

Three hurt in bar assaults

THREE people were left needing medical treatment in the aftermath of violent assaults in Stourbridge town centre.

A 17-year-old male suffered a head wound thought to have been caused by a glass or bottle during a disturbance near Mill Race Lane in the early hours of Friday April 1.

A 19-year-old male was also injured in the torso, again by a glass object, when the incident spilled over onto an area off the ring road, near to Medusa House.

Police and paramedics were called to The River Rooms nightclub at 12.30am, both injured men were taken to hospital in a stable condition – their injuries were not life threatening.

Officers say the incident began in the River Rooms and closed the bar at around 1.30am as an investigation got under way.

A 19-year-old male was arrested at the scene and has been released on bail.

In a separate incident, a 21-year-old man needed hospital treatment

after he was injured with what police describe as “an unknown sharp instrument” in Stourbridge High Street at 12.35am on Sunday April 3.

A female police officer was assaulted at the scene and a member of the door staff at The Edward Rutland pub was also hit across the head.

A 27-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of wounding, affray and assaulting a police officer. He has been released on police bail pending further inquiries.

Minor parties' election hope

ALTERNATIVE political parties are planning to give the big boys a run for their money in May's borough elections.

Nominations released this week show both UKIP and The Green Party are fielding significant numbers of candidates for seats on Dudley Council, in a bid to capitalise on support draining from mainstream parties.

UKIP and The Greens say Labour, Conservative and Lib Dem politicians have let the country down and voters are ready for a change.

Green Party spokesman, Will Duckworth, said: “The reason we have got more candidates is we are growing.”

“People are saying they don't want to vote for the big three parties, we are the best alternative. Before the general election we were the only party who said there is no need for cuts and we should grow the economy.”

The Greens say cutting public sector jobs causes extra costs for redundancy payments and benefits.

Mr Duckworth added: “Dudley Council is looking to borrow £6m. Paying to throw people out of work seems ridiculous.”

Euro-skeptics from UKIP are bullish about taking votes from mainstream parties and intend adding to the seat they already hold on Dudley Council.



● Will Duckworth

UKIP regional organiser, Derek Bennett, said: “We are going to kick them in the ballot box. This year we have more local election candidates in the West Midlands than ever before.”

“We want more democracy, local referendums on major issues, we want a smaller state.”

Mr Bennett dismissed suggestions the Conservatives also offer less government intervention and insisted Prime Minister David Cameron is handing more power to UKIP.

UKIP says leaving the EU would save the country billions and more could be cut by getting rid of officers on high wages.

Derek Bennett said: “We should cut the chief executives, in the old days that job was done by the council clerk.”

“The EU is no benefit to us, they bring in laws and the impact is to create huge expense for local councils.”

Elections for Dudley Council take place on Thursday May 5, at the same time people will be asked to vote in a referendum on whether the country should adopt the Alternative Vote (AV) system for Westminster elections.

The AV system asks voters to rank candidates in order of preference and the winner is elected when they gain more than half the vote as losers are eliminated.

Will Duckworth said: “AV is a lot simpler than people are trying to make out, it is definitely more democratic.”

Derek Bennett said UKIP supports AV but has reservations and would prefer a system with extra seats handed out in proportion to the distribution of votes.

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