

May 2017



DUDLEY Insight

MEETING OUR CORPORATE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

This is one of a series of papers aimed at providing our stakeholders, both internally and externally, with up-to-the-minute information on how we are strategically responding to local and national challenges. The papers may be of interest to many relevant stakeholders including parents, employers and the Local Enterprise Partnership.

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Care and Early Year students raised over £600 for Cancer Support.

INTRODUCTION

Supporting the local community and meeting our corporate and social responsibilities has been at the heart of the college's strategy for over 150 years. We were delighted to contribute to and read the outcome of Baroness Sharp's enquiry into the role of further education colleges in their community, "A dynamic nucleus, colleges at the heart of local communities." In the introduction Baroness Sharp notes: "We believe colleges can not only help people into jobs through skills training, but, by being proactive in their work with local communities, can also harness the energy of those communities towards positive outcomes which in turn promote health, happiness and social cohesion. In doing so, the key is for colleges to work in partnership, whether with local business, charities, local authorities or public sector organisations."

This statement continues to encapsulate our strategic approach to supporting our local community. It also articulates the values and aspirations we hold in this respect.

CONTEXT

We recognise that public funds provided to us by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Higher Education Funding Council for England are intended to be used locally, and commit to prioritising our public allocations on the skills and training needs of young people and adults in the Dudley Borough and wider Black Country.

OUR RESPONSE

ECONOMIC REGENERATION

In relation to economic regeneration we continue to be an active member of a range of key groups which enables us to play a full and active role in the economic well-being and development of the borough. This includes working closely with Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council and New Heritage Regeneration Ltd as part of a co-ordinated approach to supporting an integrated township strategy across the borough.

The creation of the college's £60million Learning Quarter, which has been ongoing since 2012, has transformed the town centre with the creation of Dudley Evolve, Dudley Sixth, and Dudley Advance I. The next phase which involves the development of Dudley Advance II is due to open in Autumn 2017 and will be the first centre of its kind specialising in the latest construction techniques, technology and off-site fabrication. Dudley North MP Ian Austin, who has applauded the building of the site, said: "It's brilliant to see the new Advance II, the college's new Centre for Advanced Building Technologies being built... the work at Dudley College has transformed the town with fantastic new facilities, bringing thousands of students to Dudley, boosting the town centre and strengthening our economy."

The college's brand new third generation artificial grass pitch, provides opportunities for students and the general public to lead a healthier active life. In addition to the college squads, and its own Saturday team (Team Dudley), a number of local clubs and teams have already taken the opportunity to use the facility for both training and matches.



Top photo: Public Services learners volunteering at local street watch events.

Bottom photo: Learners exhibit their designs for a regional poster campaign promoting health messages on World aids day

Growing from initial partner clubs Wrens Nest FC and Stourbridge FC, we now have over 10 clubs and groups, from youth age groups up to senior groups using the facility throughout the week and weekend.

SUPPORT FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

We support a number of local organisations particularly sharing our professional skills and giving our time on a voluntary basis. The Principal is Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Black Country Museum and the Vice Principal Finance supports the Friends of Priory Park. A number of college staff share their valuable skills and experience serving as governors for local schools and on the Dudley Centre for Equality and Diversity and Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board.

The college is the sponsor of a new multi-academy trust for Dudley, the Dudley Academies Trust, has been given the go ahead by the Schools Commissioner for the West Midlands and the Department for Education. The Trust will bring together Castle High School, Hillcrest School and Community College, Holly Hall Academy and High Arcal School under the sponsorship of Dudley College of Technology. Castle High School and Hillcrest School and Community College will convert to academy status on joining the Trust. If all goes to plan the Trust will be operational for the outset of the new academic year.

The proposal has emerged following lengthy consideration and meticulous planning between the four partner schools and the college and enjoys strong support from Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council. Under these new arrangements the schools will retain their own identities but will work closely together with the college to improve outcomes for learners. Once constituted the Dudley Academies Trust together with the college will annually support 8,500 young people aged 11 to 19 years old with a total operating income in excess of £60million.

The Trust will focus on achieving improved educational outcomes at Key Stage 3 and beyond. A significant emphasis will be placed on driving up GCSE attainment in mathematics and English. Support for learners with learning difficulties will also be strengthened. Over time the Trust will seek to better align the schools' curriculum to local and regional skills needs, with a growing emphasis on digital technologies and science and technology.

Bringing together the combined strengths of four secondary schools alongside Dudley College will give us the best chance of providing outstanding technical

education to Dudley's young people. We know that educational outcomes are not as high as they should be and we will work tirelessly to address this. Our plans are aspirational, not only for the development of our teaching and learning strategies and our curriculum, but also for the future transformation of the schools' estates. As sponsor, the college will release up to half a million pounds to the Trust to kick start this process.

RAISING AWARENESS OF THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF OUR LEARNERS AND PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES

Through our Performance Improvement Programme we develop our learners, particularly those aged 16-19, to be responsible citizens. We encourage and help facilitate high levels of learner volunteering.

In partnership with Dudley College Students' Union we annually adopt and fundraise for local charities. The Early Years and Care students have raised money throughout the year totalling £643 and funds were used to decorate and provide equipment for The White House Cancer Support in Dudley. Money was raised through cake sales, sponsored events, Christmas boxes and a name the bear competition.

Art and Media students have undertaken a number of voluntary projects with college partners such as The Black Country Living Museum, Compton Hospice, Summit House and White House Cancer Support. Impressively, photography learners have been commissioned by Handlesbanken, to produce landscapes of the Black Country and wider area to decorate their new premises in Stourbridge. The bank will provide profits from the sales of images which will help fund an educational landscape trip to Iceland, as well as learners being credited for the work produced.

Media learners have showcased their 'Dudley Kick Ash' campaign to spread a 'smoke free' message. The learners worked with film company, Junction 15, on the project which was commissioned and funded by Dudley Public Health and produced short social media advertisements and associated campaign posters. The films will be shared with other West Midland colleges and can be viewed via the college 'YouTube' account.

From Dudley Aspire, our land-based learners have recently started a new venture supporting volunteers maintaining the environment and landscapes at Buffery Park.



Top left and right photo: Ian Austin and Don Goodman opening Dudley Football Complex in December 2016

Bottom left photo: Food bank collections by students

Bottom right photo: The college hosts an interfaith event with Mala Yousafzai and The Archbishop of Canterbury

The college has an award winning and very active Students' Union, who campaign on behalf of their student members on both local and national issues.

The college and Students' Union work closely together to promote British Values to learners. For example, in preparation for the general election, the Students Union, in association with Sandwell Electoral Office and Youth Empowerment charity Bite the Ballot, are undertaking a voter registration drive, with pop up registration booths appearing across all campuses ahead of the voter registration deadline. The Students' Union also arranged Question and Answer events with local parliamentary candidates, councillors and MEPs which offered the opportunity for students to pose questions and debate key issues. They also produced a 'Students' Manifesto' listing a number of pledges they would like the incoming MP to commit to.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

We are committed to minimising our environmental impact, respecting the environment and the limits of its resources, and promoting and embedding sustainable

development in all aspects of college activities. We recognise the impact that our operations can have on the local, regional and global environment and to this end, we are currently undergoing accreditation to ISO 14001. We annually measure and reduce our carbon footprint which shows a continuing reducing trend. This is driven by the college's Environmental Strategy and by the development of energy efficient buildings in the Learning Quarter.

Wherever possible we use locally sourced labour and materials in our day to day operations and our major capital developments. Through our key impact measures we annually measure our performance against this objective. In working with local suppliers we seek to settle invoices promptly, within a target period of 30 days.

We act transparently and openly at all times. Through the college's website, the Dudley Dashboard and the Annual Strategic Impact Assessment Report we provide all stakeholders with accurate, timely and easily accessible data on the college's performance.



Photo above: Students support Dudley zoo through their fashion show

NEXT STEPS

The College will continue to develop its approach to this agenda and look for further ways that it can embed its corporate social responsibility into the day-to-day life of its learners, its staff and its organisational practice. Sharing good practice with other Association of Colleges members it will strive to be recognised as a leader in the sector with regard to this agenda.

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