health and Wellbeing Directorate to identify and support specific communities in Dudley who are identified to be more at risk of the impacts of COVID-19.
2. This represents a joint response as we have worked closely with Council colleagues and partner agencies to support specific communities. This report captures some of the key elements but does not do full justice to the immense work undertaken across the Dudley system, in Dudley MBC, the local NHS, care homes, voluntary sector and communities. The report builds on previous public health and wellbeing reports that have been presented to Scrutiny.

##### **Recommendations**

3. It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee note the work being undertaken and continue to support the COVID-19 response.

##### **Background**

4. This report is supported by the presentation on the impact of COVID-19 on specific communities that will be delivered at the Scrutiny meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.
5. There is emerging national evidence of the disproportionate impact of COVID 19 on specific communities from a social, economic and health perspective. This includes the BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) communities, deprived communities, those already financially struggling on benefits or low incomes and those with existing long term health issues that make them at higher risk of

serious illness or death due to COVID-19. As a result, specific actions have been implemented to identify those more at risk and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 within Dudley borough.

## 6. Embedded Inclusive Approach

Overall an inclusive approach is embedded into all COVID-19 response as outlined within the outbreak control plan. The plan recognises that the success of the outbreak control measures and test and trace provision is underpinned by public engagement to build trust and participation. Specific sub-groups have been established to ensure that specific higher-risk communities and groups are considered and included in all planning and response. There are 6 subgroups 2 of which are the community, voluntary and faith settings and the vulnerable people sub-groups.

7. The **Community, Voluntary and faith setting** sub-group has met regularly since June 2020 and covers specific communities such as BAME, Roma and traveller communities. The group is diverse and includes representation from council departments (housing, community safety, planning and regeneration, communications, access and prevention, education, family solutions, commissioning and environmental health), as well as partners from a number of faith and community organisations.

8. The group continues to provide oversight and support to the development and delivery of outbreak management plans and supporting resources, as well as providing feedback/ monitoring of any insight or issues across high risk settings (places of worship, housing, Lye, GRT, community settings, BAME communities). Meetings have been consistently well attended.

9. In addition, a number of webinars have been held as follows:

- In July three webinars on COVID-19 and Test and Trace were held for those who work with or in voluntary, community and faith settings. These were attended by almost 200 people.
- In August/ September three webinars were held for colleagues working in private and public sector housing, including housing associations. These were attended by 51 people.
- In September a 'COVID-19 public health insights for community leaders' webinar delivered by the Acting Director of Public Health was held for community leaders. This offered a forum for sharing information about COVID-19 and the local response, and to have questions answered. The webinar was very well received, with 76 community leaders participating.
- A series of webinars for local BAME communities- see section 5

10. The **Vulnerable Communities Test & Trace Subgroup** has met since June 2020 and covers specific groups such as homeless, migrant communities and substance misuse clients. It includes key partners such as the Adult Substance Misuse Service, Children and Young People Substance Misuse Service, HIV Prevention and support in the community, Homelessness Services Domestic Abuse Refuge, Mental Health Support Service, Supported Living, and Family Assessment Centres
11. A standard operating procedure has been developed for these settings and is regularly updated, as are the frequently asked questions document, the high-risk locations/ place contacts and the guidance. Leads on this subgroup have regular communication with partners in video calls and via email. All communications from the council teams are shared and partners are drawn into correspondence and communicate in positive cases, outbreaks and complex situations.
12. The work of this group included establishing support for homeless in Dudley. Compared to many urban areas Dudley has relatively few rough sleepers and there is sufficient accommodation available for all homeless people in the borough. However, if a homeless person becomes ill with COVID-19 there are potential risks to others if they are unable to isolate themselves. Working closely with our housing, safeguarding and commissioning colleagues, suitable accommodation for self-isolating has been identified.
13. The **Children and Young People's (C&YP) sub-group** includes all partners across the range of C&YP settings. The group meets weekly to remove barriers and problem solve during covid-19 to keep children safe in all of our settings; Early Years, schools (primary, special, secondary and independent), colleges and childrens homes. These partners and settings can access the Children and Young People's Public Health team inbox at any time for support and guidance, especially around vulnerable children.
14. As part of our **local test and trace processes** we monitor the demographics of all positive cases and then target welfare calls at the most vulnerable – e.g. high risk wards, ages or ethnicity to identify any support needs and also to support in terms of compliance with the guidance. Community testing sites and a community swabbing team are also being set up which will improve access to testing especially for our more vulnerable communities

15. Impact of COVID-19 Local Assessment

As part of the Health and Wellbeing Board's (H&WBB) Joint Strategic Assessment process, an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the local population's health and wellbeing is being conducted. This will include assessment of both the direct impacts of the virus and the indirect impacts on the wider determinants of health, which have arisen as a result of the protection measures.



16. It is evident from national research that the burden of these impacts has not been felt equally across society, with the most disadvantaged being hit the hardest. Determining the impacts at a local level will assist in the development of priorities and inform the reset of the HWBB's strategic purpose during the post-emergency phase of the pandemic. The consequences of COVID-19 will be considered across the life course, including the social, economic, behavioural and mental health impacts, and those that have arisen due to the postponement of NHS activity during the lockdown period. There will be a focus on health inequalities throughout. The aim is to complete the interim report in December 2020 with the final report in March 2021.

17. Inclusive Community Engagement Approach:

The PHE Local Communications Planning Guide emphasises the importance of strong partner and community engagement to ensure that messages resonate with key audiences. In Dudley, over the last few years we have been working collaboratively with partners in the borough to create a vision for increasing community participation, in order to grow strong, connected, involved communities. We have also started to have a different type of conversation with partners and communities; one which focuses on assets and strengths and seeks out opportunities for greater collaboration.

18. This inclusive approach has proved invaluable throughout our response to COVID-19 as our regular conversations with community leaders and partners working with communities has provided us with rich insight into the things which have worked well and which we need to continue and grow, as well as the things which have not worked so well and which need to be done differently.

19. We have built on our connections to ensure that all members of our community have access to information about COVID-19 and how to keep themselves and others safe and well. This included:

- Providing information in a range of languages and formats to ensure accessibility. Existing Primary Care data on preferred languages was used to help prioritise which languages other than English are most widely spoken in local areas. Community leaders and administrators of local social media sites have helped to translate and disseminate key messages to our communities. Specific support including translation and interpretation for members of the Roma community in Lye was undertaken to help meet their community needs.
- Co-ordinating targeted community engagement activity with priority groups identified by PHE and local insight. These are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, single mothers with young children, people aged 65 plus, people aged 18-24 years old, 25 – 64 year olds in work, teenagers, taxi drivers, faith leaders, the Roma community, and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families on traveller sites.

- Community development workers focusing outreach efforts on communities identified as requiring additional support advice and guidance e.g. Lye Community.
- Providing opportunities for continued dialogue with partners and communities to collect stories and capture successes and using feedback from this change in approach to inform communications going forward.
- Further engagement work carried out in specific higher risk wards to identify any potential barriers to people accessing testing. Insight has been used to inform the approaches to community testing.

20. Going forward we are focusing on three strands:

- **Covid community champions** - can be anyone in the community. Maybe the person that everyone knows and trusts or someone who wants to help. People sign up to be a Champion, receive the latest advice and guidance, then share with anyone in their community, however they want. Champions also let the council know what is and isn't working.
- **Key influencers** – people respected by the target audience - to add power and impact to messages for these audiences. They may be asked to provide a quote, a short video/ voice message etc. to be used through various communication channels.
- **Work with existing groups and networks** - to ascertain what they think about COVID-19 and the test and trace process. What are the barriers to people adhering to the guidance and how can we counter these? What messages and communication channels would be most effective? Network and leads are in place for specific higher risk communities including BAME, roma and travellers, older people and single mothers with young children.

21. Inclusive Communication Approach

Communication work continues to be key to managing the response to COVID-19 in Dudley. Please see 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2020 Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny report item 5 including appendices for detailed information on the communications strand.

22. Communications and Public Affairs (CAPA) colleagues have worked seamlessly with the Public Health team to promote the key health messages and have provided a wealth information on the Council website, in printed Council publications and in local media aimed at specific communities. This has included:

- Dedicated COVID pages for specific groups on the Council website e.g. older people, shielded
- Translated guidance into several community languages. Community development workers assisted by delivering information to more distanced members of the community eg Traveller sites.
- Telephone advice line with interpreters set up in mid April. This is staffed by colleagues in the Access and Prevention team in Adult Social Care

- Ran the Be Scam Aware campaign/Safe and Sound campaigns
- Promoted health lifestyle messages about positive mental health and wellbeing
- Administered an online Tell us your views survey through the residents' ebulletin and social media channels during July/August to obtain residents' views about the Covid-19 information they received. The Council received 843 responses and 65% of the respondents had contacted the Council.
- Worked with the health intelligence team to administer and analyse a BeHeard survey to understand our local peoples' opinions on how the Dudley system has responded to COVID-19. There were 466 respondents to the survey. Headline findings show that 97% of responders at the time felt that organisations across the system were managing the COVID-19 response OK, well or extremely well. Respondents also indicated which sources of information they most trusted. High levels of trust were indicated for NHS England, Local NHS, PHE, and the Council. Facebook, twitter, Instagram and word of mouth were not seen as highly trusted sources of information. A further analysis in terms of ethnicity is in progress. The survey will inform the local public health COVID-19 response.

23. Specific Communities – Targeted Action

In addition to taking an inclusive approach to outbreak control, assessment and engagement, additional work has also been targeted at specific higher risk communities:

24. Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Communities

As part of the H&WBB's response a sub-group is being established to oversee and coordinate work across the system. Discussions have been held with key contacts in statutory and voluntary sector organisations on how the sub-group operate and the focus of the group's work going forward. The group will consider the wider inequalities issues raised in recent Public Health England report "Behind the data: Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups"

25. There was the development of a new partnership of local organisations in Dudley to respond to an urgent need for the local BAME communities to receive high quality health information to protect their health and wellbeing. Together Cornerstone Community Church, Transforming Communities Together and Dudley Council Public Health created and delivered a programme of online seminars based on the latest health research and information. This was well received and successful in addressing an immediate need to reduce fear and equip the BAME community with access to potentially lifesaving information and advice. Subject experts spoke about long-term conditions that increase risk, mental health, self-care and workplace and welfare advice.

26. 230 people registered for the webinars, 68% from BAME communities, with between 52 and 70 attending each webinar. A retrospective survey indicated that a third of those responding had changed their behaviour as a result of their learning from the seminars and 30% of those responding had invited others or had shared information about the seminars. The feedback identifies an appetite from the BAME communities to be more involved and the recommendations from the webinars will inform the workplan of the new BAME subgroup. An evaluation report on the webinars giving more detailed information is available on request from the Public Health and Wellbeing Directorate.
27. Lye Roma Community
- The onset of lockdown in March placed many people and families in a precarious position, facing a shortage of food, lack of income and insecure housing. Key concerns included language barriers to understanding health protection messages and access to the resources needed for people to support themselves and their families during lockdown. There was also a risk of community tensions, with some members of the Roma unaware of, or not observing, government guidance for Covid-19. Social gathering and spitting seeds in public places caused particular community concern
28. Representatives from community safety, neighbourhood policing, primary care, access and prevention, family support, the local church and Public Health formed a Covid-19 Sub-Group of the Lye Community Cohesion, Health and Engagement Group. An action plan was developed and implemented, which included:
- Establishing routes for the distribution of food and essential supplies, including a foodbank based within the church and door-step deliveries
  - Translation and dissemination of key public health messages through a range of avenues, from word of mouth, recorded messaging on community Facebook pages and leafleting. Neighbourhood policing supported this communication, their involvement underlining the importance of the restrictions and need to comply.
  - Facilitating application processes for benefit claims
  - Connecting members of the community to housing support
  - Re-establishing elements of the Lye Community Project support to the Roma community in a Covid-safe form
29. All partners supported implementation of the plan, with Roma community members assisting food distribution efforts. Public Health's Roma Community Development Worker was key. Using her unique relationship with the community and language skills, she provided a trusted source of information and support and facilitated access to services.
30. The community have been hugely appreciative of the assistance provided. Their feedback suggests that people were enabled to come through the crisis well, that they have felt valued, and could rely on services for the help they needed.

31. Traveller Sites

Sites were contacted by telephone to provide information verbally (public health messages and information on available local support), make a welfare check and ensure they had a point of contact for any concerns or queries. The approach taken was informed by the particular needs and circumstances of the community i.e. low literacy levels and lack of access to means of electronic communication. The warden at the Council managed Oak Lane site remained a key point of contact for the community there, providing a known and trusted source of information and support

32. Community Cohesion

The multi-agency Community Cohesion Strategic Group has met twice since the “on set” of COVID 19. Work takes place to reduce the risk of tensions and the impact on community cohesion outside of the Strategic Group meetings. Some members of the Group are also members of a number of the sub-groups set up to respond to COVID 19.

33. Dudley’s definition of community tension is **“A situation arising from acts or events that cause people to feel negative toward one another and/or services provided, putting at risk public order or threatening the peace and stability of local communities.”**

34. Tensions may manifest through mistrust, miscommunication, the breakdown of community relationships, violence (hate crime, violent extremism), isolation, criminal/physical damage, damage to the reputation of organisations and communities. Overall tensions for the Borough have been assessed as low to date

35. There have been a number of “campaigns” delivered through Safe & Sound (Dudley’s Community Safety Partnership) to help to address concerns and provide advice. These have included:

- Hate Crime – to raise awareness of the different strands of hate crime, reporting options and where to receive advice and support
- Modern Slavery – to raise awareness of the different types of modern slavery and how to report
- On-line risks and harms and– advice given around how to stay safe on-line
- “Fake news”/miscommunication – advice given about trusted sources of information



36. 'At high risk' and 'at extremely high risk' Vulnerable

The Government identified two tiers of vulnerability based on people's age and health status- the at high risk and the at extremely high risk (shielding) groups and made specific recommendations in terms of social distancing and self-isolating to these groups.

37. At high risk of COVID-19:

In Dudley, we worked with the CCG to identify approximately 80,000 who were considered to be at higher risk of COVID-19 due to their age (over 70), pre-existing health conditions or through being pregnant. We then provided specific local advice, information and resources about staying safe for these people online and arranged for them to be contacted by their GP and sent a text message with a link to the website if they had a smartphone. Those who did not have a mobile phone were written to by their GP, summarising the web content.

The self-management programme – which is a support service for people with long term conditions is now delivering using alternatives to a face to face service. Telephone courses have been piloted. Virtual courses are in progress and includes a course for people who have a caring role.

38. Information targeted at older people in the format of a booklet was produced and distributed widely. There is a Council webpage specifically for older people which is updated on a regular basis, this includes information on staying safe, keeping occupied at home and signposting to local support services

39. Support has also continued to community groups and projects funded by the Connecting Older People's fund, and has focused on helping them revise their original project plans in light of COVID-19

40. Food and Other Support to All Vulnerable Groups:

Working in partnership with Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (DCVS) and Black Country (BC) Foodbank, a community-based support response was mobilised to support any vulnerable resident in Dudley. This included the establishment of six locality virtual community support networks, with the principle focus being to identify and provide support for the most vulnerable. A website was set up so people could apply to volunteer. The community support networks were able to help provide essential food, medicines and befriending support

41. As demand increased we worked with Organisational Development colleagues, to identify, staff and operate a food packing and distribution warehouse at Saltwells Education Centre. This provided food parcels for vulnerable, shielded, financially struggling and self-isolating residents, including supporting those with specific dietary requirements due to medical conditions.

42. Over the 14 week lock down period, approximately 3594 people were contacted and were helped with essential food support either by a volunteer being assigned them to do a personal shop, or them receiving a food parcel from Black Country Foodbank or the Local Authority food hub. Support in terms of over the counter medication collection, benefits and advice support, and 'phone chats' for those on their own was also available.
43. Contact was co-ordinated through a single 0300 helpline staffed with Dudley CVS, library and Citizen's Advice Bureau staff. In the last 8 weeks of operation, we were able to set up a digital referral platform enabling easier collection of data on demographics and need.
44. We also supported other community organisations with food stocks who were providing food parcels to the financially vulnerable including the BC foodbank and Loaves and Fishes social supermarket.
45. Out of lockdown support is still available to those who need it and a step-up plan has been developed in case lockdown or shielding occurs again. What was particularly heartening in Dudley, however, was the vast number of people who mobilised themselves to help their neighbours, friends and communities. This is evident through case stories that are being collected through DCVS and Public Health.
46. DCVS continue to co-ordinate a community response to COVID-19 in the borough, working with voluntary and community groups and the volunteer centre to mobilise essential social support for the most vulnerable. The 6 virtual networks have been collapsed into 1 borough wide community support network. The network will also continue to provide a single point of access for the co-ordination and mobilisation of support for vulnerable people and families. The DCVS approach will draw on learning from the pandemic to date, for instance introducing volunteer roles which address digital exclusion within our communities.
47. Extremely High risk (shielding):
- Government advice for the **extremely high risk** was to stay at home and self-isolate for 12 weeks. During this time, a national support system was introduced for this group where shielded residents could sign up for support in terms of essential food supplies (national delivery of food parcels), and other support delivered locally such as check in and chat, medication delivery and basic care needs. A list of shielded residents was available to the Council and updated regularly by the national team.
48. To ensure the wellbeing of the "shielded" group, Public Health formed a team of redeployed staff to contact shielding residents. Of the approximately 8000 (initially) in this group, we contacted those who requested delivery of essential food or medicine supplies to ensure that they received them. Latterly our calls

focused on encouraging residents who are shielding but were not registered with the national program to register

49. After lock-down, calls to the shielding group continued to identify what plans they had in place to access essential food if there was a future lockdown, with a view to encouraging the take-up of priority supermarket slots on offer to the shielding group.
50. Regular information updates have been and continue to be emailed, texted or posted to this group and there is a dedicated council webpage of advice for shielding residents.
51. During lock-down approximately 1380 shielded residents were provided with food parcels on a weekly basis by the national team. The Council, in partnership with DCVS and the Black Country Foodbank, provided stop-gap food parcels to those waiting for the national delivery system to start or where the national system failed to deliver parcels. The local provision also topped up national food parcels where specific dietary requirements were needed.
52. 380 shielded were identified to need support with basic care which adult social care triaged and organised support where needed. Action was also taken to ensure all 'shielded' children and young people were receiving support or contact from the most appropriate service. This included cross checking children known to Children's Services against people registering for support via the national shielded scheme
53. Struggling with Mental Wellbeing

A range of actions were implemented including:

- Information and signposting to local support has been included in all communication and advice sent out to residents and is also available on the council COVID website pages. The Lets Get website was also updated with information including mental health support, financial support and general wellbeing support. <https://lets-get.com/healthy-lifestyles/mental-wellbeing/looking-after-your-health-and-wellbeing-throughout-covid19/>
- A new provider (Beacon Centre) was procured in September to deliver a befriending scheme for older people. This is jointly funded with Dudley CCG. The service specifically targets older people at high risk of loneliness and isolation.
- Engagement has started with partners including voluntary sector organisations to explore impact of COVID-19 on loneliness and isolation on older people to address challenges and share good practice. Network event planning in progress to take this insight work further.
- Working with DCVS volunteers, support is also available locally for 'a check in and chat'

#### 54. Financially Struggling

A range of actions were implemented including:

- Work with colleagues in Benefits Services to produce a Factsheet about benefits available and how to claim. The Welfare Rights service have set up an advice line. We have also helped Dudley Business First to develop an advice page on Coronavirus and Business.
- The Credit Union has remained open as usual. In discussion with Benefits colleagues, in person identity checks have been relaxed for emergency welfare loan claimants to make it easier for those in need to claim whilst in isolation. In July the Government announced an Emergency Assistance Grant to support people in financial hardship as a result of COVID-19. Whilst there are funds in this grant, the loan scheme has been suspended and people are directed to the grant scheme. From 1<sup>st</sup> August to 7<sup>th</sup> October, 172 people have been given a grant. 401 applications are in process. Most approved applications are from unemployed, 18 have been from employed claimants and 5 from furloughed claimants.
- The Government has introduced financial support to people who have to self isolate. This scheme went live on 12<sup>th</sup> October. Those people who meet the criteria will receive a payment of £500 per week within 3 days of their claim. As at 14<sup>th</sup> October, 71 applications have been received, of which 33 have been refused as they fail to meet the scheme criteria, 35 have applied but have not supplied the evidence required to make a payment and 3 have received payment.
- Working with local partners, residents can access benefits, welfare and debt advice provided by CAB

#### 55. Children eligible for Free School Meals

During March, Public Health, Integrated Commissioning and DCVS coordinated the large-scale distribution of meals to families eligible for free school meals with support from DCVS, utilising both council staff and volunteers. Over 25 schools were supported, and meals delivered to nearly 6000 pupils during the interim period before the supermarket voucher scheme was implemented

56. At end of March 2020 the national FSM supermarket voucher scheme was introduced for schools to issue vouchers to families eligible for free school meals. For any family where they are not able to leave the house and have no means to arrange collection of the food parcel alternative arrangements are available. Families experiencing problems accessing vouchers were supported with vouchers from the council.

## **Finance**

57. Dudley MBC has received a grant of £1,941,764 to implement local plans to support the Test and Trace programme. Additionally almost £400,000k has been received to support the emergency assistance grant scheme. Self-isolation payments of £500/person are also supported by central government. Dudley MBC applies for this funding retrospectively.

## **Law**

58. Section 73A (1) of the NHS Act 2006, inserted by section 30 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, gives the Director of Public Health responsibility for all their local authority's duties to take steps to improve the health of the people in its area and Any of the Secretary of State's public health protection or health improvement functions that s/he delegates to local authorities, either by arrangement or under regulations – these include services mandated by regulations made under section 6C of the 2006 Act, inserted by section 18 of the 2012 Act. The Coronavirus Act 2020 and related legislation was enacted to make provision in connection with Coronavirus, and for connected purposes

## **Equality Impact**

59. There is clear evidence that COVID-19 has a disproportionate impact on different groups within the population. Many analyses have shown that older age, ethnicity, male sex and geographical areas, are associated with the risk of getting the infection, experiencing more severe symptoms and higher rates of death. This work aims to mitigate these impacts.

## **Human Resources/Organisational Development**

60. Staff from the authority and from partners have continued to work in a flexible to respond to the COVID-19 situation. Training and development has been provided as necessary. Workforce requirements are continually being reviewed. A redeployment policy is being developed with recommendation to align to business continuity plans. Current flexible working and overtime policies will be used to support any overtime payments.

## **Commercial/Procurement**

61. It is not anticipated that any large procurements will be needed. This will be reviewed on regular basis

## **Health, Wellbeing and Safety**

62. COVID-19 is a major public health concern and its impact on the health and wellbeing of the population cannot be underestimated. It has had a disproportionate effect on a number of different population groups and some of the most vulnerable groups in society. This work aims to mitigate the negative impacts.

## **Communication**

63. The COVID-19 response including the development and delivery of the outbreak plans has required substantial contribution from our communications team, including support to the COVID-19 engagement group.



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## COVID-19 in Dudley: Analysis by Ethnicity

For the purposes of all analysis in this report, BAME groups are defined as all ethnic groups other than White British. Data correct as at 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020.

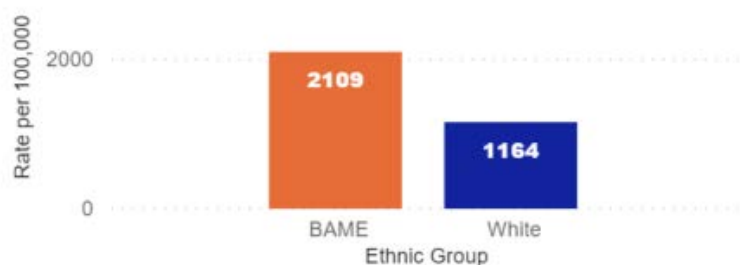
### Recorded Cases

There have been 4663 cases recorded in Dudley residents since March 2020. Of these, 869 (19%) were from BAME groups. The proportion of the Dudley population from BAME groups is estimated to be approximately 12.8%. 530 cases (11%) had no ethnicity recorded.

The overall rate is currently 1450 cases per 100,000 population, but when split by ethnic group, the rate is almost double in BAME groups when compared with the White group (figure 1).

Figure 1:

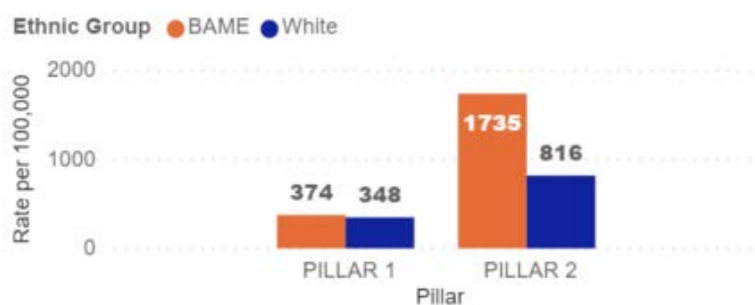
Rate per 100,000 by Ethnic Group



When split by type of testing, Pillar 1 (NHS testing) rates are similar in both White and BAME groups, whereas rates are much higher in BAME groups when only including Pillar 2 (community) testing (figure 2).

Figure 2:

Rate per 100,000 by Pillar and Ethnic Group



The rates in both groups have continued to rise since August 2020, but the rate in the BAME group appears to be increasing at a slightly faster rate than the White group (figure 3). However, in the most recent 28 days, cases in the White group have increased by 381% (140% in BAME groups) when compared to the previous 28-day period (figure 4).

Figure 3:

7 Day Cases Moving Avg by Date and Ethnic Group

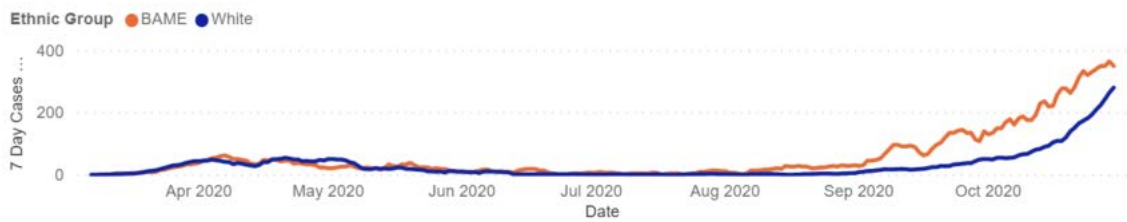


Figure 4:



## Age

The overall average age of cases is lower in the BAME group than the White group (37 compared to 49 years). This has decreased in the last 28 days for both groups. (36 and 43 respectively)

In both White and BAME groups, the majority of cases recorded are in the 25-49 and 50+ age groups. When considering rates per 100,000 (figure 5), the highest rates in both groups are in the 20-24 age group, followed by the 50+ age group. Comparing the previous two 28-day periods, there has been an increase in cases in all ages and ethnic groups (figure 6).

Figure 5:

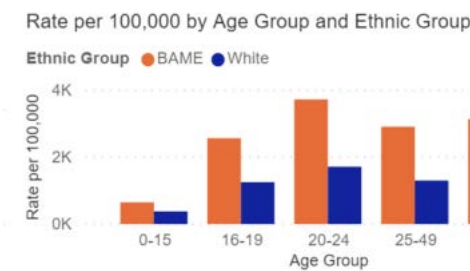
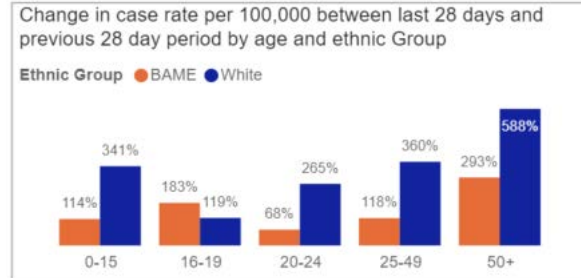


Figure 6:

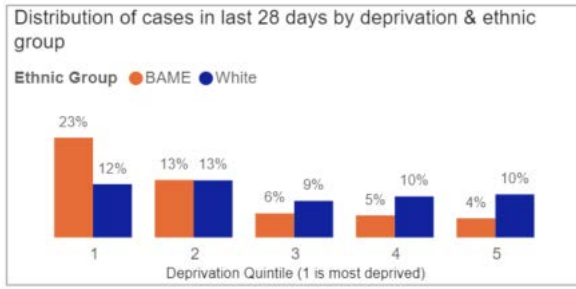


## Deprivation

In the white group, cases are fairly evenly distributed across the quintiles (figure 7). In the BAME group, however, more than two thirds of all cases are in the two most deprived quintiles.



Figure 7:



## Appendix 4 - Examples of EDI provision within Adult Social Care

### Queens cross network

Deaf support Team offer services in a 'co-produced' environment. Queens cross has played host to a Deaf community 'sign café'. The sign café is attended by large numbers of people from the deaf community. Attended by profoundly deaf people and some with varying degrees of hearing loss. A wide range of activities take place that include Guest speakers on topics of interest ranging from 'Winter warmth' to 'West Midlands Police'. Lunch is provided by the kitchen team from the charity 'Disability in action'. From the Sign café the 'Dudley Deaf Focus group' was formed. Health watch Dudley and DMBC deaf support team have supported members of Dudley's deaf community to meet as 'Deaf focus group'. The group designed and launched the 'I am deaf' card a couple of years ago, which is affectively an 'emergency card' for someone to carry on their person, so that if they are involved in an emergency incident, someone trying to support them would know they are deaf. The card initiative was shortlisted for an award by 'Signature' the awarding body for British sign language skills. Deaf support services launched online support for deaf people some years ago via 'skype'. This has been taken further during the covid pandemic when all consultations with deaf community members have gone online via the Watts app platform. Creating a seamless service during covid which has been uninterrupted by the pandemic "lockdown" arrangements.

### Disability in action (DIA)

Disability in action a charity which works in partnership with the local authority to run Queens cross. The DMBC management team of Queens cross work closely with the DIA management on all aspects of centre life, and the development of services. Many local peer support groups and charitable organisations run support cafes (like sign café, MS society, Dudley Deaf Youth Club and many others) so that people who have similar sorts of disabilities can come together to gain support from each other, as well as share common interests and aspirations. Most recently the centre has payed host to a Direct payments café/ support group, which is now called "Talking Direct". The group has been involved in key consultations around the Dudley community information directory (DCID). During the covid pandemic, Disability in action has played a pivotal role in ensuring people who have physical and sensory disabilities can still meet together online, in a virtual way. Disability in action have applied for and been awarded funding to buy in tutors for online activities in various different interests and pastimes. From gentle dance to craft-based activities.

### Dementia gateway service and dementia advisor service

The council run dementia gateway service and dementia advisor service recognises and promotes the individuals identity and supports via an holistic and "wrap around" approach to care and incorporate the '6Cs' principles into all aspects of care and support: care, compassion, competence, communication, courage, commitment. On a daily basis the management and staff team address diversity, equality and inclusion in dementia care by the use of inclusive language ("the person lives with dementia not suffers from") the use of preferred method(s) of communication; preferred names and titles; Activities offered to



individuals build on their current abilities and they match the use of language to current abilities of individuals. Adaptation of resources and environments to enable active participation. The Crystal Gateway and Brett Young are both nationally recognised as dementia friendly designed buildings and are furnished with familiar artefacts in the environment with provision of adapted resources to enable independent personal care.

Staff have been trained in the principles of dementia care mapping so they are able to identify an individual's uniqueness, trained to observe an individual to note characteristics, reactions, responses, differences in personality. Unpaid carers and family members are encouraged to provide information when forming plans for support and care

Assistive technology is used (RITA – Reminiscence Interactive Therapy and Activities which helps to calm, stimulate and reduce agitation whilst engaging the person with memory and thinking based on life experience use of music, use of familiar sounds to promote reassurance, use of personal histories in individual profiles. provision of familiar activities at an appropriate level.

Dudley was the first authority in the UK to recognise the value and benefit of Playlist for Life - a music and dementia charity founded in 2013 that saw a unique, personal playlist of music that has meaning for an individual.

As part of the Dudley Dementia Friendly Communities activity during 2018 and 2019 Play List Help Points were introduced into Halesowen and Stourbridge where trained individuals can assist carers and the person living with dementia to design their playlist on their preferred device.

The Dudley Dementia Action Alliance, which is made up of representatives from voluntary, statutory, retail, commercial, medical services to name a few is working to maintain the Dudley Borough Dementia Friendly Communities Status it gained in 2018 where people with dementia are understood, respected and supported within their local communities. Maintaining this national award from Alzheimer's Society is achieved by delivering Dementia Friends Awareness sessions to interested local groups, clubs, churches, GP surgeries and working with the local community to make small changes that makes their business/venue/organisation more "dementia friendly", at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic the Chief Officer signed a letter headed "Hidden disability, being dementia friendly during coronavirus" reminding local shop managers, whilst observing safe distancing requirements that dementia is a condition that is not always seen, the impact their decision may have on carers being able to obtain essential shopping and the benefits to the carer and person with dementia to be able to continue to shop.



The Me, myself and I group formed as a result of an education programme linked to the “Who looks after me” sessions provided by Public Health Colleagues and hosted by the dementia gateway services. This group offers their views and opinions on how the Integrated Dudley Dementia Strategy is developed and influences how it prioritises its work providing real lived experiences, based on them being “experts by experience” and supports national research activity into dementia. The group is also used as a reference group / focus group when looking to remodel current council dementia services.

## **Lye Community Project**

Lye Community Project (LCP) was established in 1992 as a service with a particular focus on improving access for the BAME communities. It has evolved into a generic access, prevention and information point for the whole community and sits within the wider Access and Prevention Social Work Team. Whilst the service essentially provides a social care service, its design is based on the assumption that the service supports people with complex interrelated issues and needs. The LCP and wider Access Team have been successful in establishing a bank of skills and knowledge to offer a range of advice and guidance across a number of domains, such as; housing, immigration, domestic violence advice, safeguarding, welfare and benefits and general health and wellbeing advice. Furthermore, LCP and the broader Access Team act as the main screening centre for all initial No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) cases. Extensive work has also been completed to encourage and develop partnerships with different organisations and professionals; including those from faith-based organisations and community groups, including the Asian Elders Group and the Afro-Caribbean Group. LCP and the wider Access Team ensure services are inclusive and work to serve all parts of the Dudley community by ensuring culturally appropriate engagement and community development approaches.

Furthermore, following the success pilot of the Integrated Community Team’s, the model has been rolled out across the borough and is a key element to the LCP and wider Access Team’s offering. The Integrated Community Team meetings are run weekly and are attended by multi-disciplinary professionals, including: GP’s, Nurses, Therapists and our Adult Social Care employees. The purpose of the meetings are to discuss any adults of concern within the community, with the aim of:

- Preventing and delaying the need for care and support
- Enabling early intervention with health social care needs
- Reducing any unnecessary hospital admissions



The service has continued to operate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and support the local communities. Additionally, the LCP has been supporting the local governments response to COVID-19 and has worked closely with Public Health and the Track and Trace system and local testing sites.

Lye Community Cohesion Health and Engagement Group that meet frequently bringing together a range of key partners is supported by the LCP and Access Team Managers playing an active part to find solutions to issues that have an impact on the communities of Lye and its surrounding areas.



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## **Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 18 March 2021**

### **Report of the Acting Deputy Chief Executive**

#### **Social Value Policy for Dudley MBC – Consultation**

##### **Purpose**

1. To consult with Corporate Scrutiny as the Council develops a Social Value Policy; to seek input on priority Themes and Measures and to advise the timescales for completion.

##### **Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that Members
  - Note the work to date in developing a draft Policy and how it aligns to
    - The Council Plan
    - The Borough Vision
    - The Dudley Deal
  - Provide feedback, advice and suggestions on the priority Themes and Measures included in the Policy – specifically section 3 of appendix 1.
  - Note that the findings of the scrutiny working group on procurement have been fed into the development of the policy.
  - Note timescales and process for finalising the policy.

##### **Background**

3. Following the Scrutiny Working Group on procurement in Dudley Council in 2019/20 a consultant was appointed to undertake a “State of the Nation” review. The report led to a Procurement Improvement Programme (PIP) which is providing a fundamental modernisation of procurement across the Council. A key element of the PIP is to establish a Social Value (SV) Policy for the Council. Dudley MBC does not currently have a Policy unlike the other Mets within the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and most other unitary Councils.

4. A team comprising subject matter experts from across the Council is developing the themes, key priorities and measures and a comprehensive consultation process is underway. An important part of this consultation is to consult councillors from across the political spectrum to ensure their views are included and the Policy itself has longevity.
5. Extensive research and benchmarking has taken place which includes reference to the following sources
  - SV Policies from the WMCA and other local Councils.
  - Other Councils that are recognised as “leading lights” in the application of SV such as Manchester and Preston, where the Community Wealth Building model has been adopted.
  - The National Procurement Strategy 2018, which has one of its core themes “Enhancing Community benefits”
  - The recommendations of the scrutiny report in 2019 have been reviewed. This report focussed primarily on enhancing opportunities for local supplier with Council contracts. This is a key priority within the Policy (appendix 1 section 3) and the Policy has gone considerably further to identify environmental and community/social benefits that should be deliverable through this SV policy.
6. A detailed implementation plan and a Guidance document will be developed alongside the Policy. This will include:
  - Detailed advice for staff on applying and measuring SV.
  - Training and communication materials and templates.
  - Approach to supplier enablement including capacity building workshops for suppliers.

#### What is Social Value and why it's important?

7. SV is the delivery of wider financial and non-financial benefits achieved by delivering Council contracts through **Economic, Environmental and Social** benefits that improve the wellbeing of individuals, communities and organisations. The SV Act 2012 requires all public-sector bodies to “have regard to” these benefits through public services contracts. Dudley Council spends c. £300m pa. which we can focus on our priority needs through SV commitments in contracts and channelling suppliers’ Social Responsibility budgets.
8. Benefits come as either **tangible or intangible** and the nationally recognised Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) contain proxy benefits with validated financial values.
  - **Economic** benefits include:
    - Focus job creation: locally and for the most needy
    - Ensuring we advertise all opportunities locally to SMEs – at present this is inconsistent
    - Pay staff fair and sustainable wages – esp. in low skilled jobs
    - Pay their suppliers promptly to ensure cash flow



- We become small-business friendly, so our processes and contracts are inclusive to trade with local SME's
- **Environmental** benefits include:
  - Address carbon reduction and emissions
  - Improve energy performance using renewable energy
  - Improve local green spaces
- **Social** benefits include:
  - Support communities recovering from the Covid pandemic
  - Improving skills and access to digital technology
  - Target reduction in inequalities such as health and inclusion
  - More people with better jobs are better able to provide for their families

## 9. Social Value myths

SV is often misunderstood and a number of statements to “bust” a series of myths are in Appendix 2.

## 10. The Policy

The policy is still draft until the consultation process is complete and is attached as Appendix 1. An accompanying summary is attached as Appendix 3 and highlights key features and will be fully populated following consultation. The key themes are

- Supporting stronger and safer communities
- Creating a cleaner and greener place
- Growing the economy and creating jobs

Under each theme are a series of priorities – 6 at present. The purpose of this consultation is to identify the key priorities so the Council can focus primarily on a total of 6 to 10 themes rather than 18. This will ensure a significantly greater focus and therefore impact where required.

Measures and Targets for each of the priority themes are currently being developed based upon the National Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs).

The Policy itself will be applied in a tiered way so that contracts of greater value will be expected to deliver substantially more social, economic or environmental benefits.

The application of “Local” in terms of employment and buying locally will depend upon specific principles. Local will be defined as:

- Local Level One – Boundary of 4 Black Country Councils
- Local Level Two – Wider West Midlands Regions (Mets, Unitary and Counties)





## 11. Consultation

The purpose of the consultation is to seek wider community and business views on SV priorities in order to meet local needs; and to identify support that potential and current suppliers require in applying SV.

Members across both parties have been provided an opportunity to comment on the Policy along with FAFE (Forging a Future Executive) which includes the Chamber of Commerce, DVCS and our public sector partners.

## 12. Timescales, Approvals and Implementation

The main consultation ran from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 to 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021. The Corporate Scrutiny Committee provides a final opportunity to contribute.

The Policy will be finalised by end March/early April for approval by the Strategic Executive Board. In the absence of Cabinet in April, the Policy will be considered by the Portfolio Holder for approval via Decision Sheet process in April.

Implementation will commence once these approvals are complete.

## Finance

13. The 2021/22 budget includes £170k targeted at improving the Procurement function within the Council, which includes establishing a Social Value Policy.

## Law

14. There are no legal comments that need stipulating so long as the Policy and its application are compliant with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

## Equality Impact

15. One of the intentions of having a Social Value Policy is to address inequalities through targeted interventions by suppliers and priority iii under the theme of "Growing the economy and create jobs" specifically addresses this.
16. This report is part of the bigger project of the improvements to procurement in Dudley and the equality impact assessment is produced at that level and includes this work stream.

## Human Resources/Organisational Development

17. This is a new Council Policy and its application will affect every employee involved in the procurement process to understand how social value will operate. Whilst managing their procurements, line managers will need to identify the support and resources required for their teams on how social value will operate in practice. With assistance from the Procurement team development training will be accessed via e learning, team meeting sessions and face to face support.

## **Commercial/Procurement**

18. There is not anticipated to be any adverse impact to the Council regarding trade and a likely positive impact on our customer base by seeing the Council adopt a Social Value Policy.

The Social Act 2012 requires public bodies to “have regard to” Social Value in its procurements and this Policy will provide the framework to do so.

The Policy is consistent with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

The next time Contract Standing Orders are reviewed they can be amended to reflect the Policy.

## **Health, Wellbeing and Safety**

19. A Social value policy will create additional capacity and resource for use in the community to address health inequalities. This may be in the form of employing local people through to supporting community groups. The committed social value contribution from organisations can contribute to strategic plans such as mitigating poverty in the Borough, increasing community involvement and engagement and helping towards Covid recovery.

*Matt Williams*

**Matt Williams – Acting Deputy Chief Executive**

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## **Appendices**

1. Draft Social Value Policy v 0.9
2. Dispelling Social Value Myths
3. Draft Social Value 2021+ Plan

## **List of Background Documents**

None

# Dudley Council

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## Social Value Policy

### 1. Introduction

Dudley Council's expenditure of approx. £300m per annum on goods, services and works has the capacity to enable the application of substantial social value outcomes and benefits. These will improve the quality of life and life chances of Dudley's residents and enhance the economy and environment of the local area.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 states:

"If a relevant authority proposes to procure or make arrangements for procuring the provision of services, ... goods or the carrying out of works...the authority must consider how what is proposed to be procured might improve the **economic, social and environmental well-being** of the relevant area and, in conducting the process of procurement, how it might act with a view to securing that improvement." It must also "consider whether to undertake any consultations as to matters to be considered" under that process.

Social value requires thinking about how to achieve outcomes in a more integrated way at the pre-procurement stage. Rather than thinking about services in isolation or in the short term, this approach requires consideration of long-term costs, sustainability and how inclusion of additional social value outcomes can potentially reduce pressures in other areas and provide capacity and funding for improved community benefits.

To implement this policy we seek measurable, verifiable **social value outcomes** that:

- (i) are relevant to what is proposed to be procured and proportionate to the contract
- (ii) can legitimately be included in contract / grant specifications and grant value
- (iii) contribute to achieving the Council's priorities

Dudley Council is setting out its commitment to Social Value through this policy. Our aim is to deliver additional value through procurement activity to benefit the residents, economy and environment of the Borough. The Council is also committed to working with other public bodies in the borough so that through a collaborative approach the benefits to Dudley will multiply.



This policy sets challenging standards. It drives for additional value along with culture change within the Council and has relevance to all employees and Members of the Council. As key partners in our objective to deliver additional value through our external spend there is a significant additional and positive impact that our Supply Chain can provide.

### Definition of Social Value

*The additional benefits and outcomes to the community from commissioning and procurement processes over and above the delivery of goods, services and works*

## 2. Policy Context

Our ambition and Social Value objectives are fully aligned with Dudley's key aims and values:

### 1. Supporting stronger and safer communities

We are committed to strengthening communities and empowering people to be self-reliant and independent and we take pride in working with our residents to deliver our services around their needs. We will therefore promote the use of the voluntary and social enterprise sector within our supply chain and help build local knowledge and resilience.

### 2. Creating a cleaner and greener place

From our roads and towns to our parks and nature reserves, our environment is our most valuable asset, providing the landscape in which our residents live. We will work hard with local businesses and communities to ensure the places where people live are cleaner and greener and we will continue to promote sustainable procurement that protects the long-term future of our planet for our children.

### 3. Growing the economy and creating jobs

Through an extensive package of regeneration and housing projects, we are making it clear that it is Dudley's time to build, connect and grow. We will ensure that our communities develop new skills and gain meaningful employment. We will also encourage employers in the region to invest in new jobs and skills open for everyone.

We are therefore committed to ensuring local businesses are provided with the skills to compete and are also offered the opportunity to work within our supply chain.



The strong link between the Council plan, the Borough vision and Social Value are reflected in Dudley's matrix of Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs).

**The Council Plan** <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/plan/plans-policies-strategies/council-plan/>

**The Borough Vision** <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/plan/plans-policies-strategies/council-plan/>

**The Dudley Deal** <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/council-community/your-council/the-dudley-deal>

### 3. Priority Themes and Measures

**Key Themes** in the delivery of Social Value that reflect the Council Plan and Vision are:

#### **Supporting stronger and safer communities**

- i. Suppliers pay staff fair and sustainable rates of pay.
- ii. Support the safeguarding and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- iii. Provide opportunities for all, including the most vulnerable, to make a valuable contribution. (Includes initiatives to tackle homelessness, reduce crime and supporting temporary housing schemes.)
- iv. Support local people to maximise their knowledge and skills and access employment opportunities improving skills and access to digital technology.
- v. Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents and employees considering equality and diversity in the provision and operation of services. (Includes a workforce that is representative of the communities we serve, where relevant and proportionate.)
- vi. Address deprivation and provide life changes

#### **Creating a cleaner and greener place**

- i. Commitment to addressing the climate emergency
- ii. Reduce carbon intensive activity
- iii. Improved energy performance incorporating renewable energy

- iv. Efficient use of resource and waste reduction through environmental management
- v. Support improvements to air quality through sustainable travel and transport solutions and reducing emissions to air from other sources
- vi. Implement local projects and initiatives that retain, protect and enhance the natural environment

**Growing the economy and create jobs**

- i. Create jobs for local people
- ii. Support for individuals made redundant as a result of the Covid pandemic
- iii. Provide support for young people to access apprenticeships, training opportunities and work experience – prioritising:
  - o Care leavers
  - o Long term unemployed
  - o Those with disabilities
  - o Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and
  - o Those Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETS)
- iv. Advertising subcontracting opportunities to a diverse local supply chain including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs)
- v. Prompt payment through the supply chain (in line with terms of primary contract) to ensure cash flow and support for SME’s
- vi. Promote the support and training opportunities made available through DRA (Dudley Regeneration Academy)

**Measures to reflect the Key Themes**

*Details of the Outcomes and Measures to reflect the key Themes will be included in appendix 1. These are selected from the measures in the TOMs to make easier.*

**4. Application of Social Value**

Due to the wide range of services provided by the Council there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach and, as such, this Policy and its associated guidance should be considered alongside advice from Procurement, Legal, and other relevant teams to ensure specific service or departmental needs are fully considered.

**Thresholds.**

As more Social Value can be delivered from higher value contracts a tiered approach to optimise benefits shall be adopted using the following guidance, based on contract value:

	<b>Tier 1</b> Policy applied where possible	<b>Tier 2</b> Light touch application tailored by nature of contract or grant	<b>Tier 3</b> Fully apply Social Value with a full action plan
Contracts for Services and Grant	<£200k	£200k to £1m	Over £1m



Contracts for supply of Goods	< £1m	£1m to £2.5m	Over £2.5m
Contracts for Works	< £1m	£1m to Works threshold	Above the Works threshold

In the case of a mixed contract e.g. a contract for the supply of goods and services, the type of contract that characterises the main subject matter of the contract in question will apply.

When Dudley use a framework from another contracting authority then social value should be optimised to the extent permitted by the framework guidance.

### Definition of "Local"

The application of Local Employment and Buying Locally will depend upon the specific principle and can be considered as:

- Local Level One – Boundary of 4 Black Country Councils
- Local Level Two – Wider West Midlands Regions (Mets, Unitary and Counties)

## 5. Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Value

Bidders will respond to the Social Value outcomes in the Council's commissioning and procurement activities and describe how they can improve the economic, social and environmental well-being in Dudley.

It is insufficient to merely consider Social Value. Delivery of benefits through Social Value embedded into contracts will be a requirement. Non-delivery will be by exception requiring formal approved by the Procurement Management Group.

### Non-Delivery of Social Value

As the Social Value can carry a weight of up to 20% in the evaluation process it can become a significant element of the total. Successful contractors will be required as part of their contract to fully deliver their Social Value commitments and non-delivery can be considered a breach of contract.

## 6. Review and Additional Information

DMBC will periodically review its Social Value Policy in consultation with key stakeholders to consider any changes in priorities, for example arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, changes in legislation arising from Brexit or changes to the Social Value Act 2012.

A comprehensive guidance pack for the application of Social Value accompanies this Policy and is updated from time to time.

## Appendix 2 – Dispelling Social Value Myths

### Social Value myths

SV is often misunderstood and a number of statements to “bust” a series of myths are in Appendix 2.

the following aims to dispel several myths.

- *“Social Value adds to suppliers’ costs”?* **False**
  - Suppliers deliver SV through the course of their contract – integrating SV delivery of benefits to their day to day processes
  - Taking a holistic view of needs and social value commitments we avoid added costs
  
- *“If I want 50 trees planting, I can just order that”* **False**
  - Social value should be relevant to the services being provided and proportionate to scale of the contract
  
- *“SV goes to those that shout loudest – not the most needy”* **Avoidable**
  - Working with Public Health and Communities we will develop a means of “brokering” supplier capacity with community need
  
- *“SV is at best tokenistic”* **Improvable**
  - Maybe at present. We will make it a contractual requirement and measure suppliers SV alongside other performance measures
  
- *“Nobody really understands SV or how to deliver, measure and manage”* **Changeable**
  - Alongside the policy we are developing detailed implementation guidance for our suppliers and officers. There is lots of excellent practice across the country
  - We will develop SV “champions” internally to lead on different themes



# Social Value 2021+

## What is Social Value?

**Social Value** is the delivery of wider financial and non-financial benefits achieved through the delivery of contracts following a procurement process.

Social Value includes Economic, Environmental and Social benefits that improve the wellbeing of individuals, communities and organisations.

## Social Value Act 2012

The Act calls for all public-sector procurement and commissioning to “have regard to” **economic, social and environmental** well-being in connection with public services contracts.

## OUR DEFINITION OF SOCIAL VALUE

The additional benefits and outcomes to the community from commissioning and procurement processes over and above the delivery of goods, services and works.

## Our Aim (need to reflect Dudley deal)

Our aim is to deliver additional value to our residents, businesses and local environment through procurement. We will work with other public bodies in the borough as well as businesses of significant size and standing, with whom we will form a Dudley Borough Social Value partnership. We believe that this collaboration will multiply the benefits to Dudley.

## Useful Contacts

Email: - [Social.Value-enquires@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:Social.Value-enquires@dudley.gov.uk)  
Tel: - 01384 814892 / 01384 816931

**Useful links:**  
Social Value Act  
Social Value Strategy  
Social Value Portal  
Procurement Manual

## Our Commitment

Dudley would like to be seen as Social Value leaders in the West Midlands. We are committed to delivering additional value through our procurement and commercial activity. All officers should regularly consider if they can deliver additional benefits through their work, not just in procurement.

Social value delivery will be mandatory for all procurements above £200,000 for Services and Grants and £1m for Goods and Works. Non-delivery of social value above £200K will be by exception and require approval.

To demonstrate our commitment to deliver additional value to our residents, the local economy and the local environment we are allocating a minimum of 10% and up to 20% of any evaluation to Social Value.

## Social Value thresholds

Contract Type & Value	Tier 1 Where possible	Tier 2 Light touch	Tier 3 Fully Apply
Service & Grants	< £200k	£200k to £1m	> £1m
Goods	< £1m	£1m to £2.5m	> £2.5m
Works	< £1m	£1m to works threshold	> Works threshold

## HOW WE MEASURE SOCIAL VALUE

At the tender stage, social value will be included as part of the defined evaluation criteria. “Proxy” values can be applied using the nationally recognised Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs Matrix) amended where required to reflect local needs. 70% of the Social Value offered will be evaluated against the TOMs values. 30% will be evaluated against a method statement to ensure deliverability of the offer. The Council approach will be non-prescriptive allowing bidders to select from a menu of opportunities so long as there is a direct relevance to the service being procured. This offers maximum flexibility and opportunity to our suppliers. Contract managers will be required to monitor and ensure delivery of Social Value.

Themes	Outcomes	Measures	Units	Value
<b>Jobs and Growth</b> Growing the economy and creating jobs	➤ To list key ones ➤ ➤	To list key ones	tba	£tba from TOMs
<b>Social</b> Supporting stronger and Safer Communities	➤ To list key ones ➤ ➤	To list key ones	tba	£tba from TOMs
<b>Environmental</b> Creating a cleaner and greener place	➤ To list key ones ➤ ➤ ➤	To list key ones	tba	£tba from TOMs

## WHY IS SOCIAL VALUE IMPORTANT

The Social Value Act makes it a legal requirement to consider Social Value. Dudley Council spends in the region of £300m per year. Many of our suppliers have Corporate Social Responsibility budgets which we are not focussing on the priority needs of Dudley. It also is important that we do not exclude our local SME's from doing business with us by over complicating our contracts and documentation, by making our procurement processes overly bureaucratic or lengthy. We also need to be “small business friendly”.

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## **Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2021**

### **Report of the Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)**

#### **Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2020/21**

##### **Purpose**

1. To consider the annual overview and scrutiny report for 2020/21.

##### **Recommendations**

2. That the Committee receive and comment on the attached draft annual report.
3. That the Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer), following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, be authorised to make any necessary amendments to update the annual report prior to its submission to the Council.
4. That the Committee identify any items that need to be rolled-forward for inclusion in the draft Annual Scrutiny Programme for 2021/22.

##### **Background**

5. The Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules, as set out in the Council's [Constitution](#), require that an annual overview and scrutiny report is submitted to the Council.
6. The Committee's draft annual report for 2020/21 is attached as an Appendix. Minutes and outcomes of all Scrutiny Committee meetings can be accessed online via the [Committee Management Information System](#). Subject to any amendments, the Annual Report will be presented to the Council on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.
7. The Council has recognised the importance of retaining an annual review and report process. This is to ensure that the arrangements continue to align themselves to the needs of the Council and that the scrutiny arrangements remain adaptable and flexible to changes in circumstances.

## **Draft Annual Scrutiny Programme 2021/22**

8. Work to develop the Annual Scrutiny Programme at this stage needs to allow for flexibility given any potential changes arising from the annual meeting of the Council. All Scrutiny Committee Chairs/Vice-Chairs, Officers and others will be invited to contribute to the development of the Annual Scrutiny Programme.
9. Arising from the annual report, the views of the Committee are invited on any items that need to be 'rolled forward' to the next municipal year or any items they would like to suggest at this stage for inclusion in the draft Annual Scrutiny Programme for 2021/22.
10. Members will be aware that it is being proposed that the following Scrutiny Committees be constituted by the Council for the 2021/22 municipal year:
  - Future Council Scrutiny Committee
  - Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
  - Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee
  - Housing and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee
11. A meeting of the Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs is being provisionally scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 to discuss the Annual Scrutiny Programme for the 2021/22 municipal year.

### **Finance**

12. The costs of operating the Council's scrutiny arrangements are being contained within existing budgetary allocations.

### **Law**

13. Scrutiny Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and the requirements of the Council's Constitution, which was adopted under the Local Government Act 2000, subsequent legislation and associated Regulations and Guidance.
14. Scrutiny powers relating to health are included in the Health and Social Care Acts 2001 and 2012, and associated Regulations and statutory guidance. The Police and Justice Act 2006 gives the Council powers to scrutinise the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enables local authorities to scrutinise other partners. Much of this legislation is consolidated in the Localism Act 2011.

### **Equality Impact**

15. Provision exists within the scrutiny arrangements for overview and scrutiny to be undertaken of the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

## **Human Resources/Organisational Development**

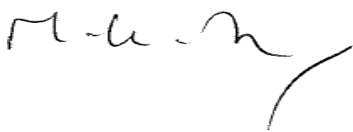
16. Overview and Scrutiny work is primarily administered within the resources available to the Democratic Services Team with support from Directorates and other Officers as required. Any proposals to develop the Council's overview and scrutiny functions have to be set in the context of the resources available and the organisational capacity to support scrutiny work.

## **Commercial/Procurement**

17. This report has no impact on the Council's potential to commercially trade. Individual items included in the Annual Scrutiny Programme may have commercial implications, which will be reported to the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

## **Health, Wellbeing and Safety**

18. Reports to Scrutiny Committees 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.



**Mohammed Farooq**  
**Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)**

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## **Appendix**

Draft Annual Report 2020/21

## **List of Background Documents**

[The Council's Constitution](#) – Article 6 and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules

Scrutiny Reports and Minutes available on the [Committee Management Information System](#)



Chair -  
Councillor  
Tim Crumpton

## Annual report of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee

2020/21 Muncipal Year



Vice-Chair -  
Councillor Ed  
Lawrence

Our role involves the scrutiny of matters falling within the functions of the Chief Executive's Directorate and the Cabinet portfolios of appropriate Cabinet Member(s).

### Attendance Management

The Committee considered staff absence levels and the application of the Attendance Management Policy within the Directorates, which had been adjusted in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

#### *Outcomes:*

- *That the Committee be furnished with the results of the Employee Survey undertaken during 2020 for information.*
- *The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, has written to the Human Resources and Organisational Development Team in recognition of ongoing work undertaken during the pandemic.*

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

Following a request by the Committee, a report was submitted on the various elements of support provided by Dudley Council and an update on work specifically relating to COVID-19 and the work and future plans of the Corporate Welfare Reform Group.

#### *Outcomes:*

- *An Annual Report on Benefits will be considered for inclusion for future Annual Scrutiny Programmes.*
- *The Head of Revenue and Benefit Services was requested to e-mail all Elected Members outlining the process in claiming benefits.*
- *The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, has written to the Revenue and Benefits Team in recognition of ongoing work undertaken during the pandemic.*
- *A recommendation has been made to the appropriate decision taker to consider allocating additional staffing resources to accommodate the expediential increase in applications received and support required for Dudley residents.*

## Corporate Quarterly Performance Report

The Committee received the corporate Quarterly Performance reports during the year. Specific officers attended meetings to provide a summary and respond to questions asked by the Committee. In the light of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Committee considered the specific impact of the pandemic on corporate performance indicators.

### *Outcomes:*

- *Detailed scrutiny has been undertaken of specific performance indicators that are reported as 'below target' with responses provided by relevant Directorates.*
- *Future Performance Reports to be modified to include trend graphs, service exception reports and actions taken to improve future performance, following comments and input made by the Committee.*
- *A training session on Procurement to be piloted at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting (see below).*
- *A further update to be provided on the work undertaken in relation to Corporate Complaints. An update was circulated to Members via e-mail on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.*
- *An update to be provided in respect of the work undertaken on a Dudley Career Pathway in relation to social workers and comments made by the Committee to be shared with the Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.*

## **Planning Services – Public Consultation**

Following a request by a Member of the Committee following scrutiny of the Corporate Quarterly Performance Report, the Committee received a supplementary report on the processes and procedures in place for the Planning Service in respect of public consultation and involvement in the planning process.

### *Outcomes:*

- *That the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise was requested to implement measures to enable all Elected Members to have the opportunity to respond to the two Government Consultations "Planning for the Future" and "Changes to current Planning System".*
- *A 'Planning for the Future' Members Seminar was held virtually on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2020. Contributions from Members helped shape the Council's response.*

## **Procurement and Social Value Presentation**

Following a request by the Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020, a pilot training session on procurement was provided 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.

*Outcomes:*

- *That a virtual community event targeting local businesses on procurement opportunities and support available be explored and arranged.*
- *The training session on procurement be provided to all Elected Members, together with an information card to assist Members in supporting local businesses.*
- *That the Commercial and Procurement Consultant 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.*

**Other Items Considered by the Scrutiny Committee in the 2020/21 Municipal Year**

- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Strategic Direction of the Council

**Ongoing Scrutiny Items**

Items that have been considered by the Committee but are incomplete requiring further scrutiny and inclusion in the Annual Scrutiny Programme for 2021/22 are listed below. Subject to the approval of Full Council, these items will fall into the remit of the Future Council Scrutiny Committee in 2021/22:-

- Local Government Association Peer Review Outcomes and Learning
- Digital Transformation

Item suggested for inclusion in the work programme for 2021/22:-

- Benefit Services Annual Report