



Telford & Wrekin
C O U N C I L

Addenbrooke House Ironmasters Way Telford TF3 4NT

CABINET

Date **Thursday, 11 July 2019** Time **4.00 pm**
Venue **Meeting Rooms G3/G4, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT**

Enquiries Regarding this Agenda

Democratic Services	Deborah Moseley / Stacey Worthington	01952 383215 / 382061
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Lead Officer	Richard Partington, Managing Director	01952 380102

Cabinet Members:

Councillor S Davies	Leader
Councillor R A Overton	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, Enforcement & The Pride Programme
Councillor A J Burford	Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care
Councillor L D Carter	Cabinet Member for Finance, Commercial Services & the Borough Economy (Cabinet member for LEP)
Councillor R C Evans	Cabinet Member for Customer, Cultural & Leisure Services & Partnerships
Councillor C Healy	Cabinet Member for Visitor Economy & The World Heritage Site
Councillor R Mehta	Cabinet Member for Communities & Inclusivity
Councillor S A W Reynolds	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Education
Councillor H Rhodes	Cabinet Member for Parks, Green Spaces & The Natural Environment
Councillor D Wright	Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport & Infrastructure

Invitees:

Councillor A J Eade	Conservative
Councillor W L Tomlinson	Liberal Democrats

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

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Key	4.	Report from the Commissioning Body - Appointment of the Chair and General Update	Cllr L D Carter	7 - 10
Key	5.	Report from the Commissioning Body on the design of the Inquiry Process	Cllr L D Carter	11 - 16
Key	6.	Report from the Commissioning Body on the Inquiry's Terms of Reference	Cllr L D Carter	To Follow
Key	7.	Telford & Wrekin Council 4 Year Programme to Protect, Care and Invest To Create a Better Borough	Cllr S Davies	17 - 56
Key	8.	Financial Management 2019/20	Cllr L D Carter	57 - 76
Key	9.	Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan 2019-24 and Shropshire Hills AONB Terms of Reference	Cllr H Rhodes	77 - 88

FILMING, RECORDING & PHOTOGRAPHY

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http://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20243/council_meetings/365/filming_photography_recording_and_use_of_social_networking_at_meetings

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 13 June 2019 at 4.00 pm in Meeting Rooms G3/G4, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 19 JUNE 2019

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 24 JUNE 2019)

Present: Councillors S Davies (Chair), R A Overton (Vice-Chair), L D Carter, C Healy, R Mehta, S A W Reynolds, H Rhodes and D Wright.

Also Present: Councillor A J Eade

Apologies: Councillors A J Burford and R C Evans

CAB-6 Declarations of Interest

None.

CAB-7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 May be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CAB-8 Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Governance

Key Decision identified as **Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Governance** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 15 May 2019.

Councillor S Davies, Leader, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment.

Following a Government directive that all Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) must have a legal personality, the existing members of the Marches LEP agreed that the Marches LEP would be incorporated as a company limited by guarantee.

The report set out the proposals for Local Authority representation on the LEP. The new arrangements would continue to allow Telford & Wrekin Council to benefit from access to significant government funding distributed through the LEPs and to influence the LEPs role in supporting economic development in the area.

It was noted that due to the ongoing process of establishing the company, it was recommended that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning, in consultation with the Leader, to appoint a director to the Board.

RESOLVED – that:

- a) **Telford & Wrekin Council becomes a Public Sector Member of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Ltd and that the company is added to the Council’s list of outside bodies to which the Council makes appointments**
- b) **Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning, in consultation with the Leader, to appoint a director as the Council’s representative on the Board of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Ltd.**

CAB-9 **Telford & Wrekin Drugs & Alcohol Strategy 2019-2023**

Key Decision identified as **Telford & Wrekin Drugs & Alcohol Strategy 2019 – 2022** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 15 May 2019.

Councillor R Mehta, Cabinet Member: Communities & Inclusivity, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Health & Wellbeing, which provided an overview of the Drug and Alcohol Strategy for Telford & Wrekin. A copy of the Strategy was appended to the report.

The Strategy set out the intention to work with partners to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and/or drug misuse in local communities, and would make a key contribution to the Council’s priority to ‘Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities’. It provided an update on the following strategy, following consultation with service users and partner agencies.

Cabinet Members welcomed the Strategy, and highlighted in particular the importance of prevention and early intervention. Investing in this work, particularly for young people, reduced local authority and NHS treatment costs, reduced the cost of crime in local communities and offered life-time benefits in terms of health, education and employment.

Cabinet Members noted the reduction in the public health grant and expressed that money spent on preventative work saved significant amounts in the long term.

In response to a question from the Conservative Group Leader, it was confirmed that, as outlined and highlighted in the report, education played an important role in the strategy, building on the schools programme in already place, which included events such as Crucial Crew, Loudmouth Theatre in Education productions. The refreshed strategy would look at opportunities linked to the development of mandatory PHSE.

RESOLVED that the refreshed Telford & Wrekin Drug & Alcohol Strategy 2019 – 2023 be approved.

CAB-10 **Representation on Outside Bodies 2019/20**

Non-Key Decision

Councillor R A Overton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, Enforcement & The Pride Programme, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning which set out the appointments to outside bodies that the Council was required to make for 2019/20. Nominations had been sought from the political groups for those appointments that were not by position. Following discussions with the political groups, a list of representatives for approval by Cabinet had been proposed, and this was tabled as Appendix 1.

It was noted that there was an amendment to the published report, with the nomination for Healthwatch to be Councillor Stephen Reynolds in place of Councillor Arnold England.

RESOLVED – that the nominations to represent the Council on Outside Bodies for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, subject to the amendment to appoint Councillor Stephen Reynolds as Healthwatch representative, be approved.

The meeting ended at 4.08 pm

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning
Date: 19 June 2019

Signed

Date: Thursday, 11 July 2019

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Appendix B

Report of the Commissioning Body

Appointment of the Chair and General Update

2 July 2019

Prepared for:

CSE Inquiry Member Advisory Group - 9 July 2019

Telford & Wrekin Council's Cabinet - 11 July 2019

Introduction

1. On 10 June 2019, the Commissioning Body of the Independent Inquiry into Telford Child Sexual Exploitation (the "Inquiry") appointed Tom Crowther QC to be the independent Chair of the Inquiry.
2. The purpose of this report is to update members on the Commissioning Body's recruitment process which led to the appointment of the Chair, as well as to provide a general update on the Commissioning Body's work.

Role of the Chair - Advertisement and Response

3. As members will be aware, a draft recruitment pack for the role of the independent Chair was prepared by the Commissioning Body and delivered to the CSE Inquiry Member Advisory Group (the "MAG") on 12 February 2019 and Telford & Wrekin Council's Cabinet (the "Cabinet") on 14 February 2019, for noting, comment and observations. This was delivered as Part A of the Final Commission. At its meeting on 14 February 2019, the Cabinet approved the recommendations from the Commissioning Body to start the recruitment process for the Chair.
4. Shortly following these meetings, on 19 February 2019, the role of Chair was advertised. Bearing in mind the qualities and attributes which the Commissioning Body was seeking from the successful candidate, as outlined in the recruitment pack, it was considered likely that potential candidates would have either a social care, legal or academic background. The Commissioning Body did not wish to pre-judge the background of the successful candidate, and therefore advertised the role in a spread of locations, these all being forums to target relevant professionals who may possess the skills identified:
 - 4.1 Guardian Jobs – a location which lists high calibre vacancies across a range of sectors;
 - 4.2 Counsel Magazine – the monthly journal of the bar, which is sent to approximately 15,000 barristers and Judges. The advert appeared in the annual 'silk' edition; and
 - 4.3 Community Care – the website used by those in the social care sector, for news and job posts, with an e-newsletter sent to 30,000 social work professionals.
5. The job posting was open for one month.
6. In response to the advertisement, during that one month period, the Commissioning Body received 47 requests for a copy of the recruitment pack; these requests came from potential candidates via all three advertising forums referred to above.

Applications and Recruitment Process

7. The deadline for applications for the position of Chair closed on 19 March 2019. By this date, the Commissioning Body had received ten applications. For fairness and data protection reasons, the Commissioning Body does not consider it appropriate, nor necessary, to share the details of the ten candidates who applied.

The Commissioning Body is however able to share some generic details about the backgrounds of those ten candidates, as follows:

Number of those applicants with legal background	5
Number of those applicants with non-legal background	5
Male applicants	5
Female applicants	5

8. The recruitment process then consisted of the following stages:
 - 8.1 Applicant sift - The ten applications were sifted by the Commissioning Body and the most suitable candidates were invited for interview;
 - 8.2 Formal interview - The Commissioning Body carried out formal interviews with seven of the ten candidates. Four of those candidates were successful at the interview and were taken to the next stage;
 - 8.3 Meeting with the Survivors Committee - The next stage was for the four short-listed candidates to meet with the local Survivors Committee. It was a vital part of the recruitment process that the views of the Survivors Committee were sought on the proposed candidates. The Commissioning Body attended these sessions as observers, but the sessions were run by the Survivors Committee. Following the sessions, the Survivors Committee provided their feedback on each of the candidates to the Commissioning Body.
9. In taking their decision, the Commissioning Body took into account: the contents of the candidates' application forms; the performance of the candidates at both formal interview stage and during the meeting with the Survivors Committee; and the views and comments of the Survivors Committee.
10. The final stage of the process involved undertaking due diligence on the final candidates. This included taking up references and undertaking independent searches into their background.
11. On Friday 7 June 2019, the Commissioning Body offered the role to Tom Crowther QC. Mr Crowther accepted that appointment, the contract was signed and appointment formally announced on Monday 10 June 2019.

General Update

12. Since the last update provided to the MAG and the Cabinet, the Commissioning Body has been undertaking further work to design the Inquiry's framework, including liaising with Telford & Wrekin Council to ensure it puts in place appropriate support for those engaging with the Inquiry's work. It has also begun engaging with key stakeholders, as it is required to do as part of the services to be delivered by the Commissioning Body.
13. A summary of the key steps taken since the last update is set out below:

- 13.1 The Commissioning Body has been in contact with the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse ("IICSA") and the team running the investigation into Child Sexual Exploitation by Organised Networks. IICSA's investigation had referred to specific instances of child sexual exploitation ("CSE") in Telford at an early stage and IICSA's Truth Project has also visited Telford and spoken to survivors. Given the potential for survivors to be involved with both inquiries and all that brings, the Commissioning Body wanted to make contact and establish lines of communication with IICSA, to ensure that any cross-over between the two inquiries could be addressed at an early stage, to reduce the impact on survivors. The response from IICSA made it clear that IICSA's investigation will not be using Telford as one of its six case studies, and therefore IICSA did not anticipate there being any cross-over between the two inquiries;
- 13.2 The Commissioning Body has contacted key stakeholder organisations with a request to preserve any potentially relevant documentation in advance of the Terms of Reference being finalised and more specific requests for documents being made by the Inquiry, and to suspend any document destruction policies in place;
- 13.3 In respect of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, the Commissioning Body has held discussions with the local Survivors Committee concerning the Terms of Reference, and further details in respect of the consultation process for the Inquiry's Terms of Reference are referred to in our Appendix D Report;
- 13.4 Other communications include responding to approaches from potential witnesses;
- 13.5 There has also been liaison with Telford & Wrekin Council to ensure adequate and appropriate witness support is in place for the work of the Inquiry; and
- 13.6 Finally, further work has been undertaken in relation to establishing the Inquiry's IT systems and governance structures to support the Chair's work, including setting up a case management system, preparing the Inquiry's privacy policy and implementing structures and processes to ensure the protection of personal data.
14. These steps have been taken to ensure that, once the Inquiry's Terms of Reference have been finalised, work can begin without delay.

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Commissioning Body
Independent Inquiry Telford Child Sexual Exploitation

2 July 2019

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members to note the Commissioning Body's update on the recruitment and appointment of the independent Chair, and the general update on progress with establishing the Inquiry, as set out in the Appendix B Report.

Appendix C

Report of the Commissioning Body

Part B, Final Commission – Inquiry Process

2 July 2019

Prepared for:

CSE Inquiry Member Advisory Group - 9 July 2019
Telford & Wrekin Council's Cabinet - 11 July 2019

Introduction

1. The Commissioning Body's previous report presented to the CSE Inquiry Member Advisory Group (the "MAG") on 12 February 2019 and Telford & Wrekin Council's Cabinet (the "Cabinet") on 14 February 2019 explained that the Commissioning Body's Final Commission would be split into two parts, Part A and Part B, as follows:
 - 1.1 Part A being the process for the recruitment of the Chair of the Independent Inquiry into Telford Child Sexual Exploitation (the "Inquiry"); and
 - 1.2 Part B being the final Terms of Reference and design of the inquiry process, with input from the Chair of the Inquiry.
2. The Final Commission was split in this way to enable the recruitment of the Chair to proceed without delay, whilst allowing work on Part B to continue, ready to be finalised soon after the appointment of the Chair. This was designed to ensure that any delay in the process is minimised, than would otherwise have been the case if the Final Commission was not split in this way.
3. On 10 June 2019, the Commissioning Body appointed Tom Crowther QC to be the Chair of the Inquiry. Since the Chair's appointment, the Chair and the Commissioning Body have been working together to finalise and deliver Part B of the Final Commission. As referred to above, Part B consists of:
 - 3.1 The Inquiry's final Terms of Reference; and
 - 3.2 The design of the inquiry process.
4. This report addresses the design of the inquiry process. The Inquiry's final Terms of Reference are addressed in the Appendix D Report that form part of the papers put before the MAG and the Cabinet.

The Inquiry Process

5. As at the date of this Report, both the Chair and the Commissioning Body have yet to receive any documentation that may be relevant to the Inquiry. That is not necessarily unexpected given that the Inquiry's Terms of Reference have yet to be finalised. The Chair and the Commissioning Body also have a limited understanding as to how many witnesses might have relevant evidence to provide, and be willing to engage with its work. As a result, the scale of the work that faces the Inquiry, for example the number of documents that will need to be reviewed and analysed, the number of witnesses that will need to be spoken to, and the various lines of investigation that will be involved, remains unknown. This means that designing an inquiry process with a fixed timetable is a challenge.
6. Inevitably, unexpected issues can also arise during the course of an inquiry's work, which impacts both timescales and the various planned stages. For example, a key witness could provide evidence towards the end of the inquiry process, which results in further lines of investigation and analysis being required. As a result, any process that is designed must have a degree of flexibility; if the

process is rigid, it could hamper the Chair's ability to meet the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

7. Despite these factors, the Commissioning Body appreciates that the public, witnesses and key stakeholders who will be involved with the Inquiry will want to have a better understanding of the Inquiry's work and potential timetable, even at this early stage. The Commissioning Body and the Chair have therefore designed an inquiry process, which sets out the likely key stages of the Inquiry's work, and the current anticipated timescales. The progress and the time taken for each stage is however entirely dependent on a number of factors, including:
 - 7.1 Documents relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference and documents specifically requested being provided by stakeholders in a timely and thorough manner;
 - 7.2 Witnesses coming forward to speak to the Inquiry and provide evidence, in circumstances where the Inquiry has no power to compel witnesses to provide evidence; and
 - 7.3 Pro-active engagement by key stakeholders in relation to any data protection concerns.
8. The Inquiry process will therefore have to remain flexible. Regular progress reports will however be published so that there is visibility as to progress and the current stage that the Inquiry's work is at.
9. A copy of the provisional inquiry process appears at Annex 1 to this Report.
10. The provisional inquiry process is provided for Members to consider, note and pass on any observations to Cabinet for approval. Members are asked to note that the Council, in any forum, will not influence Part B of the Final Commission, but it does have a fiduciary duty to carry out checks and balances on the work of the Commissioning Body and the Chair.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members to comment upon the provisional inquiry process, which forms part of the Final Commission, Part B, as proposed by the Chair and the Commissioning Body in Annex 1 to this Report, and pass those comments on to Cabinet.

2 July 2019

**Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Commissioning Body**

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* To be read in conjunction with the Commissioning Body's Appendix C Report dated 2 July 2019

Independent Inquiry Telford Child Sexual Exploitation

*Provisional Inquiry Process (as at 2 July 2019)**

Report published

Preparation of Report

Maxwellisation

Re-call witnesses/further witness interviews

Hearings (if any) in public/private

Interviewing witnesses

Doc requests/disclosure of docs/analysis/generates further requests

Terms of Reference finalised



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**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL
 CABINET 11 JULY 2019
 COUNCIL 25 JULY 2019
 TELFORD AND WREKIN COUNCIL – OUR 4 YEAR PROGRAMME TO
 INVEST, PROTECT AND CARE FOR THE BOROUGH
 REPORT OF MANAGING DIRECTOR – RICHARD PARTINGTON
 LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR SHAUN DAVIES, LEADER**

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

1.1. In May, Cabinet adopted a series of commitments as the Council's strategic focus through to 2023. This report sets out a refreshed high level Council programme to drive the delivery of these commitments.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That Cabinet:

- Approves the programme for the Council;
- Reviews the progress to date in delivering the commitments.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	All
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	All sections of the Borough. As delivery proposals are developed specific impact assessments will be undertaken as necessary.
TARGET COMPLETION /DELIVERY DATE	Once adopted as the strategic focus of the Council, a delivery programme for these objectives will be developed.	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The funding outlook for the Council beyond the end of the current financial year is unclear with the Government proposing significant changes to the local government finance system which are scheduled to be implemented in April 2020. However, using best available information, it is currently anticipated that the Council will need to identify around £25m of additional budget savings over the next two years

		(2020/21 and 2021/22). The financial implications of the updated strategic plan and priorities will be assessed and incorporated into the Medium Term Service & Financial Planning Strategy as this strategy is developed over coming months as the funding position for future years becomes clearer. PH 25/06/2019
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	It is appropriate for the Cabinet to review its strategic focus as a new administration takes on a new 4 year term of office, taking into account manifesto commitments and from canvassing. The Council Plan and the Community Strategy form part of the Council's Policy Framework and final versions will need the endorsement of full Council. These proposals also affect the budget framework, see Financial Comments from the Chief Finance Officer. Individual projects will be subject to normal project planning and consultation requirements. Scrutiny, independent from the Cabinet, may well review its work programme in the light of this strategic focus. JE 17/05/2019
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Borough-wide impact

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

4.1. The Council elections in May were in effect a community-wide consultation on the future focus of the organisation and how it delivers its priorities. In response to the results of the election, Cabinet (30 May) adopted five ***“Community Commitments”***:

1. We will continue to fight the closure of our 24/7 A&E and Consultant led Women and Children's Centre.
2. We will continue to keep Council Tax amongst the lowest in the Midlands.

3. We will continue to invest £80m per year in protecting the most vulnerable adults and children in our community including those who are victims and survivors of sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.
 4. We will invest £50m in roads and footpaths across Telford and Wrekin and continue to invest in creating new jobs for residents.
 5. We will continue to fight any proposed merger with Shropshire Council or other authorities as we believe that the Borough is best served by retaining its own council.
- 4.2. Underpinning the delivery of these community commitments, is the ambition for Telford and Wrekin to be a family friendly borough and that Telford & Wrekin Council would seek to protect, care and continue to invest in services.
- 4.3. To drive delivery of commitments and ambition, the Council's strategic programme (Appendix One) has been revised, setting out a borough vision and 8 priorities:
- ***Protect and support our most vulnerable children and adults***
 - ***Securing the best start in life for children and young people***
 - ***Protect and create jobs as a 'Business Supporting, Business Winning Council'***
 - ***Improve local people's prospects through better education, skills and training***
 - ***Keep neighbourhoods safe, clean and well connected***
 - ***Support communities and those most in need and work to give residents access to suitable housing***
 - ***Improving health & wellbeing across Telford and Wrekin***
 - ***Protect and champion our environment, culture and heritage***
- 4.4. Through this programme we want to be clear to the community and partners what we are seeking to deliver with the resources available. The programme is also an important part of communicating the organisation's ongoing development with the workforce.
- 4.5. The second part of the programme sets out how the organisation is going to continue to transform to deliver these priorities in the face of significant challenges which include:
- Protecting front-line services whilst delivering an estimated further £25m budget savings by 2022 – in addition to the £117m savings delivered to date.
 - Uncertainty over the Government's funding model for local authorities linked to the 2019 Comprehensive Spending Review.

- Lack of certainty over the future of adult social care whilst demand and costs increase. The Government's Green Paper on this was promised in 2017 and has not yet been delivered.

4.6. This transformation strategy is called "Be the Change" and is driven by 5 themes:

- **Solving problems and promoting social responsibility and action to manage and reduce demand for services**
- **Challenging & changing, reviewing and reimagining how we do things**
- **Reducing our dependency on Government grants**
- **Being a modern organisation with modern practices and where we always get the basics right**
- **"Joining the dots" – ensuring that our services, together with partners and the community, are working effectively together**

4.7. Underpinning the delivery of these priorities are our co-operative values, which define how we do things, both collectively as an organisation and individually. These are about:

- **Openness & Honesty**
- **Fairness & Respect**
- **Ownership**
- **Involvement**

Driving Delivery

4.8. Despite the challenges which the organisation faces (see para 4.5), following adoption of the community commitments by Cabinet 30th May, action has commenced to drive delivery of them. This includes:

- Commenced a review of the Council's budget to deliver:
 - £80 million per year in protecting the most vulnerable adults and children in our community including those who are victims and survivors of sexual exploitation and domestic abuse
 - £50 million in roads and footpaths and infrastructure across Telford & Wrekin and continue to invest in creating new jobs for residents
 - £50 million 'Telford Growth Deal'
 - £35 million into our local schools
 - £5 million Investment fund which will be invested in our Borough Town Centres. This includes Oakengates, Wellington, Madeley, Dawley, Ironbridge and Newport

- £1million into a ‘Stronger Community’ fund which will support the continued regeneration of our New Town and existing estates
 - £600,000 in safer routes to school
 - £100,000 in rights of way and park walks
- Continued to fight for the future of Telford & Wrekin Council – only in June the prospect of a merger with Shropshire Council was raised and pressure put on government.
- Secured a fact finding visit from the Independent Referral Panel who are considering our referral of Future Fits decision over the future of hospital services, which would see 24/7 A&E services and consultant-led Women’s and Children’s services move from PRH in Telford to RSH in Shrewsbury.
- Low Council Tax – for a band D property our Council Tax is 6.7% lower than Shropshire Councils, 14% lower than the unitary average and 14.6% lower than the Midlands average. We have the lowest Council Tax in the Midlands.
- The Independent Enquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Telford and Wrekin has now appointed a chair and is consulting on terms of reference which will be published in July.
- Adopted a new strategy to continue the transformation and modernisation of the treatment of drug and alcohol dependency.
- Launched Mental Health First Aid training for Council staff, raising awareness of the importance of mental health, how to recognise the signs and where to seek support.
- Commenced a programme for the organisation to become “Dementia Friendly” and support the creation of a Dementia Friendly Community.
- With the Telford & Wrekin CCG (NHS) and Police, adopted new safeguarding partnership arrangements for children and adults to protect and support our most vulnerable.
- Continued our work to protect the environment:
 - Reduce the use of plastic – signed up to the “Refill” initiative to reduce the use of single-use water bottles;
 - Started to prepare for the introduction of a household food waste recycling scheme from September 2019;

- Launched a campaign to increase household recycling;
- Prosecuted a company for an environmental breach and a second for the breach of a tree protection order.

- Continued to tackle rogue landlords – including the successful prosecution of a landlord for falsifying tenancies to avoid Council tax.

- Expanded the Council’s Landlord Accreditation scheme to landlords who use an accredited letting agent to manage their property.

- Launched our “Let’s Get Telford Active” campaign with over 1,000 people signed up, with more events taking place across the borough this summer.

- Culture and heritage:
 - Seen work funded through the Council’s Pride in our Community High Street initiative commence in Ironbridge to transform shop frontages.
 - Supported communities in Oakengates and Wellington to deliver significant new community facilities with the support of Telford 50 Legacy Fund (Wellington Orbit Cinema and the Wakes improvements).

- Appointed an Armed Forces Champion, Cllr Raj Mehta, while holding our first free family Armed Forces day event and offering special discounts for Armed Forces members.

4.9. Work will continue to drive the delivery of these priorities through service planning (Assistant Director level) and the development of a performance framework which will be reported to Cabinet twice each year.

5. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Telford & Wrekin Council, Cabinet 30th May 2019.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report prepared by Jon Power, Organisational Delivery & Development Manager. Telephone 01952 380141

Our programme
**to protect,
care and invest to
create a better borough**

2019-2023



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Introduction

This programme sets out our priorities and how we will seek to deliver them over the next four years until 2023.

It builds on the previous eight years, when the Council has worked hard to serve residents, those who work here and those who visit here:

- Attracting record levels of investment and creating and safe-guarding 1000+ jobs.
- Working to make the borough cleaner, greener and more attractive.
- Protecting our environment through the creation of over 200 **guaranteed green spaces** and creating an additional 10 local nature reserves protected from future development.
- Investing to protect our most vulnerable children and adults.
- Tackling rogue landlords and issues linked to poor housing that affects residents.

Our mission statement for the Council is to **protect, care and invest to create a better borough**. At the heart of this are the five commitments we have made to the community:

- 1 We will continue to fight the closure of our 24/7 A&E and Consultant led Women and Children's Centre;
- 2 We will continue to keep Council Tax amongst the lowest in the Midlands;
- 3 We will continue to invest £80m per year in protecting

the most vulnerable adults and children in our community including those who are victims and survivors of sexual exploitation and domestic abuse;

- 4 We will invest £50m in roads and footpaths and infrastructure across Telford and Wrekin and continue to invest in creating new jobs for residents;
- 5 We will continue to fight any proposed merger with Shropshire Council or other authorities as we believe that the borough is best served by its own council that puts its residents first.

Delivering our programme will not be without challenges. **By 2023 the Council will have delivered close to £150m savings since 2010 as a result of government cuts.** To achieve what we want to, we will have to continue to change and develop new models of service delivery, and to generate new income streams to limit cuts to our front line services. We will also lobby government for a fairer funding deal and for investment as Telford moves from 'new town' to 'young town'.

Whatever decisions we make, we will continue to seek new ways to work in partnership and co-operation with the borough's communities to understand their priorities and address them. Underpinning our relationship with the community will be our Co-operative values of Openness and Honesty, Ownership, Fairness and Respect, and Involvement.



Cllr Shaun Davies

Telford and Wrekin the place

Telford and Wrekin is a place of contrasts. Within the borough are the Telford New Town, the market towns of Wellington and Newport, borough towns which include Madeley, Oakengates and Dawley and the Ironbridge Gorge UNESCO World Heritage Site - birth place of the Industrial Revolution. All surrounded by beautiful countryside and farmland with more than two thirds of the borough classified as rural.



The borough has a successful growing economy. Manufacturing remains important (TW 16.5%, WM 11.6%, UK 8.2%) with the automotive supply chain a key sector. Through the availability of affordable 'ready to go' development land, the borough has been successful at attracting significant inward investment to protect existing jobs and support the creation of new ones. The recent investment by Magna International Inc. was one of the largest foreign direct investments into the UK for the last five years.

Tourism makes an increasing contribution to our local economy with 4.5 million visitors each year including 1.5 million visitors to Telford Town Park, Southwater and the Ironbridge Gorge bringing £800m economic benefit.

We have seen strong housing growth as part of our recovery from the recession. The borough is the one of the best performing local authorities for housing growth – ranked third in the 2019 Centre for Cities Report.

While challenges remain, the health of the population continues to improve. There has been significant progress on reducing early preventable deaths from cancer and cardiovascular disease. 'Lifestyles' are improving with smoking rates having fallen significantly from 25% in 2011 to 16.5% (14.2% WM, 14.2% Eng) in 2017 and "activity levels" improving (physically active adults 55.4% in 2016/17 increased to 68.55 2018/19, 66.0% Eng).



Education and skill levels continue to improve. The proportion of the working age population with NVQ level 4 qualifications has increased to 29.8%. School performance has improved with attainment for key measures (EYFS, KS1, KS2 and GCSE) better than the regional and comparable to the national position.

Whilst we have reached many milestones on our journey to create a better borough there remain challenges. We need to continue to develop the value of our economy and create higher value jobs here. Our GVA per capita trails below regional and national rates (£21.2k TW, £21.5k WM, £25.6k UK), as do our wage levels (£508 weekly TW, £537 WM, £571 Eng).

Improving the skill base of our work force is a key response to addressing these challenges. The borough has 15 neighbourhoods ranked among the 10% most deprived nationally for health, skills, employment and housing.

The challenge we face is to ensure that the benefits of our thriving economy are felt by all, enabling all our residents to enjoy healthier and more fulfilling lives wherever they live.

Our vision and priorities

Our vision and priorities have been developed through community engagement over many years. These priorities were once again tested through the local elections in May 2019. From this, we are clear what the community wants the Council to deliver.

To enable us to deliver our priorities, the organisation will continue to change and develop in response to the challenges we face, particularly the need to make further savings. Our organisational strategy '**Be the change**' sets out how we will do this.

Borough vision

Our ambition for the borough is for Telford and Wrekin, to be known as: **The place of enterprise, innovation and partnership.**

Council mission statement

Our mission statement is about what the Council will do to deliver this vision for the borough: **Protect, care and invest to create a better borough.**

Our priorities to deliver this are:



Our values

Our Co-operative values are at the heart of all that we say and do as an organisation:

- **Openness and Honesty** being open and honest in the way we work and make decisions and communicate in a clear, simple and timely way;
- **Ownership** being accountable for our own actions and empower others with the skills to help themselves;
- **Fairness and Respect** responding to people's needs in a fair and consistent way;
- **Involvement** working together with our communities, involving people in decisions that affect their lives and be prepared to listen and take on new ideas.

Key investments to deliver our priorities

- **£80m per year in protecting the most vulnerable adults and children** in our community including those who are victims and survivors of sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.
- **£50m in roads and footpaths and infrastructure** across Telford and Wrekin and continue to invest in creating new jobs for residents.
- **£50m 'Telford Growth Deal'**.
- **£35m into our local schools.**
- **£5m Investment fund** which will be invested in our borough town centres. This includes Oakengates, Wellington, Madeley, Dawley, Ironbridge and Newport.
- **£1m into a 'Stronger Community' fund** which will support the continued regeneration of our New Town and existing estates.
- **£600,000 in safer routes to school.**
- **£100,000 in rights of way and park walks.**



Protect and support our most vulnerable children and adults



Protect and support our most vulnerable children and adults



We want to see children and adults live safely at home in their communities, this means developing community capacity to achieve this goal. Where we can't, we want the very best for our vulnerable children and adults.

Early help

Our Early Help strategy is essential to this way of working. We want to work in and with communities to provide the right help at the right time. This is built on a Strengthening Families model which works with the whole family to avoid the need for the intervention of more intensive statutory services.

Protecting and supporting victims of child sexual exploitation

A very specific focus is on young people who are at risk of child sexual exploitation. We will continue to tackle child sexual exploitation and continue to support victims of sexual exploitation. We will ensure that the Independent Inquiry into sexual exploitation is delivered and all of its recommendations acted on.

Carers

Core to our strategy to protect and support vulnerable children and adults is our commitment to support carers. We will develop a Carers' Rights Covenant and support carers in very practical ways including securing funding to allow more carers to access respite care and the introduction of free skating at the Telford Ice Rink for young carers.

Supporting children in care

Children in care and care leavers face additional challenges as they move into adulthood. To support them we will:

- Promote fostering and adoption with a renewed public campaign.
- Provide support for care leavers up to the age of 25, ensuring that the Council plays its part in supporting young people to leave care. This will include a guarantee of a work placement with the Council.
- Create a care leavers covenant in our borough which will provide care leavers the best start to their adult life.



"We want to work in and with communities to provide the right help at the right time"

Cllr Shirley Reynolds



Tackling the impact of adverse childhood experiences

There is a strong body of research that identifies the harmful effects that adverse childhood experiences have on health throughout life including child maltreatment, exposure to domestic violence and separation trauma. We will use this thinking to do more to tackle the impact of domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse.

Adult social care

Our approach is built on 'promoting independence' through this we want to enable adults to live as independently as possible. We want to do all that we can to support people to live in their communities to avoid unnecessary residential and hospital admission. For example, developing a real alternative to residential care for older people with dementia which allows them to live in a supported living environment.

We want to look at innovative ways to support local people to remain independent. For example, we want to raise awareness of how technology can 'promote independence' by establishing a Smart House which showcases assistive technology and using tools like SKYPE for working with individual or groups of clients.

In response to increasing future demand for care, we want to support local people to get paid jobs in care, providing care and support in their local neighbourhood.

Core to 'promoting independence' is working better, more effectively with health services and with communities to develop capacity to support this goal.



"We want to do all that we can to support people to live in their communities"

Cllr Andy Burford





Securing the
best start in life
for children and
young people



Securing the best start in life for children and young people



We want to ensure that children and young people have the best possible start in life to improve their life chances as adults. Overall, much of our 4-year delivery programme will help us to achieve this goal: safe and strong communities, access to housing, a strong economy with better jobs and quality apprenticeships.

We want to ensure that all children whatever their background and abilities fulfil their potential. To achieve this we will continue to invest in the best facilities for our children from early years to the workplace.

This will include investing £35m into our local schools so that

children can attend a primary and secondary school that is judged to be “good” or “outstanding”. We will also continue to protect all Children’s Centres across the borough.

A second area of focus is to minimise youth unemployment and young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs). Three specific areas we will continue to drive are:

- ‘Job Box’ – a Council service which supports young people into positive destinations: employment, training or volunteering. This has been an effective programme.
- Maximising social value through Council contracts with businesses by ensuring that they provide opportunities for young people including care leavers.
- Encourage and support local businesses and industry to provide training and work experience for young people including care leavers.

The housing market presents real challenges to many young people. To address this we will explore ways to support our young people to get onto the housing ladder.

We will provide new school places to meet the special education needs of some of our children as we continue to support children and young people with SEND across our fantastic schools in the borough.

We will also expand some of our secondary schools to meet growing demand and we will plan for growth in the primary sector particularly where there are large scale housing developments.

We will continue to work in partnership with all of our schools to ensure that children in the borough receive the best possible educational opportunities which maximise their potential.



“We will continue to protect all Children’s Centres across the borough”

Cllr Shaun Davies





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Protect and
create jobs
as a 'business
supporting,
business winning
council



Protect and create jobs as a 'business supporting, business winning council'



We have established Telford and Wrekin's reputation as one of the leading councils for attracting and securing new business and investment. We have supported record investment and job creation in the borough. We do this so that all communities can benefit from a thriving local economy and prosper.

Supporting inclusive growth, jobs and new skills

Ways in which we will do this include:

- ▶ We will continue to drive our £50m Telford Growth Deal – which has levered 1,000 new jobs into the borough over £100m investment and created over £2m income to the Council to protect front-line services.
- ▶ Securing funding to bring brownfield sites to the market.
- ▶ Creating the right environment to support business growth:
 - ▶ Continue to improve all digital infrastructures, after the successful rollout of high speed broadband across the borough.
 - ▶ Maintain the best highways and roads in the Midlands in order to attract and maintain businesses.

As well as attracting new investment, we will continue to support existing businesses by:

- ▶ Committing to a £5m investment fund which will be invested in our borough town centres – Oakengates, Wellington, Madeley, Dawley, Ironbridge and Newport.

- ▶ Guaranteeing free car parking on all Council car parks that currently offer free parking.
- ▶ Continue to offer grants to businesses wishing to locate in our high streets and to businesses wishing to upgrade their shop fronts.
- ▶ Ensuring our high streets are safe and welcoming environments through our £5.2m investment in LED streetlights and £200,000 in CCTV.

Making Telford and Wrekin a great place to visit

Each year in excess of 1.5 million people visit Telford and Wrekin. This is an increasingly important part of the local economy and a significant financial boost. We will continue to drive this through our Totally Telford and Destination Telford campaigns and strategies.

We will continue to support the expansion and development of the Telford Town Centre, creating a diverse range of shops, restaurants and hotels.



“As well as attracting new investment, we will continue to support existing businesses”

Cllr Lee Carter



“We will continue to support the expansion and development of the Town Centre”

Cllr Carolyn Healy





Improve local people's prospects through education and skills training



Improve local people's prospects through education and skills training



We want to ensure that all residents can access the benefits of our thriving and growing economy. To do this will need to make sure that they have the right skills to meet the ever changing needs of local employers.

Supporting new skills

It is essential that business have ready access to the right people with the right skills. To do this we will bring together our partners in business and education to identify the critical skills gaps in the local economy and tackle this by training local people.

An essential way to do this is to support local businesses to take on apprenticeships to learn important trades and skills. The Council will ensure that it promotes meaningful apprenticeship programmes.

We will support our network of colleges to provide lifelong education and training, enabling everyone to upskill or retrain at any point in life. We will work with universities to bring specialised training and workplace programmes for those out of work. Linked to this we will develop one of the country's first employment delivery centres, preparing local people to take up work with local business.

Our role as an employer

As one of the borough's largest employers, the Council has a key role to play in supporting people into employment. We will continue to deliver this through our work experience programme, and through our Supported Employment programme providing placements and apprenticeships for adults with learning disabilities.



"We will develop one of the country's first employment delivery centres"

Cllr Shirley Reynolds





Keep
neighbourhoods
safe, clean and
well connected



Keep neighbourhoods safe, clean and well connected



We know that ensuring neighbourhoods are safe, clean and connected makes a big difference to everyday life. It is essential that this continues as the borough grows.

Improving transport and infrastructure

We will complete our record £50m investment into our roads and footpaths and infrastructure right across the borough.

Public transport is essential to connect our communities to education, work and leisure opportunities. We will explore ways to make public transport more accessible for all, for example smart ticketing initiatives. A new fund will be introduced to support new pilot travel schemes to our industrial estates and for young people to get to college, and explore a new “on demand” bus service.

A clean borough

Our new environmental maintenance contract will provide improved and more responsive street cleansing and environmental maintenance in every neighbourhood, including our rural areas.

We want to protect and increase our current household recycling rates. We will do this by:

- Ensuring that green bin collections remain free.
- Maintaining the current bin collection frequency.
- Keeping Halesfield and Hortonwood Recycling centres open.
- Introducing a free weekly food collection for all residents.
- Encouraging the reduction of single use plastics.

Making Telford and Wrekin safer

We will work with our partners to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. A specific area of focus will be to reduce domestic abuse. This has a devastating impact on victims and their families. We and our partners are committed to eliminating all forms of domestic violence and supporting victims. A core priority will be to ensure that those at risk of abuse have access to a place of safety and that there is effective support for victims. We will create a new grant fund scheme for voluntary sector organisations wanting to provide services to support victims.



“We will explore ways to make public transport more accessible for all”

Cllr David Wright



“We and our partners are committed to eliminating all forms of domestic violence and supporting victims”

Cllr Richard Overton





Support communities and those most in need and work to give residents access to suitable housing



Support communities and those most in need and work to give residents access to suitable housing



We want the borough to be a place where all communities are supported to take ownership of the challenges that they face. This will make them stronger and more resilient.

Stronger communities

We have created a £1m “Stronger Community” fund which will support the continued regeneration of our New Town and existing estates. This programme will be developed through resident and partner engagement to identify the specific needs of each community focussing on infrastructure, health and well-being, community facilities and activities.

Volunteers are an essential part of a strong community. We will continue to grow our network of community volunteers to over 1,200 residents, including snow wardens and street champions. This will be supported by a “Volunteer for Telford” initiative, rewarding and incentivising those who give their time to make our community a better place. We will create an incentive scheme to reward volunteers’ hard work.

We will continue to support key community organisations, strengthen our partnership with Citizen Advice building on the £2m of funding given to support their work since 2011. We will strengthen our long standing partnership with local food banks, building on the £150,000 funding given to support their work by guaranteeing this for a further four years.

Supporting home-owners and renters

We want to ensure that all residents of the borough have access to suitable, affordable housing so that families can remain in and thrive in Telford. For some, this is increasingly difficult. To do this we will continue the growth of NuPlace owned and run by the Council to develop and rent out homes at market and affordable rates. We will look to increase the range and availability of Council owned accommodation for older residents, including adapted living and retirement bungalows.

We will continue to:

- Take robust action to reduce the number of empty and unused properties including an extra Council Tax charge for homes which have been empty for two years with proceeds invested to prevent and reduce homelessness.
- Tackle rogue landlords, working with good landlords and supporting private tenants by continuing to invest in our ‘Better Homes For All’ scheme.
- Tackle homelessness – striving to halve the number of people living in temporary accommodation and to eradicate rough sleeping.



“We will create an incentive scheme to reward volunteers’ hard work”

Cllr Rae Evans



“We will continue our efforts to tackle homelessness and to eradicate rough sleeping”

Cllr David Wright





“We will ensure our veterans and Armed Forces personnel get the services and support that they need”

Cllr Raj Mehta

A home for heroes

We continue to recognise those who have served in our Armed Forces and commit to improving the Military Covenant and services which improve the lives of veterans and their families. We will appoint a Veteran’s Advocate for the borough to ensure our veterans and Armed Forces personnel get the services and support that they need. We will continue to mark the sacrifice of those who have served with the planting of poppies around war memorials in our borough and will seek to get all War Memorials in our borough listed to protect these for future generations.

We will introduce a discount for Armed Forces personnel who use our Council owned leisure facilities and expand provision to support our veterans, care leavers and over 65s at home and in the community.







Improving health
and wellbeing
across Telford
and Wrekin



Improving health and wellbeing across Telford and Wrekin



Although significant progress has been made over the last 25 years, inequalities in life expectancies remain within the borough. We will work to enable people in the borough to enjoy healthier, happier and longer lives.

Prevention and community led provision

Prevention is at the heart of our approach to improve lives and to reduce pressures on our health services.

We want more people to become active. To minimise some of the barriers to this we will promote and support community sport, ensuring our sports facilities offer access for all. We will pilot targeted free swimming lessons for local children and extend free swimming to all young people under 18 and maintain £1 swim for over 50s.

We want to ensure that our parks, nature trails and green spaces are attractive and welcoming to all visitors. We have invested £100,000 in rights of way and park walks including working with groups to identify and register paths that are not on the definitive map.

Whilst the NHS plays a critical role in the provision of health services, there is an important role for the community in this. We want to work in partnership with our communities to boost participation in a range of community run activities.

We will continue to invest in community and voluntary groups to ensure we have rich community events and activities for our residents.

We will continue to support the local community and voluntary sector who provide support for mental health and addiction. Our support in school and colleges for children, young adults and children in care suffering from mental ill health will be expanded.

Mental health training for Council staff is in place; by leading by example we want to encourage local businesses and community groups to support mental health awareness. Equally, we will train Council staff in dementia awareness and work towards being a dementia friendly Council and borough.



“We will invest £100,000 in rights of way and park walks”

Cllr Rae Evans



“We will continue to support the local community and voluntary sector who provide support for mental health and addiction”

Cllr Andy Burford





Protect and
champion our
environment,
culture and
heritage



Protect and champion our environment, culture and heritage



Ensuring a Sustainable Environment in Telford and Wrekin

Whilst supporting housing and business growth, we will protect the network of green spaces which run through the borough and are so important to our communities. We will work to secure funding to unlock appropriate brown field sites for the development of affordable homes, supporting hundreds of jobs in the construction and manufacturing sector. When we are making investment decisions as a Council, we will work to bring forward brownfield sites.

Our network of green spaces and parks are a real borough asset. To protect them, we will:

- ▶ Provide funding for the creation of more 'Green Guarantee' site and Local Nature Reserves.
- ▶ Establish a grant fund for community groups to improve their local green spaces and public parks.
- ▶ Champion and support our 'Friends of' groups to protect our local green and open spaces.

We will support the switch to cleaner energy by investing in LED lighting for Council owned buildings and increase the number of electric car charging points. We will also work to ensure that the Council minimises the use of plastic, particularly single use.

We want to make it easier and safer for cyclists to travel across the borough and will start to modernise and improve cycle routes.

Culture, leisure and arts at the heart of Telford and Wrekin

We will build on the success of the 'Telford 50' celebrations and continue to host free events across our borough. Including the very popular St Georges Day Celebration, Telford Carnival of Giants and the Balloon Fiesta, and continue to support community led events.

We will continue to support and invest in our Council-owned theatre at Oakengates providing a wide range of accessible arts and entertainment.

Our past, present and future

We will continue to protect and champion the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, ensuring it remains for future generations and work closely in partnership with many of our museums and local heritage groups to protect historical sites and our links with the Industrial Revolution across the borough.

It is not just about the old – we will continue to restore the heritage of Telford New Town, including the restoration of the Thomas Telford Square.



"We will protect our network of green spaces and parks which are a real borough asset"

Cllr Hilda Rhodes



"We will continue to protect and champion the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site"

Cllr Carolyn Healy



Be the change

Being the best we can be every day – our strategy for the organisation

What sets Telford & Wrekin Council apart from many other public sector organisations is our positive strategy, can-do attitude and strong vision of what we can be. We don't just talk about change and transformation, we do it and we deliver.

Despite the savings the Council has made, we still have significant resources to make a real, positive difference to the community and local businesses as articulated through our priorities.

Over the past eight years, our 'Being the Change' strategy has successfully steered a large and complex organisation through a period of challenging change and transformation. In reviewing this strategy, we have refocussed it to 'Be the change'. This change is about reinforcing that we all have a role in delivering new ways of working. The organisation needs to continue to develop and change services to new more efficient models if we are to deliver the priorities that the community want us to deliver with the resources that we have. To do this we all need to take ownership of these changes and deliver the best service we can every day. Equally, the Council will continue to get closer to and work with communities to understand their challenges and support them to develop their solutions to them.

Solving problems and promoting social responsibility

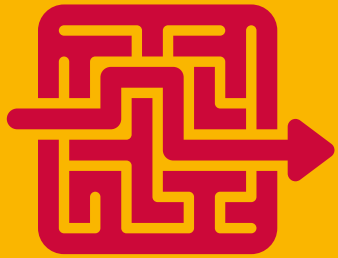
The Council can no longer afford to, nor is it right, that the Council fixes every family or community challenge. It is

the role of the Council and its partners to work with and support families and communities and so reduce demand on public services.

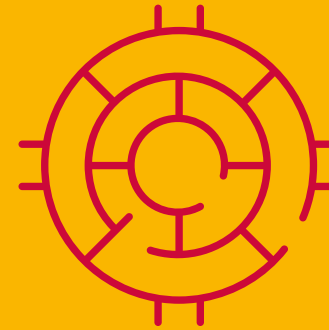
Challenging and changing, reviewing and reimagining how we do things

Despite the savings we have had to make, we have worked hard to avoid simply cutting services to balance the books – this would be the easy thing to do. We have had to be creative to find new ways to deliver services and ensure that our services are as efficient as possible. For example, working with Town & Parish Councils, community groups and organisations to deliver libraries, community centres, markets, Children's Centres and youth services, examples include 'Feed the Birds' scheme to tackle social isolation and "Bench to Bench" to encourage people into activity. This has delivered a saving of over £1m over three years.

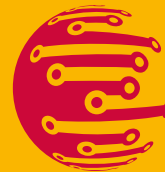
Our refocussed organisational strategy has five themes:



1. Solving problems and promoting social responsibility to reduce demand for services



2. Challenging and changing the way we do things



5. 'Joining the dots' to ensure that our services work effectively



3. Reducing our dependency on Government grants



4. Being a modern organisation where we always get the basic right

Reducing our dependency on Government grants

This is an essential part of our financial strategy to increase and maximise income into the Council from sources other than Government grants.

Being a modern organisation with modern practices and where we always get the basics right:

Employees - The Council has hard working and dedicated employees committed to the values of service and making a difference to the community. Our Workforce Strategy sets out how we will work to continually support the employees to ensure that they have the right skills and knowledge to deliver services.

Technology - Investing in ICT to keep our systems up to date is an essential part of 'Be the change'. We have doubled ICT's capital programme from £1m to £2m pa 2017/18 to 2019/20 to drive efficiencies and savings as well as ensuring that the ICT network is robust.

Customer focus - Improving the customer journey and outcomes by driving a digital transformation including the enablement of 'self-serve' at customers' convenience through 'My Telford'.

Performance - Our Performance Framework tracks the progress we are making delivering our priorities. This is an essential part of our approach to evidence based decision making and will be underpinned by improving data quality.

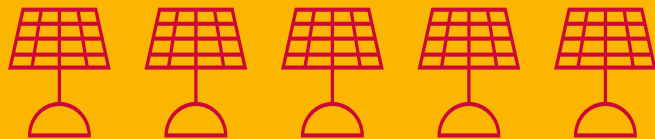
Financial Management - Our Service & Financial Strategy sets out how we will use our money to deliver our priorities and value for money including where we will invest more to deliver our priorities, but also where we are still required to make savings and deliver efficiencies.

Joining the dots

This new theme is about working to ensure that all our services work effectively together where this will drive improvement in outcomes for the community. It is about challenging ourselves to ask whether there are opportunities to work collaboratively with other Council services, public services and community partners.



SOLAR FARM
£4.4m PROFIT
over the next 20 years



NEW HOMES FOR RENT

ENERGY

PRICE COMPARISON SITE

£7k pa

Energy support service
Targeted Advice and Support
for those in fuel poverty

**SECURING
EXTERNAL
FUNDING**



£18.79m

through the Marches Local
Enterprise Partnership Local
Growth Fund

Telford and Wrekin key facts

The Council

The Council has a **net revenue budget of circa £121m** for 2019/20.

Over the four year span of this Plan, the Council is forecasting to be **required to make £25m in savings** as a result of reduced government grant, meet increasing costs and demands in key services. **This is in addition to £123m savings that will have been delivered by the end of 2019/20 since 2010.**

The Council employs some 2,636 people – **a reduction of 1,577** since April 2010.

The Borough

Population

The borough has an estimated population of 175,800 people and is younger than the national picture. The population is growing, changing and ageing. The borough's population is projected **to grow at a faster rate than the national population**, rising to 196,600 people by 2031, with **over half of this population increase expected in the over-65 age group**. As the population grows it continues to become more diverse. Some 10% of the population are from a BAME background, rising to over 13% in the 0-24 age group.

Health

The population generally has **higher rates of poor health than England averages**, and for some people social and economic circumstances make it more difficult to make healthy lifestyle choices. **Male and female life expectancy at birth both remain below the national rates** (male 78.5 and female 81.9, England 79.6 and 83.1 respectively).

Housing

There are some 73,000 homes in the borough and this is forecast **to grow at around 1,000 net new homes annually** for the next 15 years as set out in our Local Plan.

The number of homes rented from private landlords grew significantly between 2001 and 2011 and is forecast to continue to rise. The mean (average) selling price of a house in the borough in November 2018 was £165,968, below the regional (£197,387) and national (£247,430) averages.

Economy

In 2018, there were an estimated 85,950 jobs in the borough in over 6,100 business units (VAT and/or PAYE based enterprises). **Manufacturing remains the largest single sector employing 14,000 people** (16.3% of jobs, compared to the England average of 7.9%), with the second largest sector being **Business administration and support services employing 11,000 people** (12.8% of jobs, compared to the England average of 9.1%). Median gross weekly earnings for full time employees grew 6.9% to £522.30 from 2017 to 2018.

Deprivation

15 of 108 neighbourhood areas are ranked among the 10% nationally most deprived. Primarily focussed in South Telford: Woodside x4, Malinslee and Dawley Bank x3, Madeley and Sutton Hill x2, Brookside x2, Dawley and Aqueduct x2, Hadley and Leegomery and College. **27% of the population live in areas which are amongst the 20% most deprived areas nationally.**

Organisational Delivery & Development

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Web: www.telford.gov.uk



TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**CABINET – 11 JULY 2019
COUNCIL – 25 JULY 2019****2019/20 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT****REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: FINANCE & H.R. (CHIEF
FINANCIAL OFFICER)****LEAD CABINET MEMBER: CLLR LEE CARTER****PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT****1.0 SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES****1.1 2019/20 Revenue**

The net outturn position for 2019/20 is currently projected to be within budget at year-end after applying funding from the Council's contingency. The centrally held contingency is available to meet funding pressures and any unforeseen costs with any balance remaining at year-end used to support the medium term service and financial planning strategy in future years. The current projection is that £3.6m of the contingency will still be available at year-end.

This is a positive position as £6.1m savings were required to balance the 2019/20 budget although significant pressures are being experienced in a number of service areas. The aim is to reduce the impact of these pressures and improve the overall position further during the remainder of the year.

Adult Social Care is currently projected to be £0.492m (or 1.2%) over budget and close monitoring and active budget management will continue throughout the year. Children's Safeguarding & Family Support continues to be a key area of focus and is currently projecting to be £1.598m (5.2%) over budget. A cost improvement plan is in place which is actively monitored on a regular basis by senior managers and Cabinet Members.

There are a number of variations from the approved budget, including some beneficial variances. The main areas to highlight are:

- A benefit of £2.0m relating to Treasury Management activities - the majority of which relates to benefits from low interest rates for short-term borrowing. Some further long-term borrowing has been taken in 2019/20 to reduce interest rate exposure and the position is regularly monitored by senior finance staff with advice taken from the Council's external treasury management advisors.

- Children’s Safeguarding & Family Support is a key pressure area with additional investment of £1.598m required which is mainly due to the cost of placements for Looked after Children. This position is after applying £1.647m one off balances and contingencies, set aside at last year end to support the delivery of the cost improvement plan. A cost improvement plan is in place which is designed to deliver efficiencies over the remainder of the year and medium term.
- Education & Corporate Parenting is also under pressure with a projected overspend of £0.673m. This is largely due to additional costs for school transport for pupils with high needs. Savings have already been achieved in school transport and there may be further opportunities for additional savings once the current review of Home to school transport is completed. A report will be brought to Members in the near future. Post 16 transport costs are also under pressure because the Government has extended the entitlement to education for high needs students up to the age of 25. This has led to an extension of some programmes with associated transport costs. Officers are reviewing the provision of all students to ensure that it is appropriate and provides positive progression. Independent travel training programmes will also be offered to a greater number of students where this is appropriate. In general, financial pressure on high needs is a nationally recognised issue and as Government funding rules do not allow high needs transport costs to be funded by Dedicated Schools Grant allocations, this pressure is impacting directly upon general fund budgets.

The funding outlook for the medium term is still very uncertain with significant changes to the local government finance system due to be implemented from April 2020 but very little information available about what impact these changes will have on the Council. However, using the limited information that is available, it is currently anticipated that the Council will need to identify around £25m further savings over the next 2 years (2020/21 – 2021/22) on top of the £123m already delivered to the end of 2019/20.

A four-year programme to invest in, protect and care for the Borough was approved at Cabinet on 30 May 2019. This report identified the Council’s strategic focus through to 2023 and a number of key investments are now put forward for approval which enable delivery of the commitments made to the Community. Details can be found in Section 5.2.

1.2 **Capital**

The capital programme totals £70.18m which includes all approvals since the budget was set. At the time of compiling this report projected spend was 92.25% of the budget allocation.

There are a number of new allocations and slippage which required approval and are listed in Appendix 3.

1.3 **Corporate Income Collection**

Income collection in relation to NNDR is ahead of target, while collection for Council Tax and Sales Ledger are slightly behind target.

Total cash collected is over £3.5m greater than at the same point last year.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet Members are asked to:-

- | | |
|-------|---|
| (i) | Note that 2019/20 revenue spending is currently projected to be within budget and continue to work with SMT to sustain this position; and approve the use of the contingency detailed in section 5. |
| (ii) | Recommend that Full Council Approve the investments listed in Section 5.2 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy is updated to reflect these. |
| (iii) | Note the position in relation to capital spend and recommend that Full Council approve the changes to the capital programme detailed in Appendix 3. |
| (iv) | Note the collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger. |

3.0 **SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-operative Council priorities?	
	Yes	Delivery of all priorities depend on the effective use of available resources. Regular financial monitoring in the financial management reports helps to highlight variations from plan so that action can be taken to effectively manage the Council's budget.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	To outturn within the budget set for 2019/20 at 31/3/20.	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The financial impacts are detailed throughout the report.
LEGAL ISSUES	No	None directly arising from this report.

		The S151 Officer has a statutory duty to monitor income and expenditure and ensure that the Council takes action if overall net overspends /shortfalls emerge.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	Budget holders actively manage their budgets and the many financial risks and challenges that council services face, examples include the risk of a particularly harsh winter which would impact adversely on the winter gritting and adult social care budgets, the increasing dependency on income from a wide range of activities and the risk of interest rate movements. The Council has comprehensive risk management arrangements in place and an appropriate level of contingency within its revenue budget as detailed in this report.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4.0 2019/20 REVENUE BUDGET

4.1 Financial management is the responsibility of budget holders and is supported by Finance staff using a risk based approach: following considerable reductions in finance resources through savings exercises more focus is given to higher risk areas (high value/more volatile); less frequent financial monitoring is undertaken on budgets deemed to be medium to lower risk.

4.2 The overall 2019/20 budget position is summarised in the table below:

Summary of 2019/20 Projected Variations

Service Area	Net Revenue Budget	Current Variation	Variation as a % of Net Revenue Budget
	£	£	%
Business, Development & Employment	(1,481,064)	0	0.0
Finance & HR	3,284,674	(2,100,000)	-63.9
Cooperative Council Team	1,356,884	0	0.0
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support	30,921,310	1,598,553	5.2
Education & Corporate Parenting	11,613,506	673,205	5.7
Adult Social Care	42,395,547	491,890	1.2

Governance, Procurement & Commissioning	2,771,440	114,871	4.1
Health & Wellbeing	2,386,320	0	0.0
Customer & Neighbourhood Services	29,184,023	(164,199)	-0.6
Commercial & Housing Services*	1,468,207	433,000	29.5
Council Wide	(2,487,527)	(74,000)	3.0
Total	121,413,320	973,320	0.8
Use of Contingency		(973,320)	
Overall Total	121,413,320	0	

*this Service Area covers a range of services including non-commercial services such as homelessness, housing and ICT. The gross budget totals £40.9m and the overspend therefore represents 1.1% of this.

4.3 Projected variances over £0.100m are highlighted below, other variances are detailed in Appendix 2.

Service Area	Variance £m
<u>Business, Development & Employment</u>	
Regeneration & Investment – The Council’s Property Investment Portfolio (PIP) generates over £7m income each year. Some pressures arising from void properties (including NNDR costs) are currently being experienced .	+0.208
Early delivery of Growth Fund investments which are largely offsetting the above pressure.	-0.183
<u>Finance & HR</u>	
Treasury Management – the majority relates to benefits from low interest rates for short-term borrowing.	-2.000
External Audit Fee – underspend against audit fee due to new contract with Grant Thornton.	-0.100
<u>Cooperative Council Team</u>	
There are no variations over £100k to report at present.	
<u>Children’s Safeguarding & Family Support</u>	
Children In Care Placements –This position is based on the assumption that the majority of current placements continue until the end of the financial year.	+2.242
16+ Children in Care – costs associated with young people over 16 increased significantly in 2018/19 as a result of a small number of high cost cases. The full year impact of this	+0.104

is included in the 2019/20 projections.	
Staffing – Recruitment has been challenging which has resulted in the appointment of short-term agency staff who cost around one third more than Telford & Wrekin Staff.	+0.332
Children with Disabilities – the overall cost of direct payments is likely to be in excess of the budget. However direct payments reduce the need for more expensive care packages.	+0.200
Use of Contingency - £0.800million from reserves set aside at the end of 2018/19 and £0.847million contingency budget to address cost pressures in Children’s Safeguarding & Family Support approved as part of the 2019/20 budget strategy.	-1.647
<u>Education & Corporate Parenting</u>	
School Transport – the majority of expenditure on home to school transport is in relation to transport for pupils with high needs which is putting pressure on the transport budget. The variation is forecast to be at a similar level to 2018/19. Savings have already been achieved in this area of spend and there may be further opportunities for additional savings once the current review of Home to school transport is completed. A report will be brought to Members in the near future.	+0.445
Post 16 Transport – there was a significant increase in the costs of transporting post 16 high need pupils from September 2018. In 2019/20 the full year transport costs of these young people will be incurred. This is because the Government has extended the entitlement to education for high needs students up to the age of 25. This has led to an extension of some programmes with associated transport costs. Officers are reviewing the provision of all students to ensure that it is appropriate and provides positive progression. Independent travel training programmes will also be offered to a greater number of students where this is appropriate.	+0.292
<u>Adult Social Care</u>	
Purchasing – variation is currently being investigated. The volume of care purchased is higher than assumed activity rates.	+1.474
Income – additional client contributions received as a result	-0.726

of the increased volume of care shown above.	
Operational Locality Teams – underspends arising from vacant posts.	-0.257
<u>Governance, Procurement & Commissioning</u>	
There are no variations over £100k to report at present.	
<u>Health & Wellbeing</u>	
There are no variations over £100k to report at present.	
<u>Customer & Neighbourhood Services</u>	
Environmental Maintenance – early delivery of savings earmarked for 2020/21 as a result of the new grounds and cleansing contract with Idverde.	-0.168
T & W Footpath Lighting – under spend projected against electricity costs from the implementation of the LED lighting programme across the Borough.	-0.169
<u>Commercial & Housing Services</u>	
Leisure Operations – income pressures linked to the impact of new competitors entering the gym market locally. An action plan is in place to mitigate this pressure which represents 1.1% of the gross budget of £40.9m.	+0.433
<u>Corporate</u>	
There are no variations over £100k to report at present.	

5.0 **CONTINGENCIES**

- 5.1 The 2019/20 budget includes a prudent general contingency of £3.7m, which is set aside to meet any unforeseen expenditure, or delays in phasing in the significant level of savings that the Council has to deliver this year. There is also an amount held centrally for contractual inflation totalling £1.2m which forms part of the approved revenue budget and will only be allocated to specific budgets when the relevant inflation information is available. Given the exceptional reductions being made in the Council's budget it is imperative that the Council has a reasonable level of contingency in order to cover increases in demand for services (e.g. safeguarding which can be significant and occur with no warning) and to allow for any delays or shortfalls in the

delivery of planned savings. The current position relating to contingencies is shown below:

	£'000
General Revenue Contingency	3.748
Inflation Contingency	1.234
Total Contingencies	4.982
Proposed Use:	
Pride in the Community – Environmental Maintenance Projects	-0.400
Commitments:	
Required to meet the current projected pressures	-0.973
Residual Balance	3.609

The current revenue position is projected to be £0.973m over budget at year-end, which together with the proposed use leaves £3.609m available to meet any unforeseen costs for the remainder of the year.

- 5.2 A four year programme to invest, protect and care for the Borough was approved at Cabinet on 30 May 2019. The report identified the Council's strategic focus through to 2023 and the following key investment is now put forward for approval which will support the delivery of commitments made to the Community.

	£m
Revenue Investments	
Partnership Capacity Fund – additional funds (making the total available £1m) to support working with the voluntary sector and community groups. Areas for support include mental health, addiction, victim support, preserving local heritage, protecting and improving local parks and green spaces, and caring for vulnerable people.	0.440

Due to the strong financial management in 2018/19, the £3.3m budgeted use of balances was not required and therefore the level of overall balances available is higher than previously anticipated. There is therefore scope to fund the revenue investment outlined above from these balances while still retaining a prudent level of balances.

6.0 **CAPITAL**

6.1 **2019/20 Capital Programme**

The capital programme totals £70.18m, which includes the approvals proposed in this report.

The financial position is shown in the table below which shows projected spend is currently shown at £64.74m.

Service Area	Current Budget	Spend to Date	% Spend	Year End Projection
	£m	£m		£m
Development Business & Employment	27.70	0.47	1.70%	25.70
Customer & Neighbourhood Services	23.14	0.93	4.02%	22.30
Education & Corporate Parenting	7.30	1.10	15.10%	7.30
Adult Social Care	0.35	0.05	13.96%	0.35
Cooperative Council	0.93	0.07	7.74%	0.94
Governance Procurement & Commissioning	0.14	0.00	0.00%	0.14
Finance & Human Resources	2.27	0.10	4.19%	2.10
Commercial & Housing Services	8.36	0.85	10.19%	5.92
Total	70.18	3.57	5.1%	64.74

6.2 The 2019/20 capital programme relies on £4.782m of receipts as part of its funding (after adjusting for known changes). Capital receipts included in the medium term budget strategy are under continual review and any changes will be reflected in future budget projections but are currently projected to be on target.

7.0 **CORPORATE INCOME MONITORING**

7.1 The Council's budget includes significant income streams which are regularly monitored to ensure they are on track to achieve targets that have been set and so that remedial action can be taken at a very early stage. The three main areas are Council Tax, NNDR (business rates) and Sales Ledger. Current monitoring information relating to these is provided below. The Council pursues outstanding debt vigorously, until all possible recovery avenues have been exhausted, but also prudently provides for bad debts in its accounts.

7.2 In summary, NNDR collection is above target, but council tax and sales ledger collection are slightly behind target. However, the amount of cash collected has increased for all three income streams compared to last year with £3.5m more cash having been collected compared to the same point last year.

INCOME COLLECTION – May 2019				
	Actual	Target	Performance	Change in cash collected on last year
Council Tax Collection	19.13%	19.30%	0.17% behind target	+£1,009,672
NNDR Collection	24.50	24.34	0.16% ahead of target	+£442,363
Sales Ledger Outstanding Debt	5.08%	4.70%	0.38% outside of target	+£2,074,647

7.3 Council Tax (£88.5m)

The percentage of the current year liability for council tax which the authority should have received during the year, as a percentage of annual collectable debit. The measure does not take account of debt that continues to be pursued and collected after the end of the financial year in which it became due. The final collection figure for all financial years exceeds 99%.

Year End performance 2018/19	97.3%
Year End Target for 2019/20	97.4%

Performance is cumulative during the year and expressed against the complete year's debit.

Month End Target	Month End Actual	Last year Actual
19.30%	19.13%	19.15%

There is over £5 million more to collect in council tax during 2019/20 compared to 2018/19, and we have already collected over £1m more in council tax this year compared to last year. Collection rates for council tax are slightly behind target but does not cause any concern so early in the financial year.

7.4 NNDR-Business Rates (£77.9m)

The % of business rates for 2019/20 that should have been collected during the year. This target, as for council tax, ignores our continuing collection of earlier years' liabilities.

The measure does not take into account the debt that continues to be pursued and collected after the end of the financial year in which it became due. As a general rule the final collection figure for any financial year exceeds 99%.

Year End performance 2018/19	99.05%
Year End Target for 2019/20	99.05%

Month End Target	Month End Actual	Last year Actual
24.34%	24.50%	24.34%

Business rate collection is slightly ahead of target and we have collected £442k more compared to this point last year.

7.5 Sales Ledger (£58.3m)

This includes general debt and Social Care debt. Debt below 2 months is classified as a normal credit period.

The target percent is set relating cumulative debt outstanding from all years to the current annual debit. The targets and performance of income collection for 2019/20 are as follows:

Age of debt	Annual Target %	May 2019	
		£m	%
Total	4.70	2.964	5.08%

Sales ledger performance is just outside target. The highest debt outstanding continue to be in relation to the CCG, property developers, and complex ASC clients or their representatives.

8.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

28/02/2019 – Council, Service & Financial Planning Strategy
30/05/2019 - Cabinet, Service & Financial Planning Report – 2018/19 Outturn and 2019/20 Update

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

2019/20 Budget Strategy / Financial Ledger reports

Report Prepared by:

Ken Clarke, Assistant Director: Finance & HR (Chief Financial Officer)
– 01952 383100;
Pauline Harris, Corporate Finance Manager – 01952 383701

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Summary of 2019/20 Projected Variations

Service Area	Net Revenue Budget	Current Variation	Variation as a % of Net Revenue Budget
	£	£	%
Business, Development & Employment	(1,481,064)	0	0.0
Finance & HR	3,284,674	(2,100,000)	-63.9
Cooperative Council Team	1,356,884	0	0.0
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support	30,921,310	1,598,553	5.2
Education & Corporate Parenting	11,613,506	673,205	5.7
Adult Social Care	42,395,547	491,890	1.2
Governance, Procurement & Commissioning	2,771,440	114,871	4.1
Health & Wellbeing	2,386,320	0	0.0
Customer & Neighbourhood Services	29,184,023	(164,199)	-0.6
Commercial & Housing Services	1,468,207	433,000	29.5
Council Wide	(2,487,527)	(74,000)	3.0
Total	121,413,320	973,320	0.8
Use of Contingency		(973,320)	
Overall Total	121,413,320	0	

2019/20 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description		Budget	Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Business, Development & Employment				
Regeneration & Investment	PIP Income & NNDR	(5,301,121)	208,000	Income and NNDR pressures arising from a number of void properties including Hollinswood House and Euston Way. A planned refurbishment programme for Hollinswood House was approved in 18/19 to enable it to compete in the market and will be marketed in 19/20 as well as Euston Way. The market for Office space remains challenging.
	Growth Fund Income	(2,666,469)	(183,000)	Early delivery of Growth fund investments due to improved tenant phasing,
	Contribution from Reserves	-	(25,000)	One off reserves
Variations under £50k		6,486,526		
Total Business, Development & Employment		(1,481,064)	0	
Finance & HR				
Treasury Management		11,193,249	(2,000,000)	Savings arising from Treasury Management Activities
External Audit Fee		201,590	(100,000)	Underspend against audit fee due to new contract with Grant Thornton
Variations Under £50k		(8,110,165)	0	
Total Finance & HR		3,284,674	(2,100,000)	
Cooperative Council Team				
Variations under £50k		1,356,884	0	No variations to report
Total Cooperative Council Team		1,356,884	0	
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support				
CIC Placements		15,368,825	2,242,012	Equivalent expenditure in 2018/19 was around £16.5m, so the current projection for 2019/20 represents an increase in expenditure of around £1m compared to last year. The 2019/20 projection is based on the assumption that the majority of current placements continue until the end of the financial year, unless the child turns 18 over this period. Thus, if the service is able to step-down further children as is planned, particularly children currently in residential placements, then the actual expenditure may be less than that currently forecast. However, there have already been a number of cases in which a child's placement has become more expensive. This illustrates the risk that the forecast could potentially increase as well as decrease, as the year progresses. Total numbers of children in care have increased in recent months, from 377 in February to 394 in May.
16+ Children in Care		730,179	104,110	Costs associated with young people over 16 increased significantly in 2018/19 as a result of a small number of high cost cases, generally children already in residential placements transferring to a post 16 placement. The full-year impact of support for these young people is now included in the projections for 2019/20
Staffing - salaries		10,873,123	332,495	Recruitment continues to be challenging, requiring the appointment of short-term agency staff. Agency appointments generally cost around one third more than an equivalent substantive LA appointment, resulting in additional pressure to the Safeguarding budget. The extent of the variation as the year progresses will depend upon the balance between the numbers and costs of agency staff and the savings generated by vacancies, not all of which (e.g. short-term vacancies) will be covered by agency staff.

2019/20 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description		Budget	Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Assessments		368,903	-60,133	Many assessments are now completed internally, reducing the need for more expensive external assessments
Children with Disabilities		948,932	200,000	The overall cost of direct payments is likely to be in excess of budget provision. However direct payments represent excellent value for money and a deficit here likely means that children's care requirements are met in a cost-effective manner, reducing the need for more expensive care packages
Children in Care Adoption Allowances		181,270	50,000	There is a budget pressure in this area, due to the number of adopted children and the associated costs, but in principle adoptions are a positive solution for children and for the financial situation of Safeguarding as a whole, as it means that the children and young people concerned are not placed in more expensive options.
Joint Adoption Service		509,609	50,000	T&W is part of a joint adoption service with Shropshire Council. Early indications from Shropshire Council are that the contribution required to support this service is likely to be in excess of the budget for 2019/20. See also comment above regarding adoption allowances
Contribution from Reserves		-924,238	-98,337	
Health Funding		-580,000	0	
Under £50k		2,561,152	375,391	
TOTAL		30,037,755	3,195,538	
Use of contingency		0	-1,647,000	
TOTAL		30,037,755	1,548,538	
Independent Review - Staffing		701,940	28,985	Additional post to cover long-term sickness
Independent Review - Under £50k		181,615	21,030	
Total Children's Safeguarding & Family Support		30,921,310	1,598,553	
Education & Corporate Parenting				
School Transport		2,792,716	444,574	The variation is currently forecast to be at a similar level to that reported in the 2018/19 financial year outturn. The majority of expenditure on home to school transport is related to the transport of pupils with high needs. Because of this, the increase in the number of pupils with high needs and the complexity of these needs (a national issue, not one confined to T&W) is putting upwards pressure on transport costs. Work to mitigate these cost pressures is on-going, including encouraging parents to transport their children to school where possible and more sharing of taxis. The number of coaches required to transport children to mainstream schools reduced from September 2018 and further reductions will be made in future years as denominational transport ceased for new pupils in September 2017. There may be further opportunities for additional savings once the current review of Home to school transport is completed. A report will be brought to Members in the near future.

2019/20 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description		Budget	Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Post 16 Transport		176,450	292,346	This area transferred into Education & Corporate Parenting from Business, Education and Employment in 2018, coinciding with a significant increase in the costs of transporting post 16 high needs pupils from September 2018. This was due to a small number of young people with significant transport costs joining the cohort. In 2019/20, the full year transport costs of these young people will be incurred, further increasing the projected expenditure compared to the previous year. Post 16 transport is impacted by the same high needs issues outlined above, but also has additional pressures arising from the Government's extension of potential entitlement to education for high needs pupils to age 25, as part of the September 2014 SEND reforms. This has led to some pupils in post 16 education extending their education beyond 19, with a continuation of associated transport costs. Dedicated post 16 SEND officers have recently been appointed, with a remit to review the provision of all students to ensure that it is appropriate and provides positive progression. Independent travel training programmes will also be offered to a greater number of students where this is appropriate.
Variations under £50,000		8,644,340	-63,715	
Total Education & Corporate Parenting		11,613,506	673,205	
Adult Social Care				
Purchasing - all types of care		39,055,780	1,474,300	Difference in forecast net expenditure against five year model which included various transformation strategies. The variation is being investigated and is certainly to do with variation from the assumed activity or rates forecast and is impacting income recovery as detailed below
Income	Client contributions	(5,536,800)	(726,000)	Impact of the volume of care purchased giving rise to contributions offsetting the pressure above
Operational Locality Teams		5,921,680	(257,000)	Vacancies and lead times in recruiting
Other	Variations under £50k	2,954,887	590	
Total Adult Social Care		42,395,547	491,890	
Governance, Procurement & Commissioning				
Legal Services		1,062,280	94,309	Lower than expected fee income, lower costs recovered from legal action and pressure on printing budgets from childcare proceedings.
Other	Variations under £50k	1,709,160	20,562	
Total Governance, Procurement & Commissioning		2,771,440	114,871	
Health & Wellbeing				
Variations under £50k		2,386,320	0	
Total Health & Wellbeing		2,386,320	0	

2019/20 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description		Budget	Variation	Comments
		£	£	

2019/20 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description		Budget	Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Customer & Neighbourhood Services				
Environmental Maintenance	Various	3,920,210	(167,520)	Underspends from the new Grounds & Cleansing Contract with Idverde as a result of the delivery of savings earmarked for 2020/21 early in 2019/20.
TWS Holding Account	Third Party Payments	-	(66,778)	One off refund in relation to pensions as a result of the winding up of the TWS contract.
New Roads and Streetworks Act	Various	(326,450)	(74,436)	Additional permit income projected for the year in line with income levels received in 2018/19.
Off Street Car parking	Income	(219,180)	52,180	Shortfall against income targets for Ironbridge Car Parks. This is consistent with shortfalls experienced in 2018/19.
T & W Footpath Lighting	Premises Related Expenditure	662,670	(168,518)	Underspend against electricity for footpath lighting as a result of the roll out of the LED lighting programme across the Borough.
Variations under £50k		25,146,773	260,873	
Total Customer & Neighbourhood Services		29,184,023	(164,199)	
Commercial & Housing Services				
Housing	Homelessness - Income	(533,730)	175,000	A report was taken to S&FP which identified a number of ongoing pressures with limited mitigating options, short-term action is being taken in 19/20 but leaves an ongoing unstainable pressure. The pressure relates to rental income shortfall in relation to the move from one large refuge to two smaller properties to meet the needs of the client group and relatively lower occupancy levels at XRoads due to the need to ensure the right mix of clients to minimise safeguarding issues. The Housing team will review options to help mitigate these pressures in 19/20.
		0	(175,000)	One off use of Reserve created from 18/19 outturn to mitigate the above pressure.
Leisure Operations	Aspirations - Income	(1,981,944)	433,000	Income pressures within Leisure linked to the impact of new competitors entering the gym market locally. An action plan is in place to mitigate this pressure as far as possible.
Variations under £50k		3,983,881	0	
Total Commercial & Housing Services		1,468,207	433,000	
Corporate				
Staff Miscellaneous		964,280	(74,000)	Reduction in recharges for Pension Benefits from Shropshire County Pension Fund
Variations under £50k		(3,451,807)	0	
Total Corporate		(2,487,527)	(74,000)	
Total		121,413,320	973,320	

Capital Approvals - by Service Area

Appendix 3

Slippage						
Scheme	Service Area	Funding Source	19/20 £	20/21 £	21/22 £	Later Yrs £
Highways/Footpaths	Customer & Neighbourhood Services	Prudential	(900,000.00)	900,000.00		
Telford Growth Package	Customer & Neighbourhood Services	External	(2,702,443.02)	2,702,443.02		
Telford Growth Package	Customer & Neighbourhood Services	Prudential	504,267.82	(504,267.82)		
All Other Schools Schemes	Education & Corporate Parenting	Grant	(17,765,000.00)	17,765,000.00		
Total			(20,863,175.20)	20,863,175.20	0.00	0.00

New Allocations						
Scheme	Service Area	Funding Source	19/20 £	20/21 £	21/22 £	Later Yrs £
Safer Routes to Schools	Customer & Neighbourhood Services	External	11,800.00			
Every Day Telford -Pride in your Community	Co-operative Council	Revenue	(4,779.48)			
Highways/Footpaths	Customer & Neighbourhood Services	Prudential	350,000.00			
Rights of Way	Customer & Neighbourhood Services	Revenue	100,000.00			
Total			457,020.52	0.00	0.00	0.00

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TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET 11th July 2019

PROTECTING THE WREKIN FOREST: THE APPROVAL OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-24 AND THE AONB PARTNERSHIPS TERMS OF REFERENCE.

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: BUSINESS, DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR H RHODES

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Council has committed to protect, enhance and extend the network of green spaces within Telford and Wrekin which characterise the Town and provide accessible spaces for local communities to enjoy and support the Council's health and wellbeing agenda. The Borough's Green Network extends to over 2500 hectares and under its recent Green Guarantee and Local Nature Reserve initiatives the Council has identified, retained and protected over 1000 hectares of important green spaces valued by the local community.
- 1.2 The Wrekin Forest forms significant links between Telford's urban green network to the north and the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site to the east and is an integral part of Telford's green infrastructure and 'Forest City' heritage. The Wrekin and Ercall hills are regional landmarks and the Council provides protection to this 'strategic landscape' which also includes flanking woodlands and villages including Little Wenlock and New Works, through planning policy.
- 1.3 It is estimated that up to 120,000 people visit the Wrekin every a year. This massive popularity reflecting its attraction for those leading healthy lifestyles, providing the facilities and the environment for all ages to enjoy. The work of Discover Telford and the 'smart packaging' of the area's tourism offer focusses on the Wrekin forming part of a wider package of visitor experiences including guided walks, trails and 'multi-centre' experiences such as wider heritage and nature itineraries linked with the Ironbridge Gorge, the local woodlands managed by the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust and the Local Nature Reserves and Public Parks in the urban heart of the borough. The approach aims to increase visitor dwell time, return and benefits to all.
- 1.4 A small part of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) falls within The Wrekin Forest Strategic Landscape and this report seeks Cabinet approval for the 2019-2024 AONB Management Plan (Appendix 1) and the revised Terms of Reference for the AONB Partnership (Appendix 2).
- 1.5 Local Authorities with an AONB in their boundary have a statutory requirement to produce a Management Plan. The Management Plan sets out the priorities for conserving and enhancing the AONB for the next five years. As the AONB extends outside the borough's boundary and impacts on a wide range of stakeholders the AONB Partnership was established as a joint advisory committee to both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council. The Council is represented on the Partnership at Officer and Member level. The Partnership has led the update of the Management Plan which has been subject to consultation with the public and a wide range of partner organisations. The amendments to the Partnership's terms of reference reflect the need to ensure an effective management structure while maintaining links with wider stakeholders.
- 1.6 The Vision for the AONB set out in the Management Plan is that :-

“The natural beauty of the Shropshire Hills landscape is conserved, enhanced and helped to adapt - by sympathetic land management, by co-ordinated action and by sustainable communities; and is valued for its richness of geology, wildlife and heritage, and its contribution to prosperity and wellbeing.”

- 1.7 The revised Management Plan recognises the unique qualities of the element of the AONB that sits within the Borough and the key management policy maintains the protection of the area through planning policy and promotes the ongoing support of local partnerships including the Wrekin Forest Partnership established in 2007.
- 1.8 Collaboration and partnership working will continue to be key to the success of the management and evolution of the AONB in the borough.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approve the Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan 2019-24,
2.2 Approve the revised Terms of Reference for the AONB Partnership.

3 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-operative Council priorities?	
	Yes	The objectives of the AONB management plan are compatible with the priorities of the Council, in particular the objectives to raise awareness and participation, improving the health and wellbeing of our communities, addressing health inequalities and local working with communities. The management plan also supports sustainable tourism and the associated inward investment that this can bring.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	The management plan supports equality of access to the AONB by all members of the community
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	The management plan covers the period of 2019 – 2024	
FINANCIAL/ VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	<p>Responsibility for funding the management of the Shropshire Hills AONB is split 75% DEFRA and 25% Local Authority. The Local Authority contribution is split proportionately between Shropshire Council and Telford and Wrekin Council. Telford and Wrekin Council currently contributes £2,694 p.a. this will rise to £3,000 p.a. in 20/21 and will be funded from Development Management budgets.</p> <p>The Management Plan sets out aspirations for projects and delivery activities and does not make any binding financial commitments above the contributions referred to above.</p> <p>The AONB Partnership also actively seeks external funding and third party grant funding opportunities to support management actions at The Wrekin. AEM 11/06/19</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 the Council has a duty to prepare and publish a plan setting out its policy for the management of the AONB and for carrying out its functions in relation to it. The Council has a duty under the Act to review the management plan before the end of 5 years after the publication and, after that, at

		<p>intervals of not more than 5 years. The Council needs to consider the amended Management Plan and determine whether it is appropriate.</p> <p>The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership is a joint advisory committee established to advise both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council. The Partnership's Terms of Reference will govern the operation of the Partnership to facilitate the implementation of the Management Plan. The Terms of Reference have been updated/revised and are being presented to both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council for approval so that the Partnership is appropriately authorised.</p> <p>More generally, in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in the area of outstanding natural beauty, the Act requires that the Council must have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty. (IR 13.06.19)</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES		<p>Production of the management plan is a condition of DEFRA's core funding for the AONB Partnership. There are a number of opportunities identified in the plan to enhance the AONB including the Wrekin Forest, maximising benefits to the natural environment, local residents and those visiting the area.</p>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	<p>The AONB is located within the Wrockwardine Ward. However, the approval of the Management Plan and Terms of Reference will deliver borough wide benefits.</p>

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4 AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

4.1 This is the fourth statutory Management Plan for the AONB since the requirement to produce a plan was enacted by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The AONB is a statutory designation to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area and has been in place since 1958. The Management Plan sets out the priorities for conserving and enhancing the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty for the next five years.

4.2 The Management Plan has been produced jointly with Shropshire Council through the AONB Partnership – a Joint Advisory Committee. The Plan has been developed in partnership with a range of stakeholders and was made available for public consultation from November 2018 to January 2019. Formal approval is required by the two local authorities, Telford and Wrekin Council and Shropshire Council.

4.3 The Vision of the Management Plan is:

“The natural beauty of the Shropshire Hills landscape is conserved, enhanced and helped to adapt - by sympathetic land management, by co-ordinated action and by sustainable communities; and is valued for its richness of geology, wildlife and heritage, and its contribution to prosperity and wellbeing.”

4.4 Across the whole AONB the Management Plan recognises that the character and quality of the Shropshire Hills landscape are of high importance but under increasing pressure. The condition of some of the special qualities of the AONB is declining. Conservation activity through many schemes and projects is not enough to prevent some losses in wildlife. There are also challenges across the wider AONB in relation to water quality and catchment management targets. Economic forces are also increasing development pressures.

4.5 The Plan sets out the Land Use Plan policies established by the respective local authorities, and proposes actions for a wider range of partners. These fall under three main aims:

- Land management supporting natural beauty and landscape
- Planning for a sustainable economy and communities

- People enjoying and caring about the landscape

5 THE AONB IN TELFORD AND WREKIN

5.1 The Wrekin and surrounding area is identified as a priority area within the Management Plan. The area is recognised as having distinct features and needs that are different to the rest of the AONB. The plan acknowledges that the area within the Borough of Telford & Wrekin brings different users, audiences and partners. The plan recognises the well-established partnership approaches to co-ordinating management of the Wrekin area and the need for the continued support of this approach. The Plan identifies the 'Key Issues' for the area, lists a number of 'Priorities' and presents the Wrekin Forest Policy.

Key Issues and Priorities

- 5.2 Recreation, leisure and access remain the biggest challenges for the AONB within the borough. Finding ways to manage patterns of access and ensure the landscape remains resilient to increasing impacts will be required in order to ensure effective and sustainable visitor management.
- 5.8 Estimates suggest that up to 120,000 people visit the Wrekin every a year. Collaboration and partnership working will continue to be key to the success of the management and evolution of the AONB in the borough. The massive popularity of The Wrekin for audiences at the peak periods of 8am and 6pm during the week illustrates that, for those of working age, it is a magnet for healthy lifestyles, providing the facilities and the environment that fulfils their physical and mental needs. However, there is opportunity to diversify these audiences especially during peak weekend times, encouraging users to visit other areas of the AONB and the wealth of other Local Nature Reserves, parks and open spaces the borough has to offer. There are opportunities for the AONB partnership to work actively in the borough to increase awareness and knowledge.
- 5.9 Opportunities exist to better celebrate the outstanding natural importance of the Wrekin as an AONB. There is opportunity to create a stronger narrative and celebration of why The Wrekin and its heritage is globally important. Any initiatives would bring with them major benefits of civic pride and a stronger sense of community both within the borough and between other AONB locations.
- 5.10 Tourism is a major driver of the local economy and as Telford becomes more popular for domestic and international tourism there is greater opportunity to take a sustainable approach to both tourism and transport/access.
- 5.11 The 'smart packaging' of the area's tourism offer would see the Wrekin forming part of a wider package of visitor experiences including guided walks, trails and 'multi-centre' experiences such as wider heritage and nature itineraries linked with the Ironbridge Gorge, the local woodlands managed by the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust and the Local Nature Reserves and Public Parks in the urban heart of the borough. The approach would result in increased visitor dwell time, return and benefits to all.
- 5.12 Sustainable transport is a major opportunity for the future and while it is universally appreciated that The Wrekin must be celebrated, access to the area by car is impacting negatively on both landscape value and visitor experience. Early work has already been done on sustainable transport but it is now taking this forward that will strengthen landscape resilience and provide opportunities for growth.

The Wrekin Forest Policy

5.9 The Management Plan sets out its key management policy for the Wrekin Forest which focuses upon the protection of the area through planning policy and the ongoing support of local partnerships.

- The need to protect the AONB is recognised in Local Plan policy NE7. This policy places the highest level of protection upon the Shropshire Hills AONB and protects the 'strategic landscape' of the wider 'Wrekin Forest' area.
- The Wrekin Forest Partnership was established in 2007. The partnerships 'Wrekin Forest Plan' is now coming to the end of its second phase (2015-2020). Moving forward the Council will explore ways to work with partners to deliver practical project based actions that celebrate the outstanding natural importance of the Wrekin as an AONB and its links to the urban green network and the world heritage site.

Engagement in Development & Monitoring Delivery

- 5.10 In the Plan preparation, three workshops were held with the AONB Partnership, and Management Plan topics were also discussed at working groups such as the Wrekin Forest Partnership and the Shropshire Hills Destination Partnership. Themes that emerged included ongoing support for the protection of the landscape and biodiversity; the key role of the land use planning system in protecting the AONB and the need to encourage greater recognition of the AONB as an asset recognising the protection also poses economic challenges.
- 5.11 A public on-line survey was carried out during April and May 2018. With over 200 responses, the survey revealed a high degree of support for the primary purpose to 'conserve and enhance' the AONB. The most valued characteristics of the Shropshire Hills were dramatic views and wide panoramas, opportunities to walk and explore, wildlife and relatively natural areas, peace and quiet and a chance to unwind. Top concerns included the loss/neglect of habitats and wildlife, inappropriate new development, losing the Shropshire Hills' distinctive character and the quality of water and condition of rivers.
- 5.12 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Management Plan conducted in parallel with the Plan review meets the legal requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 5.13 The statutory timescale for completion of the review of the Plan is by 31st March 2019. Defra have been sent the completed Plan as endorsed by the AONB Partnership subject to the final approval by the two Councils. They have congratulated the Partnership on the work on the new Plan. Natural England have also given support to the draft Plan and made 'formal observations'.
- 5.14 The Management Plan Actions will be monitored and reviewed by the AONB Partnership and progress reported publicly. The condition of the AONB landscape will be monitored through a set of headline indicators, and a new set of performance indicators for activity of the AONB Partnership team are currently being developed nationally.
- 5.15 The Plan will help deliver many of the priorities of Defra's 25 Environment Plan - clean air and water, thriving plants and wildlife, reduced risk from flooding and drought, using natural resources more sustainably and efficiently, enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment.
- 5.16 Preparation of the Management Plan by the large and inclusive AONB Partnership group is the established national methodology, and national guidance has been followed. The team members leading the work have been responsible for previous Management Plan reviews.

6. AONB PARTNERSHIP TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 6.1 The process of updating the AONB Partnership Terms of Reference was led by the Partnership's Chair and its sub-group the Management Board (now Strategy & Performance Committee). Several consultations were held with the Legal teams of both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council, and drafts were seen and endorsed by the Partnership. The attached Partnership Terms of Reference document includes the proposed membership and appends the Partnership's procedural arrangements and the Terms of Reference for the Strategy & Performance Committee.
- 6.2 The changes being proposed are mainly minor amendments to wording. The more substantive changes include:

- The maximum number of seats on the Partnership is proposed to be reduced from 45 to 36. Reductions would be made by means of currently vacant seats and through the membership review due in the autumn of 2019. An inclusive group is valuable, but this has to be balanced with manageability, and the current size is believed to be the largest of any AONB Joint Advisory Committee in the country.
- The Management Board has been re-named the Strategy & Performance Committee and now has separate Terms of Reference. As a sub-committee of the Partnership, its Terms of Reference are approved by the Partnership itself.

7. **PREVIOUS MINUTES**

20th February 2014. Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2014-2019

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

20th February 2014. Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2014-2019

The Wrekin Forest Plan 2015-2020

Report prepared by Mark Latham Ecology and Green Infrastructure Specialist, Phil Holden Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Manager and Sarah Bird Destination Tourism Development Officer.

APPENDIX 1: AONB MANAMGMENT PLAN

<http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/a-special-place/management-plan/>

APPENDIX 2: REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

Terms of Reference

(Amended 4th March 2019)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership is the body responsible for coordinating the management of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.2 The Partnership has the formal status of a 'Joint Advisory Committee' under Section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to the two local authorities of Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council ("the Councils").
- 1.3 The purposes of the national AONB designation are as follows:
- The primary purpose of designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. *Natural beauty goes well beyond scenic and aesthetic value. The natural beauty of an AONB is to do with the relationship between people and place. It encompasses everything – 'natural and human' – that makes an area distinctive. It includes the area's geology and landform, its climate and soils, its wildlife and ecology. It includes the rich history of human settlement and land use over the centuries, its archaeology and buildings, its cultural associations, and the people who live in it, past and present.*
[AONB Management Plan Specimen text, NAAONB 2018]
 - In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves, conserve and enhance the environment.
 - Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.
(Countryside Agency, 2001)
- 1.4 Local authorities have a legal obligation under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 to prepare and review a Management Plan for the AONB, and to 'act jointly' in doing this. The AONB Partnership is the body formed principally to fulfil this requirement and includes a substantially wider membership in order to engage a range of relevant interests and expertise in the management of the area.

2. Roles and Responsibilities of the AONB Partnership

- 2.1 The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership plays three main roles regarding the AONB:
- To promote the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, character and landscape of the Shropshire Hills AONB as a local, regional and national asset.

- To promote compatible social, environmental, economic development and the wellbeing of constituent communities.
 - In pursuit of these ends, to prepare, monitor and review the statutory Management Plan for the AONB and to coordinate its implementation.
- 2.2 In order to perform the above roles and responsibilities the Partnership will lead the review of the statutory Management Plan for the AONB every five years. This Plan will be formally approved by each individual local authority and will, as required in the CRoW Act 2000, 'formulate their policy for the management of the area and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it'.
- 2.3 In addition, the Partnership will co-ordinate and facilitate the implementation of the Management Plan, and will monitor progress in achieving its objectives, policies and actions.
- 2.4 The Partnership will champion the interests of and vision for, the Shropshire Hills AONB, as contained in the statutory Management Plan, and promote a coherent and strong identity for the area.
- 2.5 The Partnership will add value to the role of local authorities as planning authorities for the AONB, especially by contributing to the development of planning policy and guidance, and by providing comments on significant development proposals and planning applications. Detailed roles and procedures for the AONB Partnership's involvement in planning are set out in a formal Planning Protocol with the local authorities.
- 2.6 The Partnership will seek to secure resources required for effective management of the AONB, including external funds to assist in delivering management activities and projects.
- 2.7 The Partnership will ensure that public bodies fulfil their duty under S85 of the CRoW Act to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB in the exercise and performance of their functions.
- 2.8 The Partnership will monitor the condition of the AONB and progress with Management Plan implementation and will publish an annual review of progress and make recommendations to local authorities as appropriate.
- 2.9 The Partnership will periodically review its governance arrangements to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

3. Membership

- 3.1 Membership of the Partnership will consist of a maximum of 36 people comprising the following:
- Four elected Members appointed by Shropshire Council (representatives should be relevant portfolio holders or local division members);
 - One elected member appointed by Telford and Wrekin Council (the representative to be an elected member appointed by the Council);
 - Up to 6 elected members of parish or town councils within or partly within the AONB;
 - Up to 4 representatives of other statutory bodies;
 - Up to 15 representatives appointed by non-statutory or voluntary organisations;

- Up to 6 individual members.

All of the above will have full voting rights.

APPROVAL OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

Signed

Date

Position

on behalf of SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

Signed

Date

Position

on behalf of TELFORD AND WREKIN COUNCIL

Appendix 1 to Terms of Reference - Procedures of the Partnership

1. All parties recognise that the Partnership is likely to be most effective if its recommendations can be reached by consensus rather than by confrontation but, if it is necessary to regulate any debate, then the Chair shall have the power to order that the Council Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of the Constitution of Shropshire Council shall apply. Consensus will be taken as the majority of the members present and the Chair will have the casting vote where needed.
2. The Partnership may establish sub-committees and may delegate any of its powers and functions to sub-committees. Only Partnership members and officers of the Councils may be appointed to be members of sub-committees but officer members will not have any power to vote. Only the Partnership can appoint members of any sub-committee.
3. The Partnership may participate in other groups as it deems appropriate.

Frequency of Meetings

4. The Partnership will normally meet three times per year. A site-based meeting or tour will normally be held annually. The Chair of the Partnership may call additional meetings or cancel pre-arranged meetings if it is felt that there is either urgent business which needs to be discussed or there is insufficient business to justify a meeting being held.

Chair and Vice Chairs

5. The Partnership will elect its own Chair on a biennial basis, or as necessary. The Chair will be a non-local authority member. The Chair will not serve for more than three consecutive terms (i.e. six years maximum). Both Vice Chair posts will be elected biennially by the Partnership, or as necessary. One Vice Chair post will be an elected member of Shropshire Council and the other Vice Chair post will be open to any Partnership member. Nominations will be invited in advance of the meeting at which the elections take place.
6. In the event of the Chair or Vice Chairs not being present at a meeting of the Partnership, a chair for the meeting will be elected by the Partnership members present.
7. The expectations of Chair and Vice Chair roles are set out in Role Descriptions and Person Specifications, which will be reviewed as necessary by the Partnership.

Local Authority Officers

8. Local authority officers attending Partnership meetings do not have the right to vote on issues being decided by the Partnership.

Declaration of interests

9. Members of the Partnership and any of its sub-groups shall declare an interest in a meeting where a matter to be discussed may affect:
 - their own wellbeing or financial position, or
 - the wellbeing or financial position of a family member or close associate, or
 - the financial position of an employer/business of the member, their family member or close associate, or
 - the financial position of a charitable body, association or other group with which they are closely associatedand shall leave the meeting room whilst that matter is being debated and voted upon.
10. Councillor Members of the Partnership shall, when acting as a member of the Partnership, comply with the code of conduct of their local authority.

11. Non-Councillor Members of the Partnership shall, when acting as a member of the Partnership, comply with the code of conduct of Shropshire Council.

Membership, Applications & Nominations

12. The Partnership will operate an application process for the individual member seats and Parish/Town Council seats, and where necessary for non-statutory or voluntary organisations. The process will be transparent and non-discriminatory.
13. Appointment of applicants to seats will be made by the full Partnership, based on the following criteria:
Individual and Parish/Town Council members
 - Resident in the AONB or a nearby town or in the surrounding countryside;
 - Proven commitment to AONB purposes and relevant areas of interest;
 - Ability to make a valuable contribution to the Partnership.Non-statutory and voluntary bodies
 - Support for AONB purposes and a clear synergy with the remit of the AONB;
 - A significant material or operational interest within the AONB;
 - Representative with ability to make a valuable contribution to the Partnership.
14. Statutory and non-statutory bodies on the Partnership will appoint a named representative to attend as their member, and may identify a named 'deputy' who will also receive papers and may attend meetings in place of the representative without prior arrangement. A representative other than the named member or deputy may attend a meeting in their place by agreement with the Chair.
15. The Partnership will undertake a biennial review of its membership.
16. In the event of conduct or alleged conduct of a member which is not consistent with the Partnership's Terms of Reference, every effort will be made to resolve the issue by informal negotiation. The Partnership may however resolve to withdraw membership, or, in the case of an organisation member, resolve to ask the organisation to provide a different representative.

Appendix 2 to Terms of Reference

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership
structure (February 2019)

