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Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

Thursday 5 December 2024

10.00 am

Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

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#### Cabinet Members:

Councillor L D Carter Leader of the Council

Councillor R A Overton Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing & Enforcement

Councillor Z Hannington Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance & Customer Services

Councillor C Healy Cabinet Member: Neighbourhoods, Planning & Sustainability

Councillor A D McClements Cabinet Member: Leisure, Tourism, Culture & the Arts

Councillor R Mehta Cabinet Member: Inclusion, Engagement, Equalities & Civic Pride

Councillor K Middleton Cabinet Member: Healthier, Safer & Stronger Communities & Partnerships

Councillor O Vickers Cabinet Member: The Economy

Councillor S A W Reynolds      Cabinet Member: Children, Young People, Education,  
Employment & Skills

Councillor P Watling              Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care & Health Systems

**Invitees**

Councillor T J Nelson              Conservative

Councillor W L Tomlinson      Liberal Democrat

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## CABINET

**Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 7 November 2024 at 9.00 am in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford TF3 4JG**

**PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2024**

**(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2024)**

**Present:** Councillors R A Overton (Vice-Chair), L D Carter (Chair), Z Hannington, C Healy, A D McClements, K Middleton, S A W Reynolds and P Watling.

**Also Present:** Cllr T J Nelson (Conservative Group Leader)

**Apologies:** Councillor R Mehta and O Vickers

### **CAB-17 Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **CAB-18 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.**

### **CAB-19 Leader's Announcements**

The Leader informed Cabinet that a lot had been happening since the last meeting and highlighted two key initiatives.

The Council continued its efforts to support the most vulnerable people in the community and had provided £100 to 6000 eligible pensioners as well as overseeing a record take up of pension credit across the borough. It was essential that the Council was on the side of residents and that they were aware of this.

The Leader announced the extension of the £2 bus fares for the services the Council runs across the borough. Some 350,000 passengers had used the services which had been designed in 2022, making it easier for residents to travel to places of work and education. There had been real frustration that there was no additional funding or powers to take greater control of the local bus services. The Council would be taking full advantage of the Bus Bill and had fed into the consultation and would exploit every avenue that became available once the Bill is law.

The borough had received 2 high profile visitors during the recent period and it was a great honour to welcome Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal to

the skills hub in Station Quarter, the new centre for further and higher education in the Town Centre, and with opportunities for 120 new start up business units. Thanks was given to colleagues in the chamber and the wider Council chamber for wise investments over the years which allowed the investment to bring education to the heart of Telford.

The Leader had welcomed the Minister of State for Veterans' Affairs to Telford. The provision for veterans in Telford is amongst the best in the country but there was always more that could be achieved. Events during the coming week would remember and reflect on the sacrifice made by those serving in the armed forces and the Leader encouraged people to take a moment to reflect on the values of service and selflessness and encouraged residents to attend the remembrance events in their locality.

### **CAB-20 Telford & Wrekin Council Plan**

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Director: Policy & Governance.

The report presented the updated Council Plan which sought to drive delivery of the Council's vision to "protect, care and invest to create a better borough" during the period 2024/25 to 2026/27.

In order to deliver the Council's vision, the Council Plan identified four priorities:

- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
- Everyone benefits from a thriving economy
- All neighbourhoods are a great place to live
- Our natural environment is protected, and the Council has a leading role in addressing the climate emergency

Significant progress had been made on delivering against these priorities which included being the first Council in the West Midlands to be judged outstanding in successive inspections by Ofsted for Children's Social Care Services. A reduction in the number of referrals for safeguarding and statutory services by 30%. There had been an increase in the number of offenders referred for treatment from criminal justice of 44.2% in the 12 months ending May 2024 compared to 2023/24 and continued to deliver one of the best alcohol treatment rates in the country. Some 340 units of extra care housing had been delivered in 2024/25 to support specialised living accommodation. The Council had provided over 37,500 people with over £7m in support including £100 given to 6,000 pensioners, together with financial support through a variety of welfare support schemes including household support fund, discretionary housing payments, emergency welfare assistance and council tax hardship fund during 23/24 and 24/25. A sum of £1.17m had been invested in environmental improvements and enhancements into local parks, nature reserves and green guarantee sites with some 11,664 trees being planted and the creation of 32 new wildflower areas.

Investment had taken place to expand schools and education centres making these more accessible to everyone. Regeneration had taken place on the high street, new factories had been built, together with start-up units and the regionally significant Agri-tech Park enabling the private sector to create job opportunities for residents.

The key priority remained that that the communities were the best place to live and work with a thriving economy, improved high streets, factories and business units come, stay and extend bringing job opportunities, expanding the school and education offer to the centre of town, protecting the local natural environment in Telford.

The final commitment was that the Council be efficient, effective and innovative in order to maintain the lowest council tax in the Midlands, make wise investments with the surplus supporting front line services in order to protect, care and invest in the Borough.

Cabinet Members expressed that the plan was linked to the vision document which had been created following significant resident input. The four priorities provided services to match the Council's high expectations and to be on the side of residents. Protecting, caring and investing was at its heart, enabling everyone to live well and ensuring neighbourhoods were a great place to live. The Council is a community focussed Council providing efficient, effective services which benefit the thriving community. Its aim was to protect the natural environment, mitigate against climate change, whilst having a plan that meant long term financial stability. The medium-term financial strategy delivered against the vision and the resources required to achieve it. The Council had a good track record of delivery in communities which had a positive effect on peoples' lives. The Council wanted to continue to make the borough the best it could be.

The Leader of the Conservative Group commented that the Vision 2032 plan had recently been before Cabinet where he enquired about partners who were not listed in the plan, and in particular secondary education, as this was a central government request. In relation to population, he asked for clarification on the correct figure as two numbers had been cited. He set out that one of his personal values was social responsibility and he agreed that the Council had a duty to the most vulnerable in society both morally and at law. He agreed with residents being asked to accept and act upon their own responsibilities so that people can do what they can to help themselves. He asked that the Council protect the natural environment from overdevelopment and protect land that has never been developed and suggested urban densification would be a sensible way forward on already developed land.

The Leader commented that key partners would be attending the vision event later in year which included health, Police, the voluntary sector and representatives from further education. He welcomed the recent and future ministerial visits and the support from the local MP who would champion the Council's causes. He confirmed that the correct population figure was 191,000. In relation to the Local Plan, that would be a debate for the future,

and it would have to consider the need for more housing and protecting the natural environment.

**RESOLVED** – that the updated Council Plan 2024/25 to 2026/27 including the vision and key priorities be approved.

### **CAB-21 2024/25 Financial Monitoring Report**

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance & Customer Services presented the report of the Interim Director: Finance, People and IDT.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 to 2027/28 was approved at Full Council on 29 February 2024 and included the 2024/25 revenue budget and medium term capital programme. Since this approval, the economic climate had continued to be challenging with cost pressures being experienced, particularly in relation to the provision of Adult Social Care.

The report set out the latest financial monitoring position for the year relating to the revenue budget, capital programme and income collection. It provided the latest projections in relation to the projected outturn position, progress against the approved 2024/25 capital programme and gave a summary of collection information in relation to Council Tax Business Rates and Sales Ledger income.

Nationally, Councils continued to face extreme challenges with unprecedented pressures driven by high costs and high demand for services, particularly in relation to Adult Social Care, Children's Safeguarding and School Travel Assistance. The autumn budget had set out its medium term financial plan for local councils which included a one year spending review covering 2025/26 and a further spending review in late spring 2025 to cover the period 2026/27 and 2027/28. The headline figures indicated a real terms increase in core local government spending of 3.2% in 2025/26 including at least £1.3 billion of new grant funding of which £600 million would be new grant funding to support social care. Further details would be announced in the local government financial settlement in December 2024. The government were committed to reforming the approach to local government funding considering up to date need and local revenue with a targeted approach to the 2025/26 financial settlement. This would be followed by a multi-year settlement.

Inflation fell to 1.7% which was below the Bank of England's 2% target which was an indication that price increases were steady. The Bank of England's base rate reduced from 5.25% to 5.00% in August with further cuts predicted for later in the year, although it was still higher than anticipated when the Council's budget was set. Whilst the funding outlook for the medium term remained uncertain, the administration would continue to address the priorities that residents expressed were important to them - a thriving economy, creating well paid jobs, ensuring the borough was a great place to live and learn, preserving the environment and addressing the climate change crisis. It was a key priority that the Council remained efficient but kept the lowest

council tax in the Midlands, whilst making wise investments to support front line services and be the best it could for its local residents.

The projected year end was summarised in the report which set out the Council had a one-off contingency of £1.595m set aside for the pressures of adult social care. Prior to application of remaining contingencies included in the revenue budget, the projected outturn position was currently expected to be over budget by £4.498m at year end, which was an increase of £0.944m since the last report. By using the specific earmarked social care contingency and an element of the general budget contingency this would bring the overall position within budget at year end. The key pressures continued to be adult social care, children's safeguarding, family support and education and skills.

The report reflected a positive treasury management benefit of £1.5m within Finance and IDT which ensured the Council had not required to use the budget strategy reserve set aside to support the medium term financial strategy which remained at £21.7m. In relation to the Dedicated Schools Grant there was a national funding gap due to the pressure on high needs provision. The Council was projecting a £6m deficit at year end but there was not an expectation for councils to fund this as a statutory override would be put in place until 2025/26.

In relation to corporate income collection, business rates were on target. Council tax was slightly behind target but this was on course to be met by year end.

While it has been extremely challenging the aim was to continue to deliver quality services to the residents of the borough and protect critical front-line services.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report which showed due diligence and that the Council was in a good position to deliver a balanced budget despite the increased demand on adult social care and children's safeguarding. A balanced budget had been achieved by hard work and thinking outside the box with projects such as the growth fund, solar farm and NuPlace, green energy, new jobs and businesses which helped to support services on the front line.

The Leader of the Conservative Group enquired about the impact on the Council of the government's increase on the rate and threshold of national insurance for employers. He raised that the challenges of the last 14 years included the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. In relation to capital slippage and development within the borough, there was a need for affordable dwellings and he noted the deferment of up to £20 million of the capital housing budget by four years which suggested young people were unlikely to get a NuPlace home any time soon.

The Leader expressed that the new multi-year funding awards were fantastic and he welcomed the new government's sensible approach. There was an absolute commitment to NuPlace and there were plans to expand, together

with Telford and Wrekin homes and the budget coming forward in March 2025 would provide for that. In relation to the 14 years of previous government being ancient history, the Leader expressed that thousands of residents could not just write off its effects and the £150m taken away from Council services. The government had planned and proposed new national insurance rules for employers, but this had zero impact on local authorities as the increase would be funded entirely by the government.

**RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL that:**

- a) the 2024/25 revenue budget position be noted; and that Full Council approve the use of £0.216m Special Fund balances for additional lighting works to be undertaken in the Special fund areas;**
- b) the position in relation to capital spend be noted; and recommends that Full Council approve the changes to the capital programme detailed in Appendix C and all associated changes to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, including Treasury and Prudential Indicators;**
- c) Notes the collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger;**
- d) Notes the current position in relation to Treasury & Prudential Indicators; and**
- e) Authority to approve bids from the Invest to Save/Capacity Fund is delegated to the Chief Executive after consultation with the Leader or the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance.**

**CAB-22 All Age Carers Strategy 2024 - 2029**

The Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care & Health Systems presented the joint report of the Director: Adult Social Care and Director: Children's Safeguarding & Family Support.

The report introduced the final All Age Carers Strategy for Telford and Wrekin 2024-2029 which had previously been before Cabinet in draft form. Following consultation, a series of amendments had been made which formed the final strategy.

The Council had a statutory duty under the Care Act 2014 to provide services to address carers needs for care and support. The Council also had a duty to provide information and advice, to promote wellbeing and, where possible, to prevent carers from needing support.

The main purpose of the 2024-2029 All Age Carers Strategy was to provide a clear framework to the provision of services to support carers of all ages:

- Identify as a carer

- Maintain their own health and wellbeing
- Plan for their future
- Participate in family and community life

It sought to address local issues and strengthen integration of health, social and voluntary services to improve the lives of carers and set out how this would be maintained and enhanced during the next five years.

The vision remained and continued to be that carers were recognised, thanked and valued by the wider community and statutory agencies. Carers were essential in supporting the wider health and care system and preventing and reducing delays accessing services.

The Strategy set out that:

- 45% (8,214 people) said that they provide unpaid care for 19 hours or less per week
- 22% (3,913 people) provide unpaid care for between 20 and 49 hours per week
- 33% (5,899 people) provide unpaid care for over 50 hours per week

It was noted that one in ten carers provided unpaid care and that the time and energy of providing support at no cost to the Council should be recognised and valued. Carers were often not in receipt of financial support or received a small amount of financial support through the carers allowance. The Council provided support to carers of all ages in a number of ways which were set out in the report. There had been a focus on young carers with 50 face to face engagement sessions taking place together with an online questionnaire and a summary and easy read version of the strategy. This had highlighted the need to speak to people on a one-to-one basis in order to increase awareness of the strategy.

Next steps were to formally launch the Carers Partnership Board and, once established, set out an action plan. The key area of focus was an all-age approach which would empower carers and support their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

The All Age Carers Strategy linked to the Telford and Wrekin Health and Wellbeing Strategy and in particular focused on health inequalities. It also supported the implementation of the Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care Strategy.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and the work that had taken place with carers in relation to health and wellbeing, relationships and the need for more social activity and positive events. It was important that care was not the only focus and that friendly, carer aware policies and flexible appointments for services were put in place. People did not recognise that they were carers and raising awareness of the available advice and support was paramount. Education was important for young carers and they should not be penalised. The new strategy put support in place to enable carers to continue with their

education and to ensure that there were no barriers for their future once their studies had finished. There was a robust commitment to all carers that they were thanked and valued and the Council learn from those with lived experience as there was no better voice.

The Leader of the Opposition Group was supportive of the work that was being undertaken on the strategy and the moral and statutory obligations the Council had. He welcomed the focus on young carers, particularly to minimise the impact on education. It was important to manage what was measured and KPIs were an important tool, but he raised that there were no numbers set out in the action plan relating to people accessing short breaks.

**RESOLVED – that:**

- a) Telford and Wrekin All Age Carers Strategy 2024-2029 for publication be approved; and**
- b) Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Adult Social Care in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care and Health Systems to implement a five-year action plan.**

**CAB-23 Telford & Wrekin Digital Strategy 2024**

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance & Customer Services presented the report of the Interim Director: Finance HR & IDT.

The report sought approval for a new Digital Strategy for the period 2024-2027.

It set out the way that the Council would maximise the potential of digital technology in how it communicated and interacted with residents, customers and partner organisations by providing the right digital environment within the community.

The vision was to create a better borough through digital innovation providing seamless connectivity for all and encouraging take-up of information and services online.

The Strategy highlighted the initial actions planned, progress on the 2021 to 2023 Digital Strategy and how aims would be delivered through to the end of 2026/27.

Key accomplishments were set out in the report and included:

- the launch of the new Leisure website and Leisure system
- the launch of the new digital assistant “Ask-Tom” available 24/7 to respond to the most frequently asked questions.
- An increased number of services could now be accessed through a more prominent home-page location which had led to a 40% increase in customers accessing services.



- A series of improvements had been implemented to the customer experience of using the My Telford portal
- In respect of travel assistance and transport requests, a custom system had been created
- Our Virtual House was now complete and fully accessible via Live Well Telford: Virtual House tour
- The creation of an Independent Living Centre (ILC)
- The implementation of an app to aid mental health professionals and booking doctors
- The implementation of One Health and Care – a digital health and social care record
- In late 2023 infrared technology to detect falls and track habits and behaviours pilot was introduced
- An online referral into Family Connect safeguarding for professional partners to streamline referral processes had been introduced
- The Care Providers portal had been introduced which linked adult social care and the financial managements systems
- Working with partners, the new Live Well Telford digital directory had been created and was a one stop shop to help people get online
- Support given to over 100 young people with a device from the Leader and Cabinet Young Persons Grant Scheme
- Face-to-face digital inclusion sessions to help people gain confidence online and using the internet, of which 77% of attendees were 65 and over
- Learn Telford provided a weekly Job Junction at Wellington Library
- A pilot project had been delivered with Teldoc Primary Care Network to support patients downloading the NHS app
- Hello Telford, a free B2B tool provided a one-stop-shop digital platform for businesses and helped reduce their carbon footprint
- Invest Telford was rebranded and a new website effectively promoted the town
- A new Council fund – Innovate Telford – offered 100 Telford businesses funding to help them transform over a six month period
- High quality digital infrastructure was being delivered boosting digital inclusion and job opportunities as well as high speed connectivity in both rural and urban areas
- LoraWAN Gully Sensors were being piloted in high risk road flooding areas
- Work had taken place with the Housing Investment programme and Nuplace to ensure new building was digitally connected
- Visit Telford website had been relaunched
- A new Third Generation Security Firewall had been upgraded
- A consistent delivery of excellent digital services with average service uptime of 99.88% in 2022 and 2023
- The Council's commitment to evidence based decision making had seen many improvements in the use of data and in particularly significant increase in the use of Power BI for interactive reports and dashboards and data modelled processes

The Strategy acknowledged that navigating the digital landscape could be challenging and the Council was dedicated to ensuring that some non-digital channels would be left open for those who required them. They were committed to a broad option of communication channels providing customers with choice and would deliver a consistent, easy to use reliable customer experience across all sections of the organisation. By encouraging user friendly and accessible services, customers could interact online which would help the Council to allocate more resource for those customers who needed to rely on using conventional contact methods.

Working alongside partners, the Council would use digital technology to empower and enable people to fulfil their potential, be actively involved in the community, stay safe and live healthy, independent lives for longer. It would also help to improve productivity and growth in businesses borough wide. To enhance Gigabit and 5G connectivity, the Council would closely monitor National Government Schemes to improve speed connectivity in remote rural areas. It would continue to create Telford Connected digital innovation, improving the way that services were delivered through the deployment of smart technology and by providing, enabling and encouraging its partners and customers with secure, reliable, resilient IT infrastructure whilst reducing its carbon footprint.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and the inclusive digital strategy. It was key that the Council kept all channels of communication open in order to maintain inclusivity in the way services were delivered. Although it was quicker and cheaper for people to get online, there were still residents who needed support going forward. By using available technology, the Council would continue to streamline and generate efficiencies.

The Leader of the Conservative Group considered that work was being undertaken more effectively as technology was doing the heavy lifting. MyTelford app was a good example of working better and smarter. He raised a minor caveat in relation to interacting with AI and felt that people needed to know if they were dealing with AI or a human and he raised concerns about the potential overuse of technology and asked the Council to remain cautious.

The Leader expressed that the Council would grasp every single opportunity that was presented including high speed connectivity and digital skills hub promotion. The MyTelford app had stood the test of time and it was hoped this could be developed further.

**RESOLVED – that the Telford & Wrekin Digital Strategy 2024 be approved.**

#### **CAB-24 Ofsted Action Plan**

The Cabinet Member: Children, Young People, Education, Employment & Skills presented the joint report of the Director: Children's Safeguarding & Family Support and Executive Director: Children's & Family Services.

The report presented the findings of the Ofsted Inspection of the Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) which took place between 29 April and 3 May 2024. An inspection would usually take place every three years. In January 2020, children's services were judged to be 'Outstanding' by ILACS and were the only local authority in the region to be judged outstanding at that time. During the recent Ofsted Inspection undertaken between 29 April and 3 May 2024, the Council's children's services retained its Outstanding judgement and continued to be the only outstanding authority in the region. It was important to note that there were only five local authorities who had been successful in maintaining their outstanding rating and this was despite the impact of the covid pandemic and the continued effects on the mental health of children and young people.

The four judgement areas now included the experiences and progress of children in care and the experiences and progress of care leavers. The inspection framework in relation to care leavers was a standalone judgement and Ofsted noted that "care leavers benefit from an extremely comprehensive and generous local offer...". Improvements had been made since the last inspection and care leavers had appropriate access across a range of services. As a corporate parent this judgment was something to be proud of.

Ofsted had highlighted two areas of improvement which were:

- The management of contacts within Family Connect
- The consistency of making children, aged 16 and 17 years old, who present as homeless, aware of their rights and entitlements

Ofsted identified some contacts were closed and then reopened to be reviewed when information was received to allow for informed decisions to be made. The service was exploring options around how contacts could be managed moving forward. In relation to the consistency of making children aged 16 and 17 years old, who present as homeless, aware of their rights and entitlements, work was underway and a senior lead within the service had been appointed and processes and age-appropriate literature were being refined.

The extensive report was a testament to the hard work and development which had taken place and recognised the many strengths of the CATE Team. The care plans had independently been reviewed as inspirational. There was innovative social work practice and the benefits were felt from early health work with children and families.

It was reflected in the report that children services within Telford and Wrekin Council had been a priority, and this was evident from the leadership, financial investment and political support of members. Children's services continued to be a priority area and appropriate financial investment, planning and support continued to be made available to help, support and deliver outcomes for the children and young people of Telford and Wrekin.

Whilst the Council had retained its outstanding judgment, it was a culmination of years of hard work and investment and the recognition that children were at the centre of all that was done and the Council would continue to listen to children and families within the borough as more could be done.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and expressed that the Council had a duty to protect and care for children in the borough and vulnerable children in particular. Despite the outstanding judgement, the Council did not rest on its laurels and the action plan demonstrated the need to continue to develop further to deliver excellent services. The work of the virtual school was highlighted, together with the broader social and extra curricular activities that were undertaken. An outstanding judgement recognised outstanding people. In relation to young carers, this was not an action from Ofsted but this had been identified via service development plans. A report would be taken to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Meeting in the evening of 7 November 2024.

The Leader of the Conservative Group whole heartedly congratulated the officers and staff who worked hard to get the outstanding judgment from an external body. In relation to progress on the action points, he asked if Scrutiny could follow this up. He observed that that support for young carers had not been picked up in the action plan but that the All Age Carers Strategy went some way towards this.

The Leader echoed the hard work that had taken place and thanked everyone for their remarkable contributions. Further investments into children's services would continue to come forward and this would be set out in the budget in March.

**RESOLVED – that:**

- a) the contents of the report be noted;**
- b) the final action plan be noted; and**
- c) the request by Children & young People Scrutiny Committee to monitor and implement the action plan be noted and supported.**

**CAB-25 Report of the Communities Scrutiny Committee – Review of Election Processes**

Councillor E Davies – Chair, Communities Scrutiny Committee presented the report of the Director: Policy & Governance.

The Scrutiny Committee met on three separate occasions as part of the review which consisted of one formal committee and two workshops. Members heard from an expert witness, the Returning Officer and Senior Deputy Returning Officer in order to better understand the legal and practical considerations to ensure a fair and just election.

Following an in-depth review of the way in which elections were conducted across the borough and after considering the best practice in the field of elections, the Communities Scrutiny Committee developed recommendations for consideration.

Members examined recent legislative changes relating to conducting an election following the implementation of the Elections Act 2022 which included the implementation of photographic voter ID. They also received details of how this had impacted voter turnout and changes to postal vote handling.

The election review looked at communication around the introduction of voter ID, the timings of the count, staffing of the count, staff breaks and when results would be received.

The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer worked with members at the workshops and evidenced that the Council already undertook “lessons learnt” sessions as the desired to continually improve. Legal requirements were extensive and the level and attention to detail was phenomenal. Staff received over 12 hours of training and mock elections took place. A staff training video was being considered to act as a reminder for staff prior to an election taking place. The workshop discussed the implications if things went wrong and the external specialist who attended reassured Members that it was not about speed but the efficiency of the count and he highlighted the best practice that took place at Telford and Wrekin. In relation to voter ID due to the social media communication there were minimal people that had been turned away.

It was concluded that best practice was to adopt a continuous improvement approach to the delivery of elections with Electoral Commission guidance highlighting the key benefits of holding a learning review following each election. The Returning Officer at Telford & Wrekin had, for some years, ensured that such learning reviews were undertaken. The recommendations from the report were testament to how well the Council was doing already but further fine tuning would be undertaken to candidates and agents training, staff breaks and the indicative plan. Voter ID had had a positive impact and was not a barrier to voting.

Cabinet Members welcomed the robust and in-depth report. It was important to adopt the continuous improvement approach as there were always areas of improvement and it gave Members assurance.

The Leader of the Conservative Group welcomed the report and the work of Councillor Davies. Elections were a technical and legal process and the work of the officers and staff involved should be commended. It was evident that officer reviews took place and as representatives, Members should play their part in a positive and constructive manner and respect the process. Within the recommendations it referred to ensuring attendance at briefings, opposition Group Leaders could only request that Members attend but could not ensure they would be there.

The recommendations were proposed and seconded.

**RESOLVED – that the recommendations be approved.**

The meeting ended at 10.29 am

**Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices**

Anthea Lowe  
Director: Policy & Governance  
Date: **Wednesday 13 NOVEMBER 2024**

Signed .....

Date: Thursday 5 December 2024



## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

Thursday 5 December 2024

### Pride in Our High Street

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Ollie Vickers - Cabinet Member: Economy
<b>Lead Director:</b>	James Dunn - Director: Prosperity & Investment
<b>Service Area:</b>	Group Manager - Strategic Planning, Inward Investment & Business Support
<b>Report Author:</b>	Gavin Ashford – Group Manager Strategic Planning, Inward Investment & Business Support
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 384260 <b>Email:</b> gavin.ashford1@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	Ironbridge Gorge, Madeley & Sutton Hill, Dawley & Aqueduct, Malinslee & Dawley Bank, Oakengates & Ketley Bank, Haygate & Park, Arleston & College, Newport West, Newport South and Newport North
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Wednesday 17 April 2024
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT – 5 November 2024 Business Briefing – 21 November 2024 Cabinet – 5 December 2024

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Note the work of the Pride in Our High Streets (PIOHS) programme in supporting resilient local high streets, local businesses and communities of the borough,
- 1.2 Approve continuation of the PIOHS programme.

## 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To highlight the positive impact of the PIOHS programme to support the regeneration and revitalisation of the boroughs high streets.
- 2.2 The programme has formed part of a key long term funding commitment to protect, care and invest in local high streets since 2015. The current phase of PIOHS has helped improve the resilience of high streets and support the boroughs local communities. This report provides a series of case studies that demonstrate the impact of Council led investment and how it has leveraged private sector funding into the boroughs high streets.

## 3.0 Background

- 3.1 Mirroring the national picture, our high streets are threatened by changes in household spending patterns, shopping culture and recreational trends. Whilst there have been national programmes such as the Portas Pilot that have tried (with mixed success) to address these challenges, many of the most successful schemes are the result of investment into local projects and initiatives that aim to increase footfall and the attractiveness of high streets.
- 3.2 Since the original programme launched in 2015 we have invested £7.6m into directly supporting businesses in the Borough's high streets recognising their value to local communities and economies. A further £1.5m into public realm and highway infrastructure improvements all of which has leveraged a further £2.4m of private sector funding.





The phases of the council funded PIOHS programme are summarised below:

- **Phase One** 2015 to 2018. Council’s investment of over £800,000 matched with £400,000 of in-kind and financial contributions from local organisations and community groups. Nearly 30 projects were supported under this phase.
- **Phase Two** 2018 to 2019. Council invested a further £700,000 directly into our borough town High Streets, providing grant funding to bring empty properties back into use and improving shop fronts and facades.
- **Phase Three** commenced in 2019 and is still being delivered. £6.1m to support high street regeneration initiatives informed by 5 new ‘Place Plans’ informed by local ward members and businesses. Investment was targeted at transforming the look and feel of our high streets though improved shop frontages, new signage, eco grants to enable high street businesses to be more sustainable and greener, diversification grants to support high street businesses to adapt their business model to the changing markets, new street furnishings creating an improved public realm area across our borough towns.

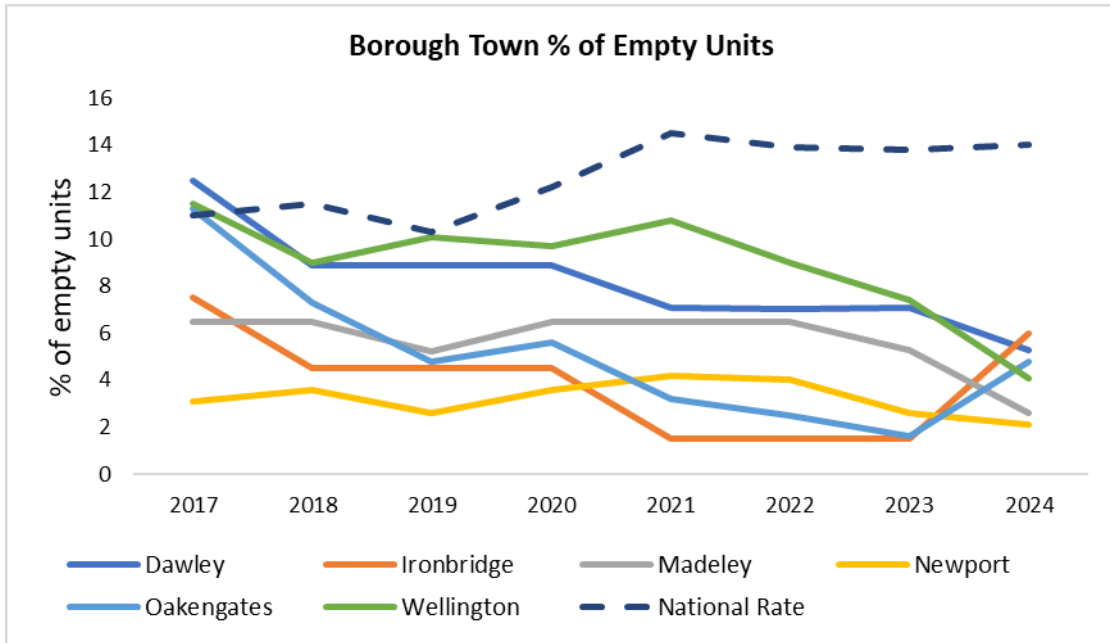
3.3 Tailoring investment through Place Plans with a variety of transformational schemes PIOHS continues to support new business start-ups and help develop business resilience, raising aspirations and encouraging young entrepreneurs to become business focussed.

#### 4.0 Summary of activity to date

##### 4.1 Empty Units

PIOHS programme has had a direct impact on reducing the number of empty premises across the boroughs high streets from an average of 9% to 3.8% over the last 5 years. The Councils intervention and commitment to high streets has seen the borough buck the national trend as the national empty unit rate is 14% (Source: Local Data Company)

<b>Table 2 – Empty units at 30 September 2024</b>			
<b>Borough Town</b>	<b>Number of Retail Units</b>	<b>Number of Empty Units</b>	<b>% of Empty</b>
Dawley	56	3	5.3%
Ironbridge	66	4	6%
Madeley	76	2	2.6%
Newport	190	4	2.1%
Oakengates	123	6	4.8%
Wellington	216	9	4.1%
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3.8%</b>



#### 4.2 Number of Start Ups and Years Trading

Nationally over half of new businesses fail within the first 3 years of trading (Source: Experian). Our grant programme is supporting businesses effectively as we have had only seven close due to poor trading. The Invest Telford business support programme has been invaluable supporting businesses with advice, guidance and growth consultancy. This has helped to provide a comprehensive package of support for local businesses that has helped ensure businesses remain resilient and the borough out performs the national rate of business closures.

Business Time Trading	Number of Businesses start up's
0-6 Months	3
6 Months +	2
1 Year	21
2 Years	13
3 Years	11
4 Years	11
5 Years	3
6 Years	1
<b>TOTAL START UPS</b>	<b>65</b>

#### 4.3 Series of Case Studies

##### The little Christmas Shop & Mrs Claus Kitchen - Ironbridge



- 4.4 The Little Christmas Shop and Tearoom is a Christmas Souvenir Shop, selling festive decorations and gifts all year round. Kimberley the owner started The Little Christmas Shop from a small shop on Tontine Hill in Ironbridge in November 2020. The business has grown and in October 2023 they relocated to a new larger premises with the addition of Mrs Klaus's Kitchen.
- 4.5 *"Soon to be our fourth anniversary, since we opened. The business has featured on TV the last two years which is great publicity for my business and Ironbridge. Most recently I was filmed for the 100 days till Christmas message on 16<sup>th</sup> September on a live show with This Morning"*
- 4.6 Kimberley said *"The Little Christmas Shop was successful in applying for a start-up business grant. The £10,000 grant enabled us to fit out the shop and create a festive atmosphere and without the grant we would have struggled to have been able to start up, so we are very grateful to Telford & Wrekin Council for providing the grant. We were well supported from the Pride in our High Street Team and have since been successful with other grants to help strengthen and support our business. One of the most recent grants enabled us to have a unique Ironbridge Snow Globe made with a miniature Ironbridge inside. These sell so well online and have been given as gifts in Australia, USA, New Zealand as well as widely throughout the United Kingdom.."*



**Amandas' Ow Bist'Ro – Dawley**

Video for [Amanda's Ow Bis'Ro-Dawley](#)

4.7 Amanda's Ow Bist'Ro is a family run friendly café in the centre of Dawley High Street offering beautiful home cooked food, delicious cakes and a nice warm space to enjoy a friendly smile and conversation. Opening in a smaller shop in October 2021 and since November 2023 occupying a large shop central to the high street.

4.8 Amanda the owner hasn't looked back since opening three years ago with the help of a £10,000 grant from Telford & Wrekin Council. Amanda said *"If I hadn't had the grant I would not have been able to open,"* she added. *"It enabled me to buy a range of catering equipment for the coffee shop and new tables and chairs - which I couldn't have done without the grant."*

4.9 *"The original coffee shop was a great starting point, but we soon realised we needed larger premises. The new café by the bandstand, offers us great space for our café and enables us to host parties, has bigger catering facilities so we offer banquet buffet food."*

4.10



**The Little Green Pantry - Wellington**

Link to Facebook page - [The Little Green Pantry](#)

- 4.11 The Little Green Pantry is an award-winning first zero waste shop for a greener lifestyle in Wellington wins awards. In 2024 Keli has won Green Start Up of the Year Award for the Midlands.
- 4.12 Keli was successful in her application for a start-up grant of £10,000 and opened The Little Green Pantry in Crown Street in July 2021.
- 4.13 Keli actively promotes sustainable living and works positively to improve lifestyles and habits. Keli said *“The borough council has been very helpful and supportive of businesses in the town, particularly a lot of smaller businesses in association with the High Street and market - it’s promoting Wellington to a high level. The pride in our community has re-emerged and there has been a lot of investment into the town - I see a lot of new people coming in and people are working hard to encourage more people to use Wellington and keep it great.”*
- 4.14 *“Accessing the grant programme has been vital to my business and I was able to access a diversification grant post covid which enabled me to purchase a nut butter machine which is used every day in the shop and taken to Food Festivals, it’s extremely popular.”*

**5.0 Communications Activity**

- 5.1 There is an ongoing programme of marketing and communications supporting our PIOHS programme. Social Media is frequently used to engage with our high streets and residents of the Borough along with Totally Telford the councils magazine delivered to outlets and households. Our branding ‘*TW High Streets Love Local*’ . has been a very successful tool to engage with local businesses, community groups and residents. Over 534 posts on social channels reaching over 2.5m active users.

**6.0 High Street Heroes Awards**

- 6.1 In the run up to Small Business Saturday (an annual event – 7 December 2024) we will be announcing our latest *High Street Heroes*, to date we have awarded over 100 High Street Hero Awards.





6.2 The awards are voted for by the public – voting for the best shops/services on our borough town high streets. We have already received over 920 votes for our next High Street Hero's 2024 awards.

## 7.0 Broader Impact of PIOHS programme

### Façade Improvement Programme

The façade improvement programme saw almost 100 properties transformed across the borough high streets. Making our high streets more attractive and inviting for visitors and residents. Heritage colours and period features were reintroduced into Ironbridge and Wellington and we were able to transform the conservation area to attract new visitors and footfall to our high streets.



*Shops in the Square, Ironbridge Before & After Façade Improvements*

## 7.1 Place Plan Projects

There have been several improvements schemes delivered as part of the Place Plan activity across the Borough. Many of the projects for this most recent phase concentrated on Madeley and Dawley high streets although investment did go to Newport and Ironbridge. Improvements included:-

- Nightclub exterior refurbishment in Newport – supported by match funding from owners
- Improvements in and around the bandstand on Dawley High Street
- War memorial improvements in Madeley & Ironbridge
- Planting schemes in Ironbridge & Madeley to improve the look and feel of the high street
- Creation of a catering facility in Dawley Town Park to help attract new visitors and to encourage existing visitors to stay longer
- Car Park Improvements in Ironbridge
- Support for the creation of a permanent Post Office in Dawley
- Supporting specialist housing provision across out towns.

7.2 Oakengates & Wellington towns secured funding from both Towns Fund and Levelling Up Funding all of which helps to further enhance provision in our High

## Pride in Our High Streets

Streets. The grant programme will help businesses start-up's in some of the new units that will be created as part of these works. The images below show some of the wider improvement works now underway on the high street within Wellington Market, Limes Walk in Oakengates, The Orbit, 2 Walker Street and vacant buildings in the wider Wellington town centre.



Limes Walk, Oakengates



Wellington Market



2 Walker street, Wellington



1 Walker Street, Wellington

## 8.0 Future of PIOHS Programme

8.1 The priority is to continue to drive footfall to the high street to boost local spend. To support we are providing a further £1m to develop an ongoing package of measures that we believe will continue to be beneficial to every borough town including:

- A further business / start-up grant funding programmes.
- Façade improvements in borough towns as well as wider areas
- Grants for town and parish councils
- A Treasure Hunt – Popular on many high streets throughout the United Kingdom. Enjoyed by the whole family and it combines technology with outdoor adventure which will involve walking the whole of every high street, so this in turn will increase footfall and encourage local spend on our high streets
- High street initiatives – a programme of initiatives to get people into high streets and encourage footfall. This will include initiatives such as ‘selfie station’s’ and working in partnership with Town and Parish Councils to develop.
- Facebook High Street – Further developing the Telford & Wrekin Virtual High Street page  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/telfordandwrekinvirtualhighstreet> using it as a platform to promote products, events, national days, services and business and retail offers. Businesses will be encouraged to use this page as the go-to place to promote their latest offers and activity. It will be re-branded under *‘TW High Streets- Love Local’*

## 9.0 Alternative Options

9.1 In the absence of the PIOHS programme the boroughs high streets would have experienced continued economic decline compounded by the changes in retail habits and the impact of the pandemic which has accelerated the move to online



activity. The likely alternative to council intervention through PIOHS would have been:

- Increased levels of empty shop units
- An increase in uses such as hot food takeaways, vape shops and betting shops
- Increased ASB issues due to declining footfall in centres
- Declining quality of infrastructure and public realm
- Lack of investment in buildings by private landlords and tenants

## **10.0 Key Risks**

10.1 The key risks to the programme include:

- Potential for business failures – this has been very low to date.
- Footfall continues to decline – evidence shows that footfall and economic activity is increasing
- Future economic shocks (recessions / further pandemics) impact high streets necessitating large scale intervention – the programme has helped demonstrate the resilience of the high street and residents desire to have good quality locations to meet and socialise that they can be proud of.

## **11.0 Council Priorities**

11.1 PIOHS contributes toward the following Council priorities:

- every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
- everyone benefits from a thriving economy
- all neighbourhoods are a great place to live

## **12.0 Financial Implications**

12.2 Capital funding for Phase 4 of PIOHS an additional £1m is available within the Capital Investment Fund of the approved Capital programme. Finance will support allocations of this budget through the Financial Monitoring process to ensure expenditure is of a capital nature.

## **13.0 Legal and HR Implications**

13.1 The UK subsidy control regime enables UK public authorities, including local authorities, to give subsidies that are tailored to their local needs, and that drive economic growth. This will need to be considered when providing support which may give a financial advantage. Legal advice will be provided as and when requested in this regard and Legal Services have developed a standard form of grant agreement that will be used in each award of funding. The Subsidy Control Act provides the framework for the regime

13.2 Any decision made by the Authority can be subject to challenge in respect of its reasonableness or lawfulness. Therefore, a robust and transparent assessment procedure is required so as to avoid challenge of either the process followed or recommendations made by Officers and the Decision Makers.

13.3 The proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources.

#### **14.0 Ward Implications**

14.1 The PIOHS programme impacts wards borough wide as residents can apply for grants for works in borough towns but may live in adjoining wards.

#### **15.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

15.1 The programme has helped to create vibrant and economically active high streets. This has helped to:

- Improve health outcomes by ensuring that high streets remain centres for shopping and commercial activity as opposed to areas seeing an increase in unhealthy uses such as hot food takeaways, vape shops and betting shops.
- Better quality high streets help create places that people wish to visit, especially more vulnerable residents, leading to opportunities to socialise, create communities, breakdown barriers and reduce isolation and loneliness.
- The programme has helped to create 388 new jobs, these are residents that may have otherwise been out of work and economically inactive. New, local employment opportunities help to raise aspirations and provide people an opportunity to improve their economic wellbeing.

#### **16.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

16.1 The programme has helped create safer, stronger communities and has helped improve high streets that serve a range of communities across the borough.

#### **17.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

17.1 The programme has helped invest in new businesses that occupy premises that would have otherwise been vacant. This helps bring properties back into economic use. Further investment in properties by landlords and business owners help to improve the energy efficiency of buildings supported by our Eco Grants.

#### **18.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Legal	29/10/2024	29/10/2024	RP
Finance	29/10/2024	29/10/2024	DR



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

Thursday 5 December 2024

### Telford Land Deal Update

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Richard Overton - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing & Enforcement
<b>Lead Director:</b>	James Dunn - Director: Prosperity & Investment
<b>Service Area:</b>	Prosperity & Investment
<b>Report Author:</b>	Dawn Toy - Regeneration & Investment Service Delivery Manager
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 384330 <b>Email:</b> dawn.toy@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT – 5 November 2024 Business Briefing – 21 November 2024 Cabinet - 5 December 2024

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

- 1.1 That Cabinet notes the outcomes achieved during the 2023/2024 financial year and overall, since the Land Deal commenced in 2015.
- 1.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Director: Prosperity & Investment to negotiate the terms of any extension to the Land Deal as set out in section 4.21 in consultation with the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing & Enforcement.
- 1.3 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Director: Policy & Governance to take all the necessary steps to give effect to the proposals set out in this report.

## 2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 The purpose of the report is to set out the continued achievements of the Telford Land Deal which, with support from the Councils Growth Fund and the Invest Telford business pledge, is delivering new and higher skilled local jobs, creating growth and security in the local supply chain alongside new homes and is central to the Council’s Strategy to Protect, Care & Invest into Creating a Better Borough.

## 3.0 Background

3.1 The Council entered a unique 10-year Land Deal with Homes England (HE) (formerly known as Homes & Communities Agency) which took effect from April 2015. This is set to see land receipts from the sale of agreed HE land assets in Telford recycled back into the local area, supporting the delivery of new homes, jobs and commercial floor space over the life of the Deal.

3.2 This report focuses on the delivery up to the end of March 2024 which signifies nine years in. The Land Deal has continued its success. The unique model allows the disposal of public land (former new town assets set aside for development) through upfront investment into site preparation and marketing of sites. Underpinned by the Council’s business support offer of Invest Telford and through its Growth Fund, it has delivered an acceleration in commercial and residential sites sold and raised land values.

3.3 Under the Land Deal, the Council has taken ownership of all residual non developable land from Homes England. This has provided the additional opportunity to substantially enhance and grow the Borough’s provision of Green Network and Local Nature Reserves alongside providing support to a range of programmes including the Great Crested Newt District Licencing Scheme, carbon offsetting and Biodiversity Net Gain.

## 4.0 Summary of main proposals

4.1 Summary of Outputs since the start of the Land Deal and for 2023/2024

### Outputs Since start of the Telford Land Deal

Gross sales income <b>£60.3m</b>	Profit share to council (gross) <b>£16.2m</b>	Jobs <b>2473</b>
Commercial floor space <b>199,278sqm</b> (2,145,010sqft)	Housing units <b>1583</b> (684 affordable)	Brownfield land developed <b>36.7 ha</b> (90.7 acres)
Private sector investment <b>£496m</b>	Business rates <b>£1,267,750 pa</b>	Council tax <b>£2,611,950 pa</b>

### Outputs Year 2023/2024

Gross sales income <b>£11.7m</b>	Profit share to council (gross) <b>£5.97m</b>	Jobs <b>240</b>
Commercial floor space <b>35,407sqm</b> (381,117sqft)	Housing units <b>48</b> (0 affordable)	Brownfield land developed <b>2.15 ha</b> (5.3 acres)
Private sector investment <b>£55m</b>	Business rates <b>£189,820 pa</b>	Council tax <b>£79,200 pa</b>

- 4.2 During the financial year 2023/2024, the Telford Land Deal has delivered the sale of 2 commercial sites and 1 residential site. This has achieved a gross sales income of £11.7m. These sales will support the delivery of new employment floor space (EFS) of 35,407m<sup>2</sup> (381,117sqft), anticipated job numbers of c.240 and 48 new homes.
- 4.3 During the last nine years, the Deal has cumulatively delivered the sale of a total of 34 commercial sites and 25 sites for residential development, achieving a gross sales income of £60.3m. The sites have enabled the delivery of EFS of 199,278sqm (2,145,010sqft), 1583 new homes and supported commercial premises delivering 2473 new jobs, many in engineering and manufacturing adding skilled job opportunities for the Borough's communities.
- 4.4 The financial successes of the Land Deal have meant that a cumulative profit of £19.1m has been achieved by the Land Deal partners up to 31 March 2024. The Council's proportion of this cumulative profit share is £16.2m, (£14.2m after £2m agreed set aside for constrained/liability sites).
- 4.5 The Council has in 2023/24 completed the reinvestment of £3.3m of its profit share alongside its Growth Fund to support the delivery of 24 industrial units at Hortonwood with the creation of Orchard Business Park. The profit share has helped in the viability of the scheme the Council has delivered; schemes such as these are rarely brought forward by the private sector due to the cost of the development. The scheme however is critical in supporting the growth of small businesses and addressing the gap in available stock within Telford. The project completed in Autumn 2023 and is now fully let to a range of existing and expanding Telford businesses alongside new companies moving into the Borough. One such business is Replenished Ltd, a new business dedicated to reducing packaging waste through refill and reuse systems.




**Mark Winsper, Managing Director of Replenished Ltd, said: "Our business is growing and the move to our new unit at Orchard Business Park has enabled us to grow further. It's a very exciting time for the company".**

## Telford Land Deal Update

- 4.6 More recently, the Telford Land Deal Board endorsed the decision of the Council to spend profit share monies to support the viability of projects being delivered through the Towns Investment Fund.
- 4.7 This included approval to spend £3m of its profit share as part of the Towns Investment Fund project at Oakengates. This project started on site in September 2023 and delivering new homes, refurbished retail units and quality public realm/event space in the heart of Oakengates.
- 4.8 Approval is also in place for the Council to spend profit share monies within Telford Town Centre at Station Quarter. This investment will support the delivery of enhanced access routes and high-quality public realm across the area and the new 4000sqm (43,055sqft) Digital Skills and Enterprise Hub (The Quad) accommodating a coordinated offer for both education and flexible space for new businesses.
- 4.9 During 2024/25, the sale of 1 commercial site has completed, achieving an additional gross sales income of £0.07m. This development will deliver additional EFS of 9,760sqm (105,055sqft) and anticipated job numbers of c.20. Whilst classed as a commercial site, the Council has acquired it to facilitate the development of a new school: an extension to the special education provision at Queensway North school at Hadley.
- 4.10 The Deal alongside the Council's Invest Telford business pledge and the Council's ability to provide land, build and lease bespoke properties and offer a full turnkey solution funded through its Growth Fund still continues to drive a high number of investment enquiries. There continues to be a pipeline of enquiries from companies wishing to relocate to Telford or expand their operations.
- 4.11 The delivery of Ni.Park is another success with the Land Deal supporting the delivery of the 10ha employment site at Newport. The first phase of development comprising 24 small business units completed in October 2021 was supported by funding through the Growth Fund and Land Deal profit share. All units are let and proving popular with small agri-tech businesses who have the opportunity to link with Harper Adams University. Phase 2 is now completed, also delivered through the Growth Fund with support from land deal profit share and provides three units totalling 2,787sqm (30,000sqft). One development plot at Ni.Park has been sold to RVW Pugh Ltd an agricultural machinery supplier who are nearing completion of their development. The remainder of land is available for turnkey solutions to address occupier's requirements. Delivered in association with Harper Adams University, overall, the park has the capacity to provide circa 38,000m<sup>2</sup> (409,028sqft) of EFS.
- 4.12 T54 continues to thrive with job numbers increasing within the businesses located there and as well as Magna Cosma, having invested over £90m into the area since landing in Telford and just announcing a new advanced automation capability, there have been other investments each securing jobs for the borough. Torus now occupy 3 buildings adding to their growing success.



- 4.13 Hortonwood West, another of the Council's prime business parks has been highly successful. Nine years into the Deal and the estate is now completed with Rosewood Pet Products Ltd, Eden Horticulture, Baker Bellfield, Craemer UK Ltd, 15 Council owned starter units, Kensa Creative and more recently UPS and CEL Group all in occupation. Plot 8 at the entrance to the site is a recently completed construction for Bruderer, relocating from Luton. A video featuring Rosewood which showcases their growing business at their purpose built facility at Hortonwood West can be seen here  ['Click here to watch the video'](#). The Council's own development of 15 small start-up business units which utilised Land Deal profit share and the Council's own Growth Fund, is fully let with regular enquiries received and a waiting list. Since the start of the Land Deal 9 years ago, this new 55-acre industrial park has succeeded in providing much needed employment land and floor space enabling 339 jobs and delivered 34,852m<sup>2</sup> (375,143sqft) of Employment Floor Space.
- 4.14 The residential market in Telford over the last 9 years of the Land Deal has been buoyant and has seen significant new interest from new developers and Registered Providers all keen to gain a foothold in the Telford residential market. 2023/24 saw the disposal of the northern parcel of The Hem to Vistry Partnerships, following on from the completion of the sale of the southern parcel the previous financial year. The Hem is one of the largest sites within the Land Deal with an allocation for residential development through the 2018 adopted Local Plan (having historically been identified for housing through a New Town allocation) bringing forward 350 homes. The first homes are due to be ready for occupation in December 2024.
- 4.15 Other residential sites such as Old Park and Pool Hill Road D have progressed and are either complete or on programme, both notable successes for the Land Deal's first 9 years.
- 4.16 Nuplace Ltd, the Council's wholly owned housing company, is progressing development at Donnington with 45 housing units completed out of 66. The wider site supports a development in conjunction with Lovells and Wrekin Housing Group with a scheme of 329 units comprising a mix of private rented sector specialist accommodation, affordable, open market sale and a Care Village. The Council secured £3.3m of funding via the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver enabling works to support delivery of this sustainable development with properties having PV panels and EV charging points.
- 4.17 The Land Deal has allowed the upfront work to de-risk challenging residential sites by obtaining planning consents, undertaking necessary infrastructure works and ecological works making them more attractive to the market.
- 4.18 During the last 9 years the Land Deal has driven significant local employment opportunities both in construction and long-term jobs with an increase in higher skilled jobs and new apprenticeships, the number of jobs enabled through the Deal to date is 2473.
- 4.19 The Council continues to monitor jobs safeguarded and created and to work proactively with businesses to provide assistance with training, apprenticeships and recruitment. One example is the Employment and Skills Plan that Vistry have committed to as part of The Hem development, and which is monitored externally

throughout the life of the development. The Council has continued to provide advice on apprenticeships and provided recruitment support through the Work Local initiatives holding employment fairs within community buildings and targeted marketing of local residents. Building on the 'Wheels 4 Work' pilot, the Council has developed and funded the Express 100 service which is a bus route operating across Telford, targeting the business parks and aligning with the shift patterns of businesses. The Council has commissioned a number of videos to showcase businesses across the borough such as Rosewood (Hortonwood West) and InComm (T54). A number of businesses feature in the Council's Economic Development Strategy which was officially launched in 2023/24. In addition, social value offers have been supported by businesses who are occupying accommodation following developments on the Land Deal sites.

4.20 In March 2024 the Marches LEP, who have been an integral part of the Land Deal Board, ceased trading and transferred all its functions to a Joint committee made up of Shropshire Council, Telford and Wrekin Council and Herefordshire Council, in line with the UK Governments plans for devolution. The three partners have agreed that Land Deal Profit Share monies held by the LEP will be returned to the Council. Outputs will continue to be monitored by the Joint Committee with the functions of the Land Deal Board being delegated to the Council and Homes England.

#### 4.21 Land Deal Extension

As the Land Deal draws nearer to the end of its 10 years and in accordance with the terms of the legal agreement, the partners are negotiating and agreeing an extension to the Deal to continue with the success and bring forward the small number of sites that remain. It is proposed that the detailed terms of the new arrangements be delegated to the Director of Prosperity & Investment in consultation with the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member: Highways, Housing & Enforcement to finalise the terms of the extension and then for the Director of Policy & Governance to execute the necessary documents needed.

4.22 Details of the achievements for 2023/24 are included in the annual Status Report produced under the Land Deal for the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) (**Appendix A**).


4.23 The Land Deal is making significant differences to the people living and working in Telford. Examples of how investment has benefitted individuals are highlighted in **Appendices B, C and D**

4.24 Specific examples of disposals and projects delivered through the Land Deal in 2023/24 include:



Telford Land Deal Update

<p>The Hem, Nedge</p> <p>Residential</p>	<p>Circa 40.47 ha (100 acre) development site with outline planning consent for 350 homes.</p> <p>Disposal of the Northern parcel (2<sup>nd</sup> phase) completed October 2023.</p> <p>Infrastructure and first units progressing to delivery programme.</p>	
<p>Plot 11E, Hortonwood.</p> <p>Employment</p>	<p>A new headquarters for DHL Ltd of 5,785 sqm (62,269sq.ft) of floor space and enabling 140 jobs.</p> <p>Completion June 2023</p>	
<p>Orchard Business Park</p> <p>Employment</p>	<p>Orchard Business Park – completed September 2023.</p> <p>24 units comprising 5858sqm(63054sqft) in total and now fully let and enabling 75 jobs.</p>	

Station Quarter	Digital Skills Hub - completed September 2024.	
Education & Employment	37,344 sq.ft across 5 Floors including ground floor café. Partnership collaboration (HAU, Telford College and Enterprise Space)	

## 5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 This is an update report on the Telford Land Deal. The Council has obligations pursuant to the Land Deal agreement to undertake the works documented in this report.

## 6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 The use of uplift monies provides the opportunity for investment to support further growth initiatives, including investments into strategic infrastructure and supporting developments. The Land Deal is based on the devolution to the local area (Telford & Wrekin Borough), of both risk and reward. Homes England receive the 2015 book values for all sites sold before net receipts are shared. On the majority of sites, the actual land receipt achieved will be higher than the Homes England book value due to investment into infrastructure etc. and the added value created through obtaining necessary planning permission.
- 6.2 A further risk is the failure to dispose of the sites in accordance with the anticipated values or phasing of delivery to market after the Council has incurred significant capital expenditure. This could for example arise should local or national economic factors impact on the demand for developable land. This risk is mitigated by close scrutiny of the investments being proposed, the market and the role of the Land Deal Board (where the Council is represented by the Member for Highways, Housing & Enforcement agreeing to each land disposal).
- 6.3 The Land Deal is supported by a risk register and regularly updated milestones which also link into Homes England's project management land disposal processes. The monitoring of land disposals and any changes to milestones dates are reported to the bi-weekly project team and to the Land Deal Board on a quarterly basis.
- 6.4 The extension to the Land Deal will continue to be monitored by the Council using the current project management arrangements in place.

## 7.0 Council Priorities

7.1 The schemes supported pursuant to the Land Deal support the following Council priorities:

Everyone benefits from a thriving economy.

All neighbourhoods are a great place to live.

7.2 The investment delivered through the Land Deal will have a positive impact across the Borough, helping to deliver new infrastructure, deliver new jobs and new homes, support businesses to grow and new investment which will support action to reduce unemployment, increase economic independence and address social inequality.

## 8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 The original Land Deal funding model set out the following in terms of the allocation of the Profit Share generated through the Land Deal:

Profit Share Homes England	15%
Profit Share TWC	85%
Within 85% TWC Profit Share	First £2m earmarked for constrained /liability sites. 15% to the Marches LEP

8.2 Over the first 9 years of the deal (until end of 2023/24) the total Profit Share delivered was £19.1m (after reimbursement of costs incurred). The Telford and Wrekin gross share was £14.2m after the £2m set aside for constrained/liability sites, and £2.1m distributable to the Marches LEP. Under the Land Deal agreement, The Land Deal Board has final authority to determine investment of both the TWC and Marches LEP Profit Share. Going forward, the newly formed Joint Committee has agreed to pass unspent LEP profit share monies to the Council to be spent in line with the Land Deal Board approvals.

8.3 The Investment and Disposal plan is continually reviewed with agreement of the Land Deal Board and work will be undertaken to keep updating the future projections to take into account the agreed changes together with the projections relating to the Land Deal extension.

## 9.0 Legal and HR Implications

9.1 The Council has the power to carry out the activity referred to in this report, obtained through various legislation Legal Services will continue to provide advice and support in connection with the Land Deal as and when necessary.

## 10.0 Ward Implications

10.1 The Land Deal is borough wide and impacts across all wards.

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

- 11.1 The investment delivered through the Homes England Land Deal will have a positive impact across the Borough, helping to delivery new infrastructure, deliver new jobs and new homes, support businesses to grow and new investment which will support action to reduce unemployment, increase economic independence and address social inequality.

## **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 12.1 The impact of the Land Deal will benefit people with a range of protected characteristics (specific aspects of a person's identify defined by the Equality Act 2010).
- 12.2 The Land Deal advances equality of opportunity, by accelerating the delivery of good quality housing, increasing the choice of housing available locally and delivering a percentage of affordable homes, supporting existing and new businesses, accommodating new jobs and economic independence.

## **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 13.1 The Land Deal and the developments that are brought forward have been innovative to date incorporating electric vehicle charging points and solar panels ahead of the statutory requirements. Residential developments are assessed using the Building for Healthy Life principles and seek to incorporate over and above the standard climate change requirements through building regulations.

## **14.0 Background Papers**

- 1 Cabinet – 17 October 2013
- 2 Cabinet – March 2015
- 3 Full Council – 3 March 2016, CB-79
- 4 Cabinet – 13 July 2017
- 5 Full Council – 21 September 2017, CB-42
- 6 Cabinet - 12 July 2018
- 7 Full Council - 26 July 2018
- 8 Cabinet – 2 January 2020
- 9 Full Council – 23 January 2020
- 10 Cabinet – 18 February 2021
- 11 Full Council – 4 March 2021
- 12 Cabinet – 7 October 2021
- 13 Full Council – 18 November 2021
- 14 Cabinet – 13 October 2022
- 15 Full Council – 10 November 2022
- 16 Cabinet- 19 October 2023
- 17 Full Council – 30 November 2023

## 15.0 Appendices

- A Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG)  
2023/2024 Status Report for the Telford Land Deal.
- B CEL Group - Focus on apprenticeships
- C Old Park – Delivery of Affordable Homes
- D Replenished – Orchard Business Park

## 16.0 Report Sign Off

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Legal	16/09/2024	03/10/2024	EH
Director	17/10/2024	18/10/2024	JD
Finance	17/10/2024	18/10/2024	DR

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# TELFORD Land Deal

MHCLG Status Report

2023-2024

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## Foreword:

The Telford Land Deal was formed in 2015 and is now in its 9<sup>th</sup> year. It has established a successful new model for reinvestment of public land receipts into delivering new homes, employment space and jobs, raising land values and driving growth. The start of 2023 continued with the land prices settling to pre-pandemic levels and still a nervousness of the investment market with funders reluctant to invest and yields remaining low. Construction costs remained high meaning viability for schemes and projects was threatened and in some cases, deals fell away. Whilst these factors did have an impact in Telford, the Land Deal continued to achieve its targets with the overall programme staying largely on track. The Land Deal continues to build on its success and has established itself as a brand recognised regionally and nationally, drawing property interest to Telford and providing opportunities for investment in the Borough. The Deal can provide businesses with a range of options for investing in Telford, invaluable in attracting and boosting jobs for the local area during the last 12 months and over the life of the Deal. House builders have shown continued interest to be present in Telford with construction working starting at The Hem, a major housing site, in March 2024. The success of the Land Deal has continued to deliver profit share to the Partners and has been used to support initiatives such as small business units developed by the Council to provide space to support new and expanding businesses and regeneration within the Town Centre and Borough towns. We continue to make Telford as easy a destination as possible for investors to land – through the commitment of partners and the Deal's ability to de-risk sites and offer a streamlined process to acquisition and development.

During the last 9 years, the Deal has delivered gross land sales of £60.3 million enabling 2473 new jobs and 1583 new homes. In addition to the major investment already secured through Magna Cosma's state of the art manufacturing plant, Polytec and Craemer, Telford continues to attract a high level of interest from other sectors such as agri-tech, food production and green industries. Telford remains a destination recognised as eager to do business attracting a number of prominent developers such as Morris Property, Total Developments Ltd and Trebor Developments Ltd.

**Councillor Lee Carter, Telford & Wrekin Council, Cabinet Member for Place (Economy & Neighbourhood Services).**



Homes England and Telford & Wrekin Council have successfully combined their national and local expertise over many years with results that speak for themselves. The number of homes, businesses and jobs created as set out in this report are testament to a fruitful relationship and we look forward to the next year to continue that success story.

**Mike Goulding, Homes England Development Director Central & South West**

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# 1. Summary of Achievements

## 1.1 Summary

The Telford Land Deal, now 9 years in, has been instrumental in bringing forward brownfield and underutilised land. The brand of The Telford Land Deal is well known within the property market and business community in Telford and the wider Midlands. The Council, as drivers of the site disposal programme, are often the first point of contact for available residential and employment sites for local and inward investment enquiries. The unique model which allows the disposal of public land through upfront investment into site preparation and marketing of sites, underpinned by the Council's 'Invest Telford' business support offer, has delivered an acceleration in commercial and residential sites sold and raised land values. This has amounted to 30,903sqm (332,637sqft) of Employment Floor Space (EFS), 574 new homes and receipts of £21.8 million delivered in advance of the original anticipated outputs set out in the Investment and Disposal Plan, in some cases by 2 years. The Land Deal has enabled the expansion of local companies, the consistent supply of much needed commercial and residential land to the Telford market and attracted circa £496 million of inward and foreign investment. The Telford Land Deal is devolution in action delivering above and beyond expectations with success underpinned by the strength of partnership between the Council and Homes England and the support of the Marches LEP.

[At the time of preparing this report, The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership had ceased trading and transferred all its functions to Shropshire Council working with Telford & Wrekin Council and Herefordshire Council, in line with the UK Government's plans for devolution.]

**During the last nine years, the Deal has cumulatively delivered the sale of a total of 34 commercial sites and 25 sites for residential development, achieving a gross sales income of £60.3 million.** The sites have enabled the **delivery of Employment Floor Space (EFS) of 199,278sqm** (2,145,010sqft) and **1583 new homes** and supported commercial premises delivering **2473 new jobs**, many in engineering and manufacturing adding skilled job opportunities for the Borough's communities.

**Over the last 12 months (financial year 23/24)** of the Telford Land Deal, the Deal has delivered the sale of 2 commercial sites and 1 residential site. This has achieved a **gross sale income of £11.7 million.** These sales will support the **delivery of EFS of 35,407sqm** (381,117sqft), **anticipated job numbers of 240 and 48 new homes.**

During 2024/25, 1 commercial site has been completed and achieved an additional gross sales income of **£70k.** Delivering additional EFS of 9,760sqm (105,055sqft) and anticipated job numbers of c.20.

The start of 2023 continued with the land prices settling to pre-pandemic levels and still a nervousness of the investment market with funders reluctant to invest and yields remaining low. Construction costs remained high meaning viability for schemes and projects was threatened and in some cases deals fell away. Whilst occupier demand remained high driven by the lack of available industrial units and premises, the developer led market slowed as funders withdrew and the cost of construction rose significantly. The Land Deal's industrial and commercial land disposals remained a challenge with one developer withdrawing from a sale and another stalling due to finance availability. That said the Land Deal

remained largely on track enabling 35,407sqm (381,117sqft) of employment floor space.

Housing delivery remained steady within Telford over most of 2023 with developments at The Hem, Donnington and the former Charlton school site all progressing.

In the last 9 years, Local Growth Funding via The Marches LEP has enabled £22.6 million highway infrastructure works under the Telford Growth and Eastern Gateway Packages. The infrastructure works have included increasing the capacity of Junction 4 at M54 to enable growth in that part of the Borough and bringing services and infrastructure into north Telford to open up and allow development on Land Deal sites in and around Hortonwood. Local Growth Funding via the Marches LEP of £7 million also supported site infrastructure works at Ni.Park and works along the A41 and A518 at Newport, increasing capacity and supporting the release of employment land.

The Council's ability to provide land and deliver through its Growth Fund a range of industrial units to lease to smaller and expanding businesses in Telford continues to drive a high number of enquiries.

The Borough continues to attract a range of interest across all sectors, building on the town's strong manufacturing, engineering and agricultural history. Telford has been dubbed the 'silicon suburb', due to the high levels of tech employment, digital focused education, and commitment to innovating the agri-tech sector. Telford's strength in offering employment sites is its strategic location with good road and rail links providing an excellent location for distribution hubs. There continues to be a significant increase in

indigenous companies requiring new premises to expand and wishing to remain in Telford such as Polytec and Magna Cosma who have expanded their current premises building on their success in Telford over the last few years. Other companies: Yellow Hat, The Crane Pad Shop Ltd, and others have all expanded within Ni.Park, Hortonwood West or moving to the new development at Plot 12 Hortonwood. This has led to the safeguarding of jobs and increasing local job opportunities for the Telford & Wrekin Borough.

Ni.Park – the newest employment park in Newport provides 24 units aimed at agri-tech and enterprise businesses as well as general small businesses. The units are all let and phase 2 has completed providing 3 units totalling 2,787sqm. (30,000sqft) of employment floor space. Interest is strong with 1 unit already occupied and 2 under offer. Both phases benefit from green technologies with solar panel and EV charging points.

In addition, RVW Pugh Ltd also purchased and started construction on site in 2023 with a base for their agricultural machinery business and this is nearing completion and occupation. Their development will provide 1573sqm (16,931sqft) of employment floor space. Future development proposals at Ni.Park include a Harper Adams University education facility designed to accommodate 200 veterinary students for which planning consent was granted in January 2024.

Delivered in association with Harper Adams University, Ni.Park has the capacity to provide circa 38,000sqm (409,028sqft) of EFS across the whole site.

The largest deal delivered to date continues to be the c£90 million inward investment by Magna Cosma which is set to deliver over 600 jobs over 2 phases, with 345 delivered so far. Since landing in Telford, Magna continue to grow and evolve and have just

announced a new advanced automation capability; a strategic move that will drive long term growth and competitiveness. These new expansion proposals which will provide for additional production capacity and bring further jobs. Planning has been granted this year for 11,119sqm (119,683sqft) of expansion floor space. T54 continues to thrive with Polytec and Torus expanding the final road adoption surfacing being completed.

Hortonwood West also continues to build on its previous success with all plots now sold. The Council's own development of 15 small start-up business units which utilised Land Deal profit share and the Council's own Growth Fund, remains fully let, with regular enquiries and a waiting list. Plot 8 is the last plot to be developed starting on site in October 2023 and due to complete in October 2024. These developments are delivering additional business premises and avoiding the need for businesses to relocate out of Borough and providing inward investment such as Bruderer on plot 8, a Swiss owned company relocating from Luton. Since the start of the Deal 9 years ago, this new 55-acre industrial park has succeeded in providing much needed employment land and floorspace and has enabled 339 jobs and delivered 34,852sqm (375,143sqft) Employment Floor Space.

Alongside the physical development, the Council's ecologists are currently working on a landscape plan to enhance biodiversity at the industrial park ensuring that the legacy of the Land Deal extends to enhancing green spaces as well as the built environment.

In the first 9 years of the Deal, all sites at Halesfield have now been sold. The development on Halesfield 18 (Pioneer Park) by Redsun Projects Ltd successfully let in 2023 to Load Lock and the Smartwater Group. This development delivered a total of 7,226sqm (77,780sqft) across 3 Grade A employment units. The land holdings

in Halesfield have now been sold with the Land Deal having enabled the process.

There has been particular success in Hortonwood where all sites brought into the Land Deal have now been sold with developments either completed or on site. The Council owned site, Plot 12, purchased through the Land Deal, is now completed and fully let. The site provides 24 small high spec business units with solar technology and EV charging points set within a green landscape. The level of take up has been excellent with all units let within 6 months of completion of the build. The construction by Trebor Developments of a large unit for DHL, completed in June 2023. DHL are in occupation and the new development has provided 140 jobs for the borough. The sale of plot 11D completed in November 2023 and is now on site providing 33,507 sqm (360,666sqft) of employment floorspace, with 11,705 sqm (126,000sqft) pre-let to Polytec, a further expansion in addition to their premises at T54. The development is due to complete in March 2026.

During the first 9 years, the Deal has seen extensive activity in the residential sites market with demand high and land prices remaining buoyant. The financial year 2023/24 saw the successful start on site of the largest parcel at The Hem, a 37.25 hectares (92 acres) site on the eastern edge of Telford with planning permission for 350 homes with The Vistry Group, as preferred developer, building 299 being on Homes England land and therefore attributed to the Land Deal. As well as partnering with a Registered Provider, The Vistry Group are already underway with the infrastructure ready for an SME house builder, helping to diversify the market. Telford continues to see a range of tenures delivered across Land Deal sites with good representation of major and regional house builders and a broadening representation of Registered Providers taking

sites. Master planning commenced at Lawley West in 2023 together with extensive site investigations to ascertain the extent of development of the site, a former mining site. An outline planning application is due to be submitted later in 2024 together with marketing the site through Homes England's tender process.

During the last 9 years, the Deal has driven significant local employment opportunities both in construction and long-term jobs with an increase in higher skilled jobs and new apprenticeships; the number of jobs enabled through the Deal to date is 2,473. The Council continues to monitor jobs safeguarded and created and to work proactively with businesses to provide assistance with training, apprenticeships and recruitment. One example is the Employment and Skills Plan that The Vistry Group have committed to as part of The Hem development, and which is monitored externally throughout the life of the development. The Council has continued to provide advice on apprenticeships and provided recruitment support through the Work Local initiative holding employment fairs within community buildings and targeted marketing of local residents. Building on the 'Wheels 4 Work' pilot, the Council has developed and funded the Express 100 service which is a bus route operating across Telford, targeting the business parks and aligning with the shift patterns of businesses. The Council has commissioned a number of videos to showcase businesses across the borough such as Rosewood and InComm, both beneficiaries of the Telford Land Deal.

Some of the Land Deal businesses feature in the Council's Economic Development strategy which was officially launched this year. In addition, Work Local and Social Value offers have been supported by businesses who are occupying accommodation following developments on the Land Deal sites.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Introduction

The Telford Land Deal was formally completed on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016, and signed by Telford & Wrekin Council (TWC) and Homes England (HE). The agreement documents the parties' intention to work together over a 10-year period from April 2015 to promote commercial and residential sites within Telford which fall within the Council and the Agency's ownership, with the Council taking the lead in site preparation, in order to de-risk and accelerate delivery, and in bringing the land to the market. Now 9 years in, the Deal has had significant success, and its achievements are many.

There are **79** Homes England sites and **11** TWC sites included within the Telford Land Deal (sites listed in Appendix 1). This deal offers the opportunity for TWC to drive economic growth and prosperity in the region by taking responsibility for the stewardship, marketing and disposal of all Homes England land holdings in Telford. Of these sites have been brought to the market and sold in the first 9 years of the Deal.

The Council brings local market intelligence and a proactive approach to inward investment including a willingness to co-invest.

### 2.2 Context

Telford and Wrekin Council are driving forward economic growth and prosperity through Invest Telford which sets out a vision '***To promote Telford's role as a major contributor to the West Midlands economy; to focus on those things that will do most to unlock jobs and create growth that will improve the lives of all the people who live in our Borough and; to make Telford a natural home for investors, innovators and entrepreneurs***'.

The Deal is set to see £44.5 million of land receipts from the sale of agreed Homes England land assets in Telford recycled back into the local area, supporting the delivery of new homes, jobs and EFS. The local area will also benefit from a share of land value uplift delivered where the Deal accelerates and raises land values over and above Homes England profiled receipts. A proportion of this has been shared with the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) who have enabled Local Growth Funding to support highway infrastructure to open up sites included in the Deal.



As part of the Deal, TWC were required to take freehold responsibility for all Homes England constrained/liability sites i.e. those sites considered to have no development value and/or to incur potential costs, which it has now done, and all transfers are completed. These sites have the potential to contribute to the boroughs biodiversity plans and can be used to offset biodiversity requirements from other Land Deal sites. This not only enhances the non-developable sites but also allows efficient development of the development sites.

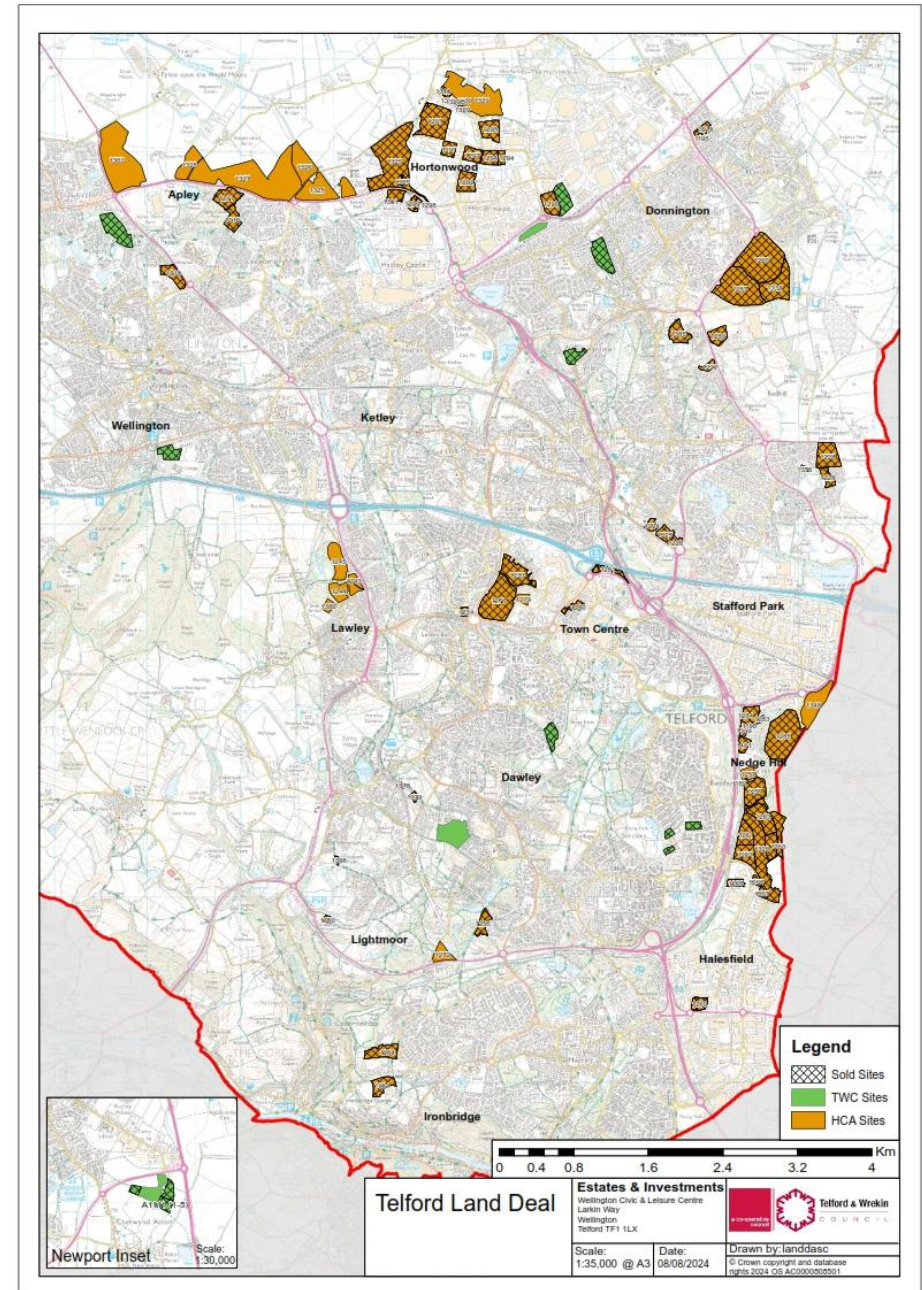
### 2.3 Operation

The Deal is managed through a 3-year rolling Investment & Disposal Plan, which details the sites for disposal, investment requirements and estimated uplift achieved as a result. The overall Programme is dynamic and the order of land sales, investment required per site and receipts varies with market demand. The 3 Year Plan provides much greater certainty in terms of forecasting and delivery and is reviewed annually and approved by the Telford Land Deal Board. The Deal is now in its 9<sup>th</sup> year and therefore has 1 year left with a 2 year period for completion of projects and the finalising of accounts. The partners have been discussing an exit strategy following the end of the Deal which will allow the existing sites yet to be sold and developed to be brought forward and an extension to allow for the development of a larger tract of land, currently unallocated, to be brought forward for a Sustainable Urban Extension in the future.

### 2.4 Site Map

#### Diagram 1: Site Map

This map shows the footprint of the Telford Land Deal area and extent of land included showing the split of Homes England and TWC sites with sold site marked as hatched as at Q4 23/24.





## 2.5 Key Sites

### 2.5.1 Commercial Update

**T54** is one of the Council's premier business parks extending to 31 hectares (78.11 acres). Its attraction lies in its proximity to the M54 and being 12 miles from I54 and the Midlands heartland. The site has been very successful and all but 1 of the 7 plots have now been sold. The Land Deal has enabled the de-risking of the sites resolving ecological issues and obtaining planning consent upfront for the plots. T54 is now home to Magna Cosma, Polytech, Filtermist, XYZ, Torus, Gentech and Incomm. The latest development is by Polytec who are expanding their current facility following a major contract award. The sale of Plot 7 is now progressing, the last remaining plot at T54. Local Growth Funding via the Marches LEP has been used to deliver strategic infrastructure improvement on the M54 motorway junction 4, which enhances the connectivity of the site. The Council, through its Growth Fund, has also contributed investment into further utility upgrades in order to prepare the site for occupiers who have a high power requirement. This investment assisted in accelerating the disposal of land to Polytec ahead of the forecasted date in the Investment and Disposal Plan by 10 months.

**In 9 years the Land Deal has achieved a gross sales income of £3.5 million, employment floor space of 42,588sqm (458,413sqft) and 683 jobs at T54.**

Photographs below illustrate completed sites:

T54 – Plot 1c  
Gentech – Operational



T54 – Plot 2  
Polytech - Operational



T54 – Plot 5a  
TWC industrial unit –  
Operational – Incomm  
Training



T54 – Plot 5b  
Torus – Operational



T54 – Plot 5c  
TWC industrial unit –  
Operational – Filtermist



T54 – Plot 6  
Magna – Operational



**HORTONWOOD WEST** is a new flagship industrial site enabled by the Land Deal and Local Growth Fund. The site extends to 22 hectares (55 acres) and is divided into 11 plots in a landscaped setting. The site has been successful in attracting foreign direct investment, UK investors and local companies looking to expand. The infrastructure work for the internal estate roads, utilities and drainage was completed in December 2017 funded by the Land Deal and the Local Growth Fund. These works allowed the site to offer shovel ready plots for occupiers and developers. Nine years into the Deal and the estate is now mostly completed with Rosewood Pet Products Ltd, Eden Horticulture, Baker Bellfield, Craemer UK Ltd, 15 TWC starter units, Kensa Creative and more recently UPS and CEL Group all in occupation. Plot 8 at the entrance to the site is under construction providing a new UK headquarters for Bruderer a Swiss owned company who have relocated from Luton of 300sqm (3,229sqft) of additional floor space.

**In 9 years the Land Deal has achieved a gross sales income of £4.6 million, employment floor space of 34,852sqm (375,143sqft) and 339 jobs at Hortonwood West.**

Photographs below illustrate completed sites or schemes in progress:

**HWW – Plot 1 Morris Properties – operational – CEL Group – completed 21/22**



**HWW - Plot 2 TWC units - operational – various small businesses**



**HWW – Plot 2a Kensa Creative - operational**



**HWW – Plot 3,4,5 Craemer - Operational**



**HWW – Plot 6 Baker Bellfield – operational**



**HWW – Plot 7 Trebor – operational – UPS – completed 21/22**



**HWW Plot 8 Bruderer – Sold – in progress**



**HWW – Plot 9 Rosewood – Operational**





**HWW – Plot 10**  
**Eden Horticultural - operational**

## Hortonwood and Halesfield

Both established employment areas, the first 9 years of the Deal has seen significant movement in the sale of these sites with all plots in Halesfield sold and a number in Hortonwood now sold and under offer.

**Site below are completed or progressing with sale completion programmed for 23/24:**

Scheme	Status of site sale	EFS	Jobs	Start on Site	Site Completion	Private Sector Investment
<b>Hortonwood Plot 11d</b>	Completed	33,507	200	Dec 2023	Mar 2026	£30 million

**In 9 years the Land Deal has achieved a gross sale income of £7 million, employment floor space of 69,215sqm (745,024sqft) and 1011 jobs at Halesfield and Hortonwood.**



Photographs below illustrate completed sites or schemes in progress:

**Halesfield 24, Plot 2  
Wrekin Pneumatics -  
operational**



**Halesfield 25, Plot A  
Travis Perkins - operational**



**Halesfield 18 Plot 1 – Redsun  
operational**



**Rampart Way  
Various – operational**



**Hadley Park E  
Morris Properties –  
operational**



**Hadley Park B – Eurogarages  
– operational**



**Hortonwood 37 – Epwin  
Group - operational**



**Hortonwood, Plot 6  
Veolia – operational**



**Hortonwood Plot 6  
remainder – Omega – In  
progress**



**Hortonwood Plot 11b –  
Portion Solutions –  
operational**



**Hortonwood Plot 11e – Trebor  
– Operational**



**Hortonwood Plot 12 – TWC –  
Operational**





## 2.5.2 Residential Update

The residential market in Telford over the last 9 years of the Land Deal has been buoyant and has seen significant interest from new developers and Registered Providers all keen to gain a foothold in the Telford residential market. Housing delivery remained steady within Telford over most of 2023. Within the Land Deal a major housing site disposal was completed at The Hem which will provide 299 homes, and which started on site in March 2023 with the infrastructure works. The first new homes were commenced in April 2024 by the appointed developer, Vistry Partnerships Ltd (Vistry). Vistry will work with an SME helping to diversify the market as well as a registered provider to develop affordable homes. The development will also provide a new green corridor for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians linking the development to nearby Stirchley.

Other sites such as Newcomen Way, Majestic Way and Old Park are now completed, all notable successes for the Land Deal's first 9 years providing much needed affordable housing within Telford, enabled by the Deal.

NuPlace, the Council's wholly owned housing investment company, have progressed development at Donnington (Wildwalk) in conjunction with Lovells and Wrekin Housing Group with a scheme of 329 units comprising of private rented sector specialist accommodation, affordable, open market sale and a Care Village.

Significant progress has also been made by Vistry at the former Charlton School site, a development of 195 homes for the private rental sector.

Scheme	Status of site sale	Housing Units	Start on site	Site Completions	Estimated Private Sector Investment
The Hem	Completed	48	Nov 2023	Apr 2029	£20.6 million

**In 9 years the Land Deal has achieved for residential sites a gross income of £35.3 million and enabled 1583 housing units (684 affordable).**

Photographs below illustrate completed sites or schemes in progress:

**Daisy Bank – completed  
Lioncourt Homes**



**Priorslee D3 – completed  
Central and Country  
Developments**



**Frome Way – completed  
Keepmoat Homes**



**Land at Snedshill – completed  
NuPlace**



**Apley – completed  
Kier**



**Priorslee E&F – completed  
Lovell**



**The Beeches – completed  
Shropshire Homes**



**Horton Lane, Plot B –  
completed - Private purchaser**





**Wellington BRJ – completed  
Lovell/NuPlace**



**Priorslee Road – completed  
Lovell/NuPlace**



**Majestic Way – completed  
Living Space**



**Horton Lane Plot A2 –  
completed - Bowring  
Developments**



**Newcomen Way – completed  
Keon Homes**



**Pool Hill Road Site C –  
completed - Millenium  
Properties**



**Horton Lane Plot C2 – on site  
Private purchaser –  
completion Oct 24**



**Donnington – on site –  
Lovell/NuPlace – completion  
Mar 25**



**Horton Lane Plot A1 – on site – Private purchaser – completion date - Oct 24**



**The Hem – on site - Vistry – completion date – Apr 29**



**Pool Hill Road Site D – in progress**





### 3. Key Deliverables/Milestones planned for future years

#### Residential sites

#### Lawley West



Lawley is a 14.1 hectare (34.83 acre) former mining site allocated for residential development in the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan. The site's former use has left a legacy of complex ground conditions resulting in extensive geotechnical work and master planning. The site is another key residential site for Telford and the Land Deal. Master planning is on going with pre-planning public consultation having taken place and it is anticipated that an outline planning application will be submitted Autumn 2024.

The site lies on the edge of Lawley and will provide a high-quality residential development of family housing in a semi-rural setting and the design will comply with the Building for a Healthy Life principles. 25% of the homes will be affordable in accordance with planning policy. Developer selection will commence later in 2024.

## Commercial sites

### Ni.Park



The Land Deal has supported the delivery of a 10ha employment site at Newport promoted through the Local Plan for a major, new employment park. The construction of phase 1 comprising 24 small business units completed in October 2021 is fully let and has been proving popular with small agri-tech businesses who have the opportunity to link with Harper Adams University. Phase 2 is now completed and provides three units totalling 2,787sqm (30,000sqft). Planning consent was secured in April 2024 for a new 1440 sqm Vet school for Harper Adam University which is anticipated to start late 2024.

Ni.Park provides serviced land for a range of potential occupiers with the Council able to offer a range of solutions for occupation from design and build to turnkey. Council led developments have incorporated green credentials in the form of solar PV's and car charging points which has helped to consolidate the Borough's growing reputation in this emerging global sector.



The site is being brought forward in partnership with Harper Adams University and their Agri Tech Centre of Excellence industry partnership.

## Hortonwood Sites

Hortonwood is a well-established, large, industrial estate located in the north of Telford and has a variety of occupiers ranging from smaller local companies e.g., Baker Bellfield, to large foreign direct investments e.g., Epson. The Council has procured extensive infrastructure works to increase the electricity capacity to sites in Hortonwood at an investment of £1.6 million. In addition, the Council has entered into a District Licencing Scheme with the local planning authority in respect to great crested newt mitigation which has accelerated the release of development of sites by allowing

**Appendix 1 provides a full list of sites.**

undevelopable sites to be ecologically enhanced for great crested newts and other protected species.

All the Land Deal sites within Hortonwood are now either developed or under construction. Plot 12 Hortonwood which was purchased by the Council provides a development of 24 starter and small business units, a response to a lack of these types of units within Telford. This development completed in September 2023 and is now fully let. The development at Plot 11e is also complete and let to DHL with the development of 11D now on site and programmed to complete March 2026.

## 4. Finance

The Deal is managed through a 3 year rolling investment and disposal plan, which is subject to regular reviews at the Land Deal Board. As set out in the Land Deal Agreement, the table below demonstrates the net uplift and respective shares for the 9 years ended 31 March 2024, and the forecast for the first ten years of the Deal.

£	9 year Actual 31 March 2024 (..) – shows an income	10 year forecast 31 March 2025 (..) – shows an income
Gross land receipts	(60,312,187)	(60,382,187)
Net land receipts	(31,649,473)	(31,649,933)
Total costs to be funded from land receipts	12,514,971	13,359,403
Net uplift	(19,134,503)	(18,290,530)
Homes England share @15%	(2,870,175)	(2,743,580)
TWC share @85%	(16,264,327)	(15,546,951)
Constrained/liability set aside.	2,000,000	2,000,000
TWC share retained.	(14,264,327)	(13,546,951)
LEP share @15%	(2,139,649)	(2,032,043)



## 5. Investments

### 5.1 Investment of Local Profit Share

The financial successes of the Deal to date has meant that a cumulative profit of £19.1 million has been achieved up to 31 March 2024. The Council's proportion of this cumulative profit is £14.2 million after the deduction of £2 million to invest in the constrained/liability sites. The proportion of profit share payable to the Marches LEP under the Land Deal is £2.1 million, resulting in a net retained profit share of £12.1m to the Council

In the first 9 years of the Deal, TWC has invested £1.0 million profit share as part of a larger investment by the Council from its Growth Fund to develop the 15 small businesses starter units at Plot 2 Hortonwood West, Telford. This has been a successful development with all units let and providing the evidence of demand for the development of further similar sized units at Hortonwood and Ni.Park, where £0.5 million profit share was invested to support the development of 24 units on Phase 1.

The Council has also reinvested £1.4 million of its profit share to develop a second phase of employment 3 units totalling 2,787sqm (30,000sqft) units at Ni.Park, assisting the viability of the scheme. The units have added to the offer for companies looking to base themselves at Ni.Park providing solar PV and EV charging points and mid-range units sizes for expansion.

A further £3.3 million of profit share was used to support the delivery 24 units at Hortonwood, reacting to market demand and assisting in the viability of this Council lead development. Schemes such as these are rarely brought forward by the private sector due to the cost of including solar PV's and EV charging points.

More recently, The Land Deal Board endorsed the decision of the Council to spend profit share monies to support the viability of projects being delivered through the Towns Fund.

This includes approval to spend £3million profit share as part of the Towns Investment Fund project at Oakengates. This project is delivering new homes, refurbished retail units and quality public realm/event space in the heart of Oakengates.

Approval is also in place for the Council to spend profit share monies within Telford Town Centre at Station Quarter to support the delivery of enhanced access routes and high-quality public realm across the area and a new circa 4000sqm (43,055sqft) Digital Skills and Enterprise Hub that will accommodate a coordinated offer for both education and flexible space for new businesses.

The Marches LEP has invested £0.24 million profit share to support the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust during the pandemic.

The Land Deal Board continues to consider other areas of investment for the local profit share within Telford.

## 6. Communications and Marketing

A Strategic and Local Communication, Marketing and Engagement plan overseen by the TLD Board, underpins the range of activities being undertaken. The plan timetables planned press releases, attendance at events, specific visits and website activity. The plan has both a local focus – recognising the need to engage with local communities within which sites are coming forward and outward facing to attract investor interest. The Plan includes activity led by the Authority and supported by Homes England, the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership and Telford Business Board.

A partnership approach has been adopted to communications with all messages.

Underpinned by 3 key aspects:

- Delivering a consistent approach to all external communications
- Engaging effectively with appropriate audiences
- Raising the profile of the Land Deal and its impact on the Borough, Marches and West Midlands economy, on a local, regional and national level

A number of press releases linked with major commercial investments are included at Appendix 2.

The focus in 2023/24 has been to advertise the successes of the Land Deal over its 9 year lifetime and in particular to focus on individual successes and the benefits of the Land Deal to the people of Telford in terms of economic benefits, jobs and housing. This has been done through various mediums such as online platforms, Midlands Today news, regional magazines and local newspapers and also presentations to forums such as the Telford Business Board.

## 7. Future Priorities

There is a strong partnership approach to the Land Deal and this has led to its success during the first 9 years. The future success of the Land Deal will be achieved through continuing to work together and maximising opportunities in the local market and continuing to invest upfront into challenging sites to de-risk and make sites 'shovel ready' and attractive to developers through ecological mitigation, infrastructure and planning consents. This in conjunction with the Council's Growth Fund which is available to fund developments that provide much needed industrial floor space, bespoke property solutions for investors requiring a leaseback

solution plus investment to bring utilities to sites make Telford one of the UK's most attractive locations for inward investment.

Market interest in Telford's residential sites remains high and 2023/4 saw one of the largest sites in the Land Deal, The Hem, obtain planning consent and start on site for the construction of 299 new homes. In addition, the Lawley site will follow later in the programme providing another large scale opportunity of up to 250 new homes.

Provision of adequate infrastructure and energy capacity for manufacturing, particularly automotive remains a challenge. The Land Deal and Council have made significant investment and will continue to monitor supply in order to be able to accommodate incoming investment in the town. There is a drive to include for more sustainable energy solutions and new developments are encouraged to provide more sustainable energy options such as solar.

In terms of employment land, the success of the Land Deal has resulted in most of the sites offered at the start of the Deal now being developed or under offer and consequently employment land availability is reducing and prices reflect the level of demand versus supply. The partial review of the Local Plan, currently underway, will be addressing this issue with sites being considered for employment use being a high priority.

The Land Deal is now at the end of its 9<sup>th</sup> year of a 10 year programme. Delivery across both residential and employment sites overall is running ahead of original planned delivery dates and land values, showing the strength of the local market and effectiveness of the principles underpinning the Deal. Telford is a growing town with an ambitious agenda for growth and commitment to invest into local communities. The current partial review of the Local Plan prioritises driving further economic growth balanced by residential development.

Discussion between the partners of the Deal are now underway in relation to how the Deal progresses past the 10 year programme. The governing documents allow for a 'run-off' period and

discussions are taking place in relation to specific sites that are currently within the Deal but may not be brought forward before the end of the 10 years.

## Appendix 1 – Schedule of Sites

Homes England site	Site ref. no.	PCS ref.	Parcel ref.	Status
Apley B1 (ii)	1211	19806	12348	Sold
Apley B3	1212	19806	5825	Sold
Hortonwood (Shawbirch East Campus Site)	1303	21800	1527	
Wellington (Adj Blessed Robert Johnson School Phase 1)	1210	19339	1417	Sold
Wappenshall	1326	21964	1548	
Wappenshall	1327	21964	1549	
Wappenshall	1328	21964	1550	
Wheat Leasows – 10 Plots	1325	21963	1547 10781 12698 12887 12888	Plots 9 and 10 – Sold Plots 3,4,5 – Sold Plot 6 – Sold Plot 2 – Sold Plot 7 – Sold Plot 1 – Sold Plot 8 - Sold
Hortonwood North Residual – 3 plots	1329	21961	1551 13111	Plot B - Sold
Land & Buildings Adj Horton Farm	1330	21961	1552	Plot C1 – Sold Plot C2 - Sold
Land off Horton Lane	1340	21961	1557	Plot A2 – Sold Plot A1 - Sold
Donnington Wood (K) (constrained site)	1220	20219	1430	Site transferred to TWC
Donnington Wood Way (constrained site)	1332	20219	1553	Site transferred to TWC

Land North of Granville Road (Donnington Wood) (constrained site)	1287	20219	1502 12913	Site transferred to TWC
Priorslee East - Phase 1	1228	19629	11429	Sold
Priorslee East F	1229	19629	6091	Sold
Land Snedshill / Church Road	1224	28463	1434	Sold
Land – Priorslee Road	1225	24497	1436	Sold
Priorslee Road (Phase 2)	1226	24497	1436	Sold
Old Park Campus Site (constrained site)	1277	24497	1436	Site transferred to TWC
Old Park Phase 1 and 2 (constrained site)	1233	28462	1445	Sold
Lawley Extension	1243	21334	1458	
Lawley Extension	1244	21334	1459	
Lawley Extension	1382	21334	1460	
Lawley Village Residential Site (Non-Strategic Project)	1382	21334	1591 1592	
T54 – Plot 2	1284	22479	1499	Sold
Sub Station Nedge	1198	20526	1406	Sold
T54 – Plot 3	1399	22480	1604	Sold
T54 – Plot 5	1401	22482	1606	Sold
T54 – Plot 6	1285	22483 26764	1473	Sold
T54 – Plot 7	1348	22484	1565	
Nedge Buildings (The Hem)	1182	22485	1393	
Land Around Nedge Buildings (The Hem)	1257	1257	2952	
The Hem Phase 4 (The Hem)	1263	21775	2954	Sold
The Hem Phase 3 (The Hem)	1260	21775	1476	Sold

Open Space – Nedge Housing (The Hem)	1320	21775	1542	Sold
The Hem Phase 2 (The Hem)	1261	21775	1477	Sold
The Hem Phase 1 (The Hem)	1262	21775	2953	Sold
Halesfield 24 – Plot 2	1266	21777	1483	Sold
Halesfield 23 – Plot 3	1267	21779	1484	Sold
Halesfield 25 – Plot 6	1265	21776	11576	Sold
Halesfield 18	1269	21319	1485	Sold
Plots – Moor Farm, Majestic Way	1256	16153	1472	Sold
Lightmoor Road	1272	16153	1487	
Town Centre Hall Court Car Park	1280	24497	1495	Sold
Rough Park 3	1264	16153	1480	Sold
The Beeches	1964	20464	2095	Sold
South West Old Park Mound (Specified Site)	1279	24497	1497	
Plot 12 Hortonwood	1292	21790	1509	Sold
Plot 6 Hortonwood	1294	26707	1511	Sold
Plot 1 Hortonwood 65 (Specified Site)	1295	21793	1512	Sold
Plot b, d and remainder of e Hortonwood – 3 plots	1297	21795	10669 10678 6056	Plot 11b - Sold Plot 11e – Sold Plot 11d - Sold
Site C Pool Hill Road	1378	28464 21757	1587	Sold
Site D Pool Hill Road	1379	28464 24982	1588	Sold
Plot – Rock Road	1234	22347	1446	Sold
Hadley Park B	1299	21797	5989	Sold

Hadley Park A	1298	21797	5809	Sold
Hadley Park E	1301	21804	6014	Sold
Site 2 Donnington Campus	1289	22224	6115	Sold
Croppings Farm House	1180		1391	Sold
Land at Wellington Road	1195	19807	6061	Sold
Land at Wellington Road	1215	19807	6061	Sold
Land at Daisy Bank	1221	21043	5876	Sold
Rampart Way	1281	24497	1496	Sold
T54 – Plot 1c	1283	22478	1498	Sold
Hortonwood 37	1290	21789	1505	Sold
Priorslee East D3	1376	19794	1586	Sold
Donnington H Phase / Frome Way	1385	21796	1594	Sold
Woodlands Farm Buildings	1398	24201	6138	Sold
<b><u>TWC Sites</u></b>	<b><u>Site Ref</u></b>	<b><u>Status</u></b>		
Charlton Site	A0422	Sold		
Plot 2 Telford Rail Freight	A1133	Sold		
Plot 1 Telford Rail Freight	A0908			
The Sutherland School	A0126	Sold		
Wrockwardine Wood Arts Academy	A0125	Sold		
Ercall Wood Technology College	A0421	Sold		
Phase 2 Dawley	A0084	Sold		
Phoenix Academy	A0151			



Grange Park Primary School	A0090	Sold
Lakeside Academy	A0105	Sold
Newport Innovation Site	A1111	Plot 2a – Sold Plot 2c – TWC Development

## Appendix 2 – Press releases

### Newport Innovation Park

## Telford youngsters discover their superpowers at LEGO league event

Published July 2023

School children from across Telford and Wrekin came together at AFC Telford for the final of the second LEGO® League Explore programme, sponsored by Telford & Wrekin Council and Morris Property and supported by Capgemini.



The programme, aimed at pupils aged six to nine years old, introduces a scientific challenge to help develop new skills and inspire a love of learning while having lots of fun with LEGO.

Ten schools took part in the competition, which challenged small teams to research, design and make prototypes to harness alternative energy sources to create new superpowers.

Over the preceding ten weeks, more than 100 children took part in the event, organised and managed by volunteers from Capgemini.

Pupils presented to judges from [Morris Property](#), [Capgemini](#) and Telford & Wrekin Council before immersing themselves in technologies such as code breaking and 360 tours before the final prize-giving ceremony.

Telford & Wrekin Council sponsored the LEGO League Explore programme and purchased the LEGO kits through its social value fund raised as part of the Ni.PARK phase two construction project.

Ni.PARK phase two, on the outskirts of Newport, is Telford & Wrekin Council's latest direct investment at the site where Morris Property were awarded the contract to construct three new commercial units.

The 10,000 sq ft units, which are available to let from this month, will be owned and managed by the council's estates and investments team.

Phase one of the Ni.PARK project has already delivered a series of smaller units at the innovative agricultural technology park which are occupied by agri-tech businesses or firms with links to the agri-tech sector – making it a hub for knowledge, expertise and industry networking.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act came into force on 31 January 2013, requiring people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. This can include monetary sums generated through social value.

The fund can only be spent in the Telford and Wrekin area and so schools within the borough were approached to participate.

Morris Property Construction Manager, Steve Flavell said: “We’ve been seriously impressed today by the innovations designed by the teams.

“They have worked so hard to identify problems and find solutions, working closely in their teams to impress the judges.

“We are proud to sponsor the LEGO® League Explore programme and directly engage with these young people - they have bright futures ahead of them.”

As a fifth-generation family business, Morris Property has a track record of working with young people and investing in local communities, from supporting apprenticeships to transforming school environments.

**Councillor Lee Carter (Lab), Telford & Wrekin Council’s cabinet member for place (the economy & neighbourhood services) said:** “This programme has provided a great opportunity to utilise some of the social value fund brought forward as part of the Ni.PARK development.

“We’re proud to support this programme and help local school students with their learning along the way.

“Ni.PARK has become an outstanding centre of agricultural excellence in Newport and we are pleased to have co-sponsored the LEGO programme through the social value fund it has raised.”

**Councillor Eileen Callear (Lab), Telford & Wrekin Council’s Cabinet Member for education, employment & visitor economy, said:**

“This has been a really exciting opportunity to promote science, technology, engineering and maths to primary schools across the borough using the LEGO kits as a tool for exploration and learning.

“It’s wonderful to see some of the fantastic prototypes local school children have created using LEGO – the culmination of 10 weeks of hard work.

“Hopefully, being part of this programme will help inspire youngsters to become researchers, designers or engineers as a future career.”

For more information about Morris Property and its range of services, call 01743 232005 or visit [www.morrisproperty.co.uk](http://www.morrisproperty.co.uk)

**To make an enquiry about the three new units at Ni.PARK, please call Telford & Wrekin Council’s estates and investments team on 01952 384333 or email [estates&investments@telford.gov.uk](mailto:estates&investments@telford.gov.uk)**

**Or for more information visit [www.estatesandinvestments.co.uk](http://www.estatesandinvestments.co.uk)**

***Photo: Back (l-r) are Phil Griffiths, Morris Property contracts manager, Steve Flavell, Morris Property construction manager and Rebecca Carey, school performance team leader at Telford & Wrekin Council and front are award-winning pupils from Newport CE Junior School.***

## Hortonwood Plot 12

# ATW Couriers is Orchard Business Park's first tenant

Published October 2023

**ATW Couriers Ltd has become the first tenant to move into Telford & Wrekin Council's latest commercial estate Orchard Business Park.**



The growing business, which delivers packages and products for local and national companies across the length and breadth of the UK, has taken up one of the brand new units at Hortonwood, Telford.

[ATW Couriers Ltd](#) was founded by owner and Managing Director Adam Welborn in 2019, but after the firm outgrew its previous premises at Halesfield it needed somewhere bigger and Orchard Business Park fitted the bill.

In total 24 units have been constructed at Orchard Business Park which cover 60,000 sq.ft across eight buildings on the site.

The units at Orchard Business Park promote a 'green' environment and have been designed with space for 26 electric vehicle charging points, roof solar panels and other sustainable features and ecological enhancements.

Tenants have been secured by the Council for another 13 units which are ideal for a range of potential occupiers - including start-ups, smaller businesses and larger firms at the site which is in a prime location in Telford.

The Council acquired the site from Homes England through the Telford Land Deal which brings forward former new town sites identified for development, de-risks them and provides shovel ready land which can be developed for employment and residential use.

After identifying a high demand for smaller industrial units that wasn't being met by the private development market, the Council set about the building project.

The site will now be managed and let through the Council's property investment portfolio, providing a vital revenue stream for the Council.

Orchard Business Park has also been delivered with support from the Telford Growth Fund which invests directly into land and buildings to attract new investors, support businesses, boost jobs and the economy as well as reinvesting into frontline services and local communities.

This development further consolidates Telford and Wrekin borough's reputation as an investment hotspot providing much needed, high quality rented business space.

ATW Couriers Ltd, which is open seven days a week and offers a same day delivery service, now has six staff and a fleet of vehicles out on the road.

Adam said: “We’re really pleased with our new unit which is a huge boost for our business at just the right time.

“We transport packages for firms across the UK but we want to build a bigger client base here in Telford and deliver goods for business on our doorstep, as we sub-contract some of our work for companies out of the area.

“We’re really grateful to Telford & Wrekin Council for the support we’ve received and I think the Telford Growth Fund is fantastic because it has helped businesses like ours to move into new premises and hopefully grow our client base.”

Adam added: “The facilities at Orchard Business Park are first-class. There’s plenty of parking and electric vehicle charging points, it’s a great place to do business from and in a perfect location.

“For the units which are still available to let, I’d definitely encourage other businesses to come and take a closer look at what’s on offer here.”

**Councillor Lee Carter (Lab), Telford & Wrekin Council’s Cabinet Member for Place (the Economy & Neighbourhood Services), said:** “It’s great to see ATW Couriers already reaping the benefits of a move to Orchard Business Park

“The site is appealing to a range of businesses from a variety of industry sectors who are keen to benefit from state-of-the art facilities and unit space on an eco-friendly business park.

“The Telford Land Deal and Telford Growth Fund have been instrumental in creating new jobs and bringing new skills and expertise to the borough and the Orchard Business Park development is another prime example of that.”

**Businesses interested in enquiring about units still available at Orchard Business Park can call Telford & Wrekin Council’s Estates and Investments team on 01952 384333 or email [estates&investments@telford.gov.uk](mailto:estates&investments@telford.gov.uk)**

**To find out more about ATW Couriers, please call 01952 503560 or email [info@atwcouriers.co.uk](mailto:info@atwcouriers.co.uk) Photo:**

***Photo: Councillor Lee Carter, left, with ATW Couriers Managing Director Adam Welborn outside the Orchard Business Park unit.***

# Donnington

Published March 2024

## First tenants move into Nuplace’s sustainable Future Homes Standard properties in Telford



*Photo: Telford & Wrekin Council - Cllr Richard Overton pictured meeting the residents of their new home*

Telford & Wrekin Council has welcomed the first wave of tenants to its latest properties in Donnington, marking a significant milestone in the completion of Nuplace’s latest housing development.

Wild Walk is a mixed tenure development with a total of 329 new homes which are being bought forward by a partnership comprising of Telford & Wrekin Council, Nuplace, Lovell Partnerships Ltd and local housing association, Wrekin Housing Group.

Nuplace, the council’s wholly owned housing company, has taken sustainable housing to the next level at the development

by introducing its first ever Future Homes Standard properties to further support residents with lower fuel bills.

Nuplace properties range from 1 to 4-bedroom houses, apartments, and bungalows. Of the 66 properties 18 of these are being built to accessible and adaptable standards, and are available for people who are over the age of 55, or with a demonstrable need.

Residents can still reserve a Nuplace property at Wild Walk – details of available plots and rent prices can be found on Nuplace’s website.

All Nuplace properties at Wild Walk have been delivered to low carbon standards incorporating solar panels and electric car charging points as a part of its commitment to help tackle climate change.

In addition, the Future Homes Standard green homes at Wild Walk will produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes built under the current Building Regulations. The properties will feature new technology when it comes to heating, hot water systems and reducing heat waste.

After months of preparation Jamie and his family were among the first tenants to move into their Donnington homes today. He told us:

“This is our first time renting with Nuplace. For us as a family knowing that the property is owned by the council has given us a huge sense of security. Our previous home was owned by a private landlord, and we were always so unsure about the future. We are a family of six and one of our children has additional

needs so knowing we have a stable home, that we can call our own, is a huge relief and really exciting.

“At first, we weren’t looking for a Future Home Standard property, this is just a bonus for us!

“We are really looking forward to learning more about these features and seeing how they benefit us as a family.”

Councillor Richard Overton (lab) deputy leader and the cabinet member for homes and enforcement said: Housing is one of our key priorities in Telford and Wrekin as we set to protect, care and invest to create a better borough for all of our residents. This new development at Wild Walk is a key part of this and it’s great to see the range of properties available both from Nuplace and also our partners.

“With over 1,300 tenants now living in Nuplace properties right across the borough, we know they are providing fantastic long-term homes for our residents from a landlord they can trust.

“Seeing tenants arrive at their new homes today really brings to life the development and the vision of the partnership which was to create a development which offers something for all residents.”

To date Nuplace has 485 homes right across the borough, with a further 359 planned or at construction. 124 of the existing homes are affordable properties. The housing investment programme has also enabled the delivery of a further 399 affordable dwellings by housing association partners.



## Hortonwood Plot 11d

# New commercial units development is underway at Hortonwood

Published March 2024

**Work to create a series of new commercial units is underway on a site brought forward through the Telford Land Deal.**



The new development at Hortonwood 45 Plot 11D, known as Total Park Telford, is being delivered by Total Developments NW Ltd and will bring new skills and jobs to Telford and Wrekin.

The development will comprise of 350,000 sq ft of industrial space split across four units with a total power offering of 4 MVA.

The four self-contained manufacturing and logistics warehouses, ranging from 55,240 to 126,133 sq ft, will each have their own dedicated parking and yard areas and provide a ground floor open warehouse and office accommodation at first floor level.

All units will have generous dock and level access loading provisions and the surrounding areas will be fully landscaped with over 14,500 trees and shrubs planted as part of the development.

The Telford Land Deal, launched by Telford & Wrekin Council in 2015 with Homes England, is set to generate £44.5m of land receipts from the sale of HE land by 2025.

Through the Land Deal, former new town sites are brought forward and de-risked for development to provide shovel ready land that can be developed for employment and residential use.

To date, the programme has delivered commercial floor space of 163,871m<sup>2</sup> (1,763,892sq ft), 1535 housing units (684 affordable) and created 2233 new jobs.

The Total Park Telford project is expected to create an additional 450 jobs for the local community, with the first two units being available for handover as early as late 2024.

Telford is a well-established commercial location within the West Midlands and the site is located within one of Telford's main employment areas.

Significant occupiers within Hortonwood Industrial Estate include DHL, Denso, BAE Systems, Makita, Nestle and Heinz.

**Councillor Lee Carter (Lab), Telford & Wrekin Council's Cabinet Member for Place (the Economy & Neighbourhood Services), said:** "The Telford Land Deal continues to be a huge success - delivering new skills, jobs and homes across the borough.

“We are really pleased to see this latest development on a Telford Land Deal site come to fruition and these new commercial units are in a prime location in Telford.

“We look forward to seeing this development taking shape and it’s another excellent example of how land is being brought back into use through the Telford Land Deal.”

Total Developments are expected to complete the first two units towards the end of 2024 and the remaining units will follow in early 2025, albeit the developer is able to prioritise each of the four unit’s dependant on early occupier demand.

Ed Chantler, CEO of Total Developments, said: “Total Park Telford represents a continuation of our clear strategy since inception.

“Our track record of identifying sites and speculatively developing best-in-class mid-box warehousing and manufacturing space has established our position as market leaders in the 20-150,000 sq ft size range.

“It gives us the confidence to push on at Telford and ensure the development is expedited to meet demand.

“Our experiences at the likes of Total Park Leeds, Bedford, Theale and Middlewich has made power provision a particular focus on this site.”

Edward Spooner, Acquiring agent for M1 Agency said: “Total Park Telford’s unrivalled power provision should prove to be a significant draw.

“Similarly, functional unit configuration and orientation with large yards and strong loading provision should appeal to logistics operators looking for cost effective space along the M54 Corridor and wider West Midlands region.

“Initial conversations are being held with a number of major operators on both freehold and leasehold terms.”

**For further enquiries contact Georgina Thompson (01193 461360), Kayleigh Mason (07747 486661) of M1 Agency and Richard Bradbury (07956 847446).**

***Photo (L-r) Dan Owen, Senior Manager (Planning and Enabling) for Homes England, Catherine Hawksworth, Senior Surveyor for Telford & Wrekin Council’s Estates and Investment team, Councillor Lee Carter (Lab), Telford & Wrekin Council’s Cabinet Member for Place (The Economy & Neighbourhood Services), Ted Macdougall, Development Director for Total Developments North West and Chris Grimmett, Contract Manager for Pioneer Design and Build.***



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# TELFORD LAND DEAL GIVES APPRENTICE CHANCE TO PROGRESS WITH CEL GROUP



## CEL Group

Grace Evans is the latest apprentice to progress at Telford-based subcontract manufacturer CEL Group.

The 16-year-old is a third of the way through her Business Administration apprenticeship with the expanding global firm, which has additional facilities and partners in China.

Grace, who started her business administration apprenticeship in October 2023, works across all departments at CEL Group

Medical aids and adaptations are just some of the products which are assembled by CEL Group in the UK after the firm opened an impressive new purpose-built HQ at Hortonwood West in September 2022.

CEL Group has rapidly reaped the benefits of moving to the site developed through the Telford Land Deal – a partnership between Telford & Wrekin Council, Homes England and the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership.

**Grace said:** “I learn better when I’m working hands-on doing tasks and activities that support what I’m learning instead of just being in a classroom environment.

I work right across the business and complete a whole range of various activities every day, from invoicing for accounts to creating social media posts to market the business.

“I also get to work with our teams in China too. It is fascinating to see how everyone works so closely despite being on separate continents.”



## TELFORD LAND DEAL GIVES APPRENTICE CHANCE TO PROGRESS WITH CEL GROUP



CEL Group virtually doubled its floor space when it moved to the Hortonwood West site and since the move it has been accelerating the expansion of its subcontract manufacturing and supply services.

**Grace added:** “CEL Group is a growing company and they have made it clear to me that I can grow with the business.

“As an apprentice you need lots of support to make that transition into working in a real-life adult environment and CEL Group offers that support.”

**Councillor Shirley Reynolds Telford & Wrekin Council Cabinet Member for Children, Young People, Education, Employment & Skills,** said: “It’s fantastic to see that apprentices are at the forefront of CEL Group’s success and future growth plans.

“Apprenticeships give people a fantastic opportunity to gain hands-on skills in a live work environment, earn money and gain a qualification at the same time. Grace is gaining the skills and qualifications she needs for a really exciting career.”

# OLD PARK DEVELOPMENT: TELFORD'S £10.7 MILLION PROJECT DELIVERS 88 AFFORDABLE HOMES.



The Old Park development is a significant new residential project spearheaded by the Wrekin Housing Group, known for its commitment to social impact and enhancing community well-being. This project is strategically located in Telford, close to the Group's Head Office.

The development includes 88 new homes designated for affordable rent. The housing mix consists of:

- 28 two-bedroom houses
- 54 three-bedroom houses
- 2 four-bedroom houses
- 4 two-bedroom bungalows

Each home offers allocated parking and a private garden. The surrounding landscape has ecological enhancements created as part of the development's commitment to environmental sustainability.

The Old Park residential development exemplifies the successful collaboration between Telford & Wrekin Council, Wrekin Housing Group, and Tricas Construction. It highlights the efficacy of the Land Deal and the partnerships formed in delivering substantial community benefits, both in terms of affordable housing and job creation.

The land for Old Park was sold through the collaborative partnership between Homes England and Telford & Wrekin Council, via the Telford Land Deal. The process involved:

**Due diligence:** The Land Deal team undertook thorough due diligence across the site, including intrusive ground investigation works and the preparation of a comprehensive Sales Information pack to ensure transparency and mitigate risks.

**Marketing and sale:** The site, allocated within the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan, was competitively via the Telford Land Deal and sold to Wrekin Housing Group under a conditional contract, securing the development opportunity once planning consent was in place.





## OLD PARK DEVELOPMENT: TELFORD'S £10.7 MILLION PROJECT DELIVERS 88 AFFORDABLE HOMES.



The impact of this collaborative project includes:

**Affordable housing:** The addition of 88 affordable residential homes enhances the housing stock available to the community, directly supporting local housing needs in an accessible town centre location.

**Economic benefits:** The project has delivered 5 new jobs supporting the ongoing administration and maintenance of the development, reflecting its positive economic impact on the local area.

Jane Kind, Development Manager at the Wrekin Housing Group said:

"The Old Park development is another excellent example of partners coming together to create positive outcomes for local residents.

"Wrekin's current development strategy runs from April 2020 – March 2026. During this time, Wrekin are investing over £279 million to build 2,300 new homes to help tackle the housing crisis. We remain committed to providing high quality, sustainable homes for local people."

"We are passionate about creating new communities and providing homes that our customers are proud to live in. New homes, particularly ones for affordable rent, are extremely important for places like Telford and Wrekin. Not only do they help address the housing waiting list by providing high quality homes, they also provide vital support for the construction sector, creating jobs and providing apprenticeships."



# ORCHARD BUSINESS PARK: EMPOWERING SUSTAINABILITY AND BUSINESS GROWTH IN TELFORD



Orchard Business Park, part of Telford’s ambitious economic development strategy, was delivered through the Telford Land Deal; a collaboration between Telford & Wrekin Council, Homes England, and the former Marches Local Enterprise Partnership. This development has provided Telford with state-of-the-art business spaces designed to meet the needs of a wide range of industries while promoting environmental sustainability.

Located in Hortonwood, Orchard Business Park comprises 24 modern commercial units spanning 60,000 sq. ft. across eight buildings, equipped with features such as electric vehicle charging points, roof solar panels, and other green enhancements.

## Replenished Ltd: A Business Championing Sustainability

One of the early occupants of Orchard Business Park is Replenished Ltd, a business dedicated to reducing packaging waste through refill and reuse systems. Founded by a Telford local, Replenished Ltd was established out of frustration with disposable packaging in everyday products. The company’s mission is to eliminate waste by offering a subscription-based service that delivers household and business supplies in reusable containers, which are collected, cleaned, and refilled.

In February 2024, Replenished Ltd began searching for a factory space and found a perfect match in Orchard Business Park. Not only did the location offer the necessary infrastructure and high-quality units, but the sustainable features of the development aligned perfectly with the company’s values. The solar-powered, well-insulated units, combined with affordable rent and energy savings, made it an ideal choice for Replenished to establish its operations.





# ORCHARD BUSINESS PARK: EMPOWERING SUSTAINABILITY AND BUSINESS GROWTH IN TELFORD



In May 2024, Replenished Ltd moved into its unit at Orchard Business Park and began building its operations centre. The facility now integrates modern manufacturing principles with eco-friendly processes to deliver reusable packaging solutions to homes and businesses across Shropshire.

Mark Winsper, Head of Operations at Replenished Ltd, said: “We were fortunate to secure a unit at Orchard Business Park. The sustainability features, such as the solar panels and electric vehicle charging points, have aligned perfectly with our mission to reduce packaging waste. The site is not only eco-friendly, but also well-designed and cost-effective, making it the ideal base for us to grow and expand our refill and reuse services.”

Replenished Ltd is just one example of how Orchard Business Park is supporting innovation and economic growth in Telford. The development of the business park, supported by the Telford Growth Fund, reflects the council’s commitment to creating high-quality business spaces while promoting sustainability. By providing modern, energy-efficient units at competitive prices, the council is helping businesses like Replenished Ltd thrive in a challenging economic environment.

Councillor Ollie Vickers (Lab) Telford & Wrekin Council Cabinet Member for The Economy, praised the development: “We are proud to see businesses like Replenished Ltd setting up at Orchard Business Park, contributing to Telford’s growing reputation as an investment hotspot. The Telford Land Deal has been instrumental in creating new jobs and supporting sustainability-focused enterprises, and we look forward to seeing more businesses take advantage of the fantastic opportunities this development offers.”





Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

5 December 2024

### 2024/25 Financial Monitoring Report

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Zona Hannington - Cabinet Member: Finance and Governance
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Michelle Brockway - Interim Director: Finance, People and IDT
<b>Service Area:</b>	Finance, People and IDT
<b>Report Author:</b>	Pauline Harris – Finance Manager
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 383701 <b>Email:</b> pauline.harris@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Yes – 28 October 2024
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT – 5 November 2024 Business Briefing – 21 November 2024 Cabinet – 5 December 2024

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for Decision/Noting

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Notes the 2024/25 revenue budget position;
- 1.2 Notes the position in relation to capital spend; and recommends that Full Council approve the changes to the capital programme detailed in Appendix C and all associated changes to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, including Treasury and Prudential Indicators;
- 1.3 Notes the collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger;

1.4 Notes the current position in relation to Treasury & Prudential Indicators

## **2.0 Purpose of Report**

2.1 To provide Cabinet with the latest financial monitoring position for the year relating to: the revenue budget, capital programme and income collection.

## **3.0 Background**

3.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 to 2027/28 was approved at Full Council on 29 February 2024, which included the 2024/25 revenue budget and medium term capital programme. Since the MTFS was approved, the economic climate has continued to be challenging with costs pressures being experienced, particularly in relation to the provision of Adult Social Care.

3.2 Good financial management is an essential element of good governance and long-term service planning which are critical to ensuring that local service provision is sustainable and the use of resources is maximised in order to meet the needs of our residents.

3.3 Financial management is the responsibility of budget holders and is supported by Finance staff using a risk based approach: 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. Financial monitoring provides Cabinet and Senior Management Team with a focussed view on the Council's financial performance, to inform and support decision making and to ensure financial sustainability.

3.4 This Financial Monitoring Report for 2024/25 provides the latest projections in relation to the projected outturn position i.e. how projected net revenue spend compares to the budget set for the year; progress against the approved 2024/25 capital programme; the key issues to be highlighted; together with a summary of collection information in relation to Council Tax, Business Rates and Sales Ledger income.

3.5 The funding outlook for the medium term remains very uncertain and will clearly continue to be challenging, particularly given the Council has already had to deliver £156.9m ongoing budget savings since 2009/10.

3.6 There is a statutory duty for local authorities to set a balanced and robust budget each financial year and to take timely action to address financial pressures. It is our aim to continue to deliver quality services whilst ensuring a balanced budget.

## **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

4.1.1 Nationally, Councils continue to face extreme challenges in 2024/25 with unprecedented pressures driven by high costs and high demand for services – particularly Adult Social Care, Children's Safeguarding and School Travel Assistance.

4.1.2 The Autumn Budget, presented by the Chancellor on 30 October 2024, set out a medium term plan for public finances. This included a one-year Spending Review

covering Departmental budgets for 2025/26 with a further Spending Review stage in late Spring 2025 which it is anticipated will cover 2026/27 and 2027/28.

The headline figures indicate a real terms increase in core local government spending power of around 3.2% in 2025/26, including at least £1.3bn of new grant funding, of which £600m will be new grant funding to support social care. However, there are many unknowns and lack of clarity about what funding streams are included; the detail and impact on individual local authorities will not be known until the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement which will be announced in early December. The Autumn Budget did confirm that the Government is committed to reforming the approach to local government funding so that it reflects an up to date assessment of a need and local revenues – a targeted approach is expected for the 2025/26 Finance Settlement followed by a multi-year settlement wef. 2026/27.

- 4.1.3 While inflation is expected to reduce in the medium term, current indicators show that the economy will be slower to recover than was expected when the Council's budget was set. In October 2024 CPI increased to 2.3% which is above the Bank of England's 2% target. The Bank of England reduced base rate from 5.25% to 5.00% in August with a further cut to 4.75% in November which is higher than was anticipated when the Council's budget was set.
- 4.1.4 Given these factors, monitoring for 2024/25 indicates a number of variations from the approved budget, notably relating to Adult Social Care where in order to meet the needs of the most vulnerable residents, additional investment is required.
- 4.1.5 Before application of remaining contingencies included in the revenue budget, the projected outturn position is currently expected to be over budget by £5.261m at year end, which is an increase of £0.763m since the last report. Making use of the specific earmarked Social Care contingency and the General budget contingency brings the position back to be within budget. Further work is ongoing to refine projections, identify additional in-year efficiencies, additional income and one-off balances which could be used to improve the position further.
- 4.1.6 The Council has an excellent track record of strong financial management and Cabinet Members and budget holders will continue their work to manage budgets as effectively as possible during 2024/25 to address in-year financial pressures.
- 4.1.7 Projections will continue to be refined and updates brought to Cabinet in future financial monitoring reports. While extremely challenging our aim is to continue to deliver quality services to the residents of the borough and protect critical front-line services.



4.1.8 A summary of the current projection for the year end position is:-

	<b>£m</b>
Net Revenue Budget	157.296
Projected Net Revenue Outturn	162.557
Projected Variance	+5.261
Use of One off Contingency (earmarked for Social Care Pressures)	-1.959
Use of General Budget Contingency	-3.302
<b>Projected Year End Variance</b>	<b>0.000</b>

4.1.9 There are a number of variations from the approved budget, detailed in Section 5. The key variance is Adult Social Care (ASC), with £6.7m additional investment currently being required relating to the cost of providing care packages across all client groups. This includes the impact of market price increases, more complex needs, higher demand and longer periods of care being required; all of which are being analysed by the Service with the aim of refining projections and managing spend. This is after additional net investment of £5.9m (which is after savings of £7.7m have been reflected) into ASC in 2024/25 as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

#### 4.2 **Capital**

The capital programme totals £92.8m for 2024/25 which includes all approvals since the budget was set. Schemes are in progress and at the time of compiling this report spend is projected to be on budget at year end.

#### 4.3 **Corporate Income Collection**

Income collected in relation to Business Rates is within the target set while Sales Ledger and Council Tax are slightly outside the target set. Ultimately, all debt will be pursued and will continue to be collected after the end of the financial year with all appropriate recovery avenues being pursued.

## 5.0 Additional Information

5.1 The overall 2024/25 monitoring position against the budget is summarised in the table below:

Service Area	Budget	Variation 7 November 2024 Cabinet	Movement	Total Current Variation
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Finance, People & IDT	16.589	(1.619)	(0.131)	(1.750)
Policy & Governance	1.369	(0.043)	0.000	(0.043)
Adult Social Care	68.180	4.270	2.491	6.761
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services	5.182	0.000	(0.229)	(0.229)
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support	49.422	0.765	(0.114)	0.651
Education & Skills	12.794	0.506	0.084	0.590
Health & Wellbeing	0.806	0.033	0.000	0.033
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	33.145	(0.046)	0.085	0.039
Prosperity & Investment	(6.771)	1.424	(0.362)	1.062
Council Wide	(23.420)	(0.792)	(1.061)	(1.853)
<b>Total</b>	<b>157.296</b>	<b>4.498</b>	<b>0.763</b>	<b>5.261</b>

5.2.1 Projected variances over £0.250m are highlighted below, all other variances over £50k are detailed in Appendix B.

Service Area	Variance £m
<b><u>Finance, People &amp; IDT</u></b>	
<b>Treasury</b> – impact of capital spend re-profiling and positive cash flow positions during the year. This benefit is offsetting the income pressure in the Property Investment Portfolio and Housing shown below.	-1.700

Service Area	Variance £m
<b><u>Adult Social Care</u></b>	
<b>Longer Term Care Purchasing</b> – projected expenditure relating to block and spot contracts. Additional investment is required due to the continued increase in the costs of care. The service continues to work on delivering care which maximises prevention and independence where possible. External consultants have also been commissioned to review the service and work undertaken to date indicates areas where savings may be possible in future.	+6.552
<b>My Options – Adults &amp; Childrens Services</b> – pressure from delay in delivery of savings from change in provision at Lakewood Court and staffing savings to be delivered.	+0.569
<b>Prevention &amp; Independence – Older People &amp; Disability</b> – mainly due to staffing vacancies due to recruitment challenges	-0.269
<b>Prevention &amp; Enablement, Intermediate Care</b> – demand for reablement services and services to facilitate discharge from hospital continue to be high and a pressure is very likely in 2024/25. Regular discussions with Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin ICB are being held to determine the funding strategy for 2024/25 which may result in a share of the pressure falling on Telford & Wrekin Council.	+0.319
<b>Income</b> – client contributions	-0.370
<b><u>Housing, Commercial &amp; Customer Services</u></b>	
<b>Customer Relationships &amp; Welfare Services</b> – Use of One off Reserve Funding	-0.466
<b>Strategic Housing, Income</b> – income shortfall which will be delivered when Housing Schemes become operational (Red Lion development due 2025/26). Note, borrowing costs are also reduced which is reflected in the Treasury benefit reported under Finance.	+0.270
<b><u>Children’s Safeguarding &amp; Family Support</u></b>	
<b>Children in Care, Leaving Care Team &amp; Speciality Services, Family Solutions:</b>	
<b>Children In Care Placements</b> – additional investment was allocated in the 2024/25 budget process and costs are currently projected to be within budget. The Council’s new	-0.260

Service Area	Variance £m
provision for supported accommodation, Octavia Court, which opened in the Summer, is also having a positive impact on placement costs.	
<b>Health Funding</b> – anticipated health contributions in relation to health needs are lower than budgeted, impacted by reduced overall placement costs.	+0.467
<b>Operational Expenditure</b> – pressure mainly arising from aids and adaptations and funding of the Autism Hub.	+0.253
<b>Income</b> – additional grant income received	-0.404
<b>Child Protection &amp; Family Support, Parenting Assessment &amp; Contact Teams</b>	
<b>Staffing expenditure</b> – underspend due to vacant posts	-0.415
<b>Safeguarding, Management &amp; Partnerships:</b>	
<b>Staffing expenditure</b> – shortfall arising from one off investment ending and anticipated savings target applied	+0.656
<b><u>Neighbourhood &amp; Enforcement Services</u></b>	
<b>Use of Reserves</b> – one off funding to meet street lighting costs	-0.313
<b><u>Prosperity &amp; Investment</u></b>	
<b>Regeneration &amp; Investment, Property Portfolio Income</b> – capital investment re-phased into future years with corresponding impact on budgeted income. Note, this is offset by a reduction in borrowing costs which is reflected in the Treasury benefit totalling £1.7m reported under Finance.	+0.911
<b><u>Council Wide</u></b> – including WME dividend which is projected to be higher than budgeted; additional retained rates inflation and other corporate underspends.	-1.853

## 5.2.2 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

Dedicated Schools Grant sits within Education & Skills and is monitored separately to the Council's General Fund position shown in Section 5.1. Excluding funds passed to academies and colleges, Dedicated Schools Grant totals £133.4m in 2024/25. DSG deficits are currently required to be held in a separate reserve in local authorities' accounts.

During 2023/24 Telford & Wrekin's DSG was overspent and a deficit of £1.82m was carried forward to 2024/25. The deficit was due to budget pressures relating to High Needs provision and these pressures have continued in 2024/25. The current position is that the deficit is currently projected to significantly increase in 2024/25, from £1.82m at the start of the year to approximately £6m at the end of the financial year.

A cost improvement plan is in place and meetings are regularly held to monitor and address budget pressures. The Council has a positive relationship with schools and other providers which assists the Council to manage the budget as effectively as possible and ensure we meet our responsibilities to young people.

High needs pressure is a national issue with most upper tier Council's having a DSG deficit. At the end of 2022/23, the national total DSG deficit was £1.168bn (which included 100 authorities with deficits). A recent survey from the Association of Local Authority Treasurers has revealed that the deficit currently exceeds £3bn across English Councils and is projected to rise to £8bn in 2026/27.

In 2020, the Government introduced a statutory override that meant that all local authorities' DSG deficits were separated from a Council's wider accounts. This means there is no current expectation that a council's general fund should be used to offset any DSG deficit. This override is currently in place until 2025/26. The new government has yet to announce its policy position beyond 2025/26.

A letter has been sent to the Secretary of State for Education, and the Minister of State for School Standards advising them of the significant financial challenges we are currently facing, calling on the government for a financial resolution and for the current system to be reformed.

The position is being closely monitored and updates will be included in future financial monitoring reports.

## 5.3 CONTINGENCIES, RESERVES & BALANCES

5.3.1 The 2024/25 budget includes a general revenue contingency of £3.950m which is set aside to meet any unforeseen expenditure or income shortfalls during the year and a one-off contingency of £1.959m set aside specifically for Social Care pressures.

The current projected position would require use of all of the one-off contingency earmarked for Social Care and would leave a balance of £0.648m in the general contingency (see table in 4.1.8).

5.3.2 There is also a contingency amount held centrally for contractual and pay inflation. Any remaining balance will be applied to support the overall position at year end. The pay award for 2024/25 has now been finalised and detailed work on the associated cost is being undertaken; if it is higher than the allowance set aside this will be an additional in year pressure.

5.3.3 The Budget Strategy Reserve remains at £21.7m.

## 5.4 CAPITAL

### 5.4.1 2024/25 Capital Programme

The 2024/25 capital programme totals £92.8m. The financial position is shown in the table below and shows projected spend at year end is on target.

Service Area	Approved Budget	Spend	% Spend	Year End
	£m	£m		£m
Prosperity & Investment	51.35	25.15	48.98%	51.35
Policy & Governance	0.07	0.01	14.29%	0.07
Education & Skills	15.18	6.25	41.17%	15.18
Adult Social Care	0.03	0.00	0.00%	0.03
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	12.86	4.74	36.86%	12.86
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services	6.37	2.64	41.44%	6.37
Finance, People and IDT	5.93	3.51	59.19%	5.93
Corporate Items	1.01	0.23	22.77%	1.01
<b>Total</b>	<b>92.80</b>	<b>42.53</b>	<b>45.8%</b>	<b>92.80</b>

5.4.2 The 2024/25 capital programme relies on £4.6m of net capital receipts as part of its funding. Capital receipts included in the medium term budget strategy are kept under continual review and any changes will be reflected in future budget projections but are currently projected to be on target.

5.4.3 Slippage is included in Appendix C for approval.

5.4.4 Full Council approved Prudential and Treasury Indicators on 29 February 2024. Appendix D shows the Treasury and Prudential Indicator monitoring as at end September 2024.

## 6.0 CORPORATE INCOME MONITORING

6.1 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.

- 6.2 In summary, NNDR collection is within the target set while sales ledger collection and council tax are slightly outside target.

<b>INCOME COLLECTION – SEPTEMBER 2024</b>			
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Performance</b>
Council Tax Collection	53.76%	54.11%	0.35% behind target
NNDR Collection	58.96%	57.33%	1.63% ahead of target
Sales Ledger Outstanding Debt	7.04%	5.25%	1.79% behind target

**Council Tax (£119.0m)**

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 2023/24 97.31%

Year End Target for 2024/25 97.31%

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

Month End Target	Month End Actual	Last year Actual
54.11%	53.76%	54.11%

Collection rates are slightly behind target.

**6.3 NNDR-Business Rates (£82.3m)**

The % of business rates for 2024/25 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 2023/24 97.37%

Year End Target for 2024/25 98.00%

Month End Target	Month End Actual	Last year Actual
57.33%	58.96%	56.70%

Collection rates are slightly ahead of target, and ahead of performance last year.

#### 6.4 Sales Ledger (£102.1m)

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 2024/25 are as follows:

Age of debt	Annual Target %	August 2024	
		£m	%
Total	5.25	7.157	7.04

Sales ledger performance is outside of target; individual balances are being pursued via legal action.

#### 7.0 Alternative Options

7.1 Budget holders will investigate a number of options to seek to deliver required service outcomes from within budgeted resources. Options to deliver savings and additional income have been explored.

#### 8.0 Key Risks

8.1 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 and further inflationary pressures, the risk of changes in legislative or accounting requirements impacting on budgets etc. The Council has comprehensive risk management arrangements in place, which are reviewed and updated by the Senior Management Team.

#### 9.0 Council Priorities

9.1 Delivery of all Council priorities depends 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.

#### 10.0 Financial Implications

10.1 The financial impacts are detailed throughout the report.

#### 11.0 Legal and HR Implications

11.1 There are no direct legal implications 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.

11.2 Legal services will provide ongoing advice in relation to specific proposals relating to the making of savings, including on any requirement to undertake consultation as such proposals are brought forward for consideration.

## 12.0 Ward Implications

12.1 There are no impacts on specific wards

## 13.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications

13.1 There are no Health, Social and Economic Implications directly arising from this report.

## 14.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

14.1 There are no Equality & Diversity implications directly arising from this report. Proportionate impact assessments are carried out and a range of consultation mechanisms are used where appropriate.

## 15.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

15.1 There are no Climate Change and Environmental Implications directly arising from this report.

## 16.0 Background Papers

1	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28	Council 29/02/2024
2	2024/25 Financial Monitoring Report	Cabinet 10/07/2024 Council 18/07/2024
3	2024/25 Financial Monitoring Report	Cabinet 07/11/2024 Council 12/11/2024

## 17.0 Appendices

Appendix A	Summary of 2024/25 Projected Variations
Appendix B	2024/25 Revenue Variations over £50,000
Appendix C	Capital Approvals
Appendix D	Treasury & Prudential Indicators

## 18.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Director	31/10/2024	31/10/2024	MLB
Finance	31/10/2024	31/10/2024	PH
Legal	11/11/2024	13/11/2024	RP

**2024/25 Revenue Budget Variations**

Service Area	Budget	Variation 7 November 2024 Cabinet	Movement	Total Current Variation
	£	£	£	£
Finance, People & IDT	16,589,038	(1,618,969)	(130,621)	(1,749,590)
Policy & Governance	1,369,241	(42,638)	0	(42,638)
Adult Social Care	68,180,364	4,269,806	2,491,447	6,761,253
Housing, Commercial & Customer Services	5,182,353	0	(229,561)	(229,561)
Children's Safeguarding & Family Support	49,422,228	765,290	(113,874)	651,416
Education & Skills	12,793,726	506,394	83,768	590,162
Health & Wellbeing	805,856	33,497	0	33,497
Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services	33,144,752	(46,232)	84,551	38,320
Prosperity & Investment	(6,771,621)	1,423,571	(362,037)	1,061,534
Council Wide	(23,420,097)	(792,654)	(1,060,661)	(1,853,315)
<b>Total</b>	<b>157,295,840</b>	<b>4,498,066</b>	<b>763,012</b>	<b>5,261,077</b>
	<b>0</b>			<b>0</b>

## 2024/25 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000

Description		Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
<b>Finance, People &amp; IDT</b>				
Treasury		14,444,469	(1,700,000)	Impact of re-profiling capital spend and positive cash flow position during the year.
Learning & Development	Staffing	564,456	(60,447)	Vacancies
Revenues	Supplies & Services	217,710	66,013	Legal/operational expenditure
	Variations under £50k	1,362,403	(55,156)	
<b>Total Finance, People &amp; IDT</b>		<b>16,589,038</b>	<b>(1,749,590)</b>	
<b>Policy &amp; Governance</b>				
	Variations under £50k	1,369,241	(42,638)	
<b>Total Policy &amp; Governance</b>		<b>1,369,241</b>	<b>(42,638)</b>	
<b>Adult Social Care</b>				
All long term care purchasing-Spot & block for all ages	Spot & block purchasing	83,724,125	6,551,685	The substantial upward revision to forecast expenditure arises from an acceleration in the costs of care over the last two periods, which initial analysis suggests is due to higher numbers of people requiring care or for their care to be extended, particularly adults with learning disabilities. It should, however, be noted that the trajectory of growth in the first half of 2024/25 has been half that in the equivalent period in 2023/24, reflecting the delivery of validated savings by the service. Part of the increase in care costs is offset by an increase in income (£370,000) shown lower down in this report, reducing the net increase to just over £2.5m. The management team continue to work on delivering care which maximises prevention and independence wherever possible, which is helping to mitigate this budget pressure, which would otherwise be much higher. Newton Europe, external consultants, have also been commissioned to review the service and their work to date has indicated areas where further savings could be delivered in the future. The forecast position will be kept under review as the year progresses, as demand for the service has historically been volatile.
Health funding contributions-all ages and care types	Joint Funding	(7,986,218)	0	Latest forecast income from the NHS from latest identified projections of care for clients with some health needs
Prevention & independence - Older People & Disability	Staffing & Operational expenditure	3,079,487	(269,393)	Mainly from vacancies due to recruitment challenges.
Autism, Learning Disability & mental health	Staffing & Operational expenditure	2,059,417	114,388	Overspend due to additional agency workers.
	My Options-Adults & Children's services	272,374	569,136	Pressure from previous savings associated with changes to Lakewood Court from residential provision to Supported accommodation, and costs of agency staff to cover services.
	In House purchasing (from My Options)	7,168,213	223,771	Increase in costs to reflect additional clients mainly in day services

**2024/25 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000**

Description		Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Prevention & Enablement	Intermediate Care	7,632,827	319,000	The demand for reablement services and services to facilitate discharge from hospital continues at an unprecedented level. Work to mitigate the impacts of increased activity and expenditure has had a positive impact resulting in some reduced activity. This has allowed a reduction to forecast bed usage and expenditure. The pressure on the base budget held within the BCF is, based on current activity levels, projected to be a little under £1m in 2024/25, which is half the 2023/24 overspend. Total expenditure in 2024/25 is likely to be around £9.6m. Any overspend is split between Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin ICB and the Council and the current monitoring position assumes the same split (49:51) as in 2023/24. Partner organisations continue to pursue work programmes to look at alternative service delivery strategies to deal with the demand in the medium to longer term. Alongside this discussions with Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin ICB are being held on a regular basis to determine how any funding pressure will be split, and the position will be updated when this is confirmed.
	Staffing & Operational expenditure	1,402,323	57,751	Overspend due to agency workers over and above the number of vacancies
Income	Client Contributions	(13,599,430)	(370,000)	Based on current expectations of in year income.
	Agency - contribution from reserves	0	(143,992)	Contribution from ASC reserves to cover additional agency resource taken on to support the service in the first quarter of 24/25, costs of which are included in staffing lines above.
	Use of One Offs		(199,000)	
	Variations under £50k	(15,572,754)	(92,093)	Expenditure for Newton support, forecast at £398,000 this year, is included here with an equivalent income source to cover the expenditure.
<b>Total Adult Social Care</b>		<b>68,180,364</b>	<b>6,761,253</b>	
<b>Housing, Commercial &amp; Customer Services</b>				
Strategic Housing	Income	(324,000)	270,000	Income target shortfall; will be delivered when Housing Schemes become operational; Red Lion development due in 2025/26. There is a benefit in relation to lower borrowing costs which is included in the Treasury benefit reported under Finance.
	Variances under £50k	1,184,765	(176,428)	
Telford Theatre	Various	331,640	137,165	Projected costs in relation to the closure. This over spend is being mitigated by a £151k underspend within the BIT team as a result of premises cost savings.
Catering Services	Various	0	(13,750)	
Telford Ice Rink	Income	(870,113)	(122,987)	Projected over achievement of income.
Wellington Leisure Centre	Various	0	0	
Customer Relationships & Welfare Services	Housing Benefit Subsidy	(190,000)	13,759	Projected reduced recovery of overpayments plus an adjustment to reflect the impact of the bad debt provision. Projections reflect the expected caseload reduction due to DWP's Universal Credit managed migration.
Customer Relationships & Welfare Services	Housing Benefit Subsidy - Use of reserve	0	(13,759)	Use of earmarked one off funding to cover the above costs.
Customer Relationships & Welfare Services	Use of one of reserve funding	0	(466,241)	Use of Reserve.
Community Services	Solar Farm - Income	(989,810)	114,213	Projected shortfall in PPA and FIT income; 10.45% reduction for April to Sept to the previous year.
	Variations under £50k	4,929,491	28,467	
Libraries	Variations under £50k - Libraries	1,110,380	0	



**2024/25 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000**

Description		Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
<b>Total Housing, Commercial &amp; Customer Services</b>		<b>5,182,353</b>	<b>(229,561)</b>	
<b>Children's Safeguarding &amp; Family Support</b>				
Children in Care, Leaving Care Team & Speciality Services, Family Solutions	CIC Placements, Post 18 Staying Put & Leaving Care Support	31,222,780	(260,434)	Additional budget, allocated in the context of 2023/24 outturn and the budget model, currently exceeds projected costs of placements. The work with Impower and ongoing work on prevention, early intervention and review of placement costs is having a positive impact on the cost of placements. The Council's new provision for supported accommodation, Octavia Court, which opened over the summer, is also having a positive impact on placement costs.
	Health funding	(6,997,900)	467,012	The budget has been realigned in accordance with the placements model but health funding is currently projected to form the same proportion of placement costs as in 2023/24 and a reduction in overall placement costs has reduced the projected health income.
	Children with Disabilities	2,058,540	137,577	Expenditure in this area has increased significantly in recent years, as the level of need in the CYP population has increased. The realigned budget is now more realistic for this area, but there continues to be a high demand for support for children with disabilities.
	Staffing expenditure	3,790,651	29,201	Leaving care grant of £254K has been applied and this together with a review of staffing has meant the overall projected staffing costs in this area are now close to budget.
	Operational expenditure	2,584,980	252,985	Section 17 costs (for children in need), CWD - aids and adaptations and funding of the Autism Hub are the main elements contributing to pressure in this area.
	Income	(2,587,834)	(403,590)	Additional income received from government grants including Remand Grant, staying put grant and care leavers supported accommodation reform grant.
Child Protection & Family Support, Parenting Assessment & Contact Teams	Staffing expenditure	2,094,845	(415,114)	There are currently a significant number of vacant posts in this area.
	Operational expenditure	455,235	132,712	Increase in No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) expenditure and Hotel/B&B costs
Service Improvement & Efficiency	Staffing expenditure	1,552,323	(54,870)	There are some vacant posts in this area
	Operational expenditure	522,340	85,641	Additional expenditure offset by additional income - see below
	Income	(26,330)	(66,647)	See above, additional income generated covers additional costs
Family Connect, EDT & Early Help Children & Families (Strengthening Families)	Staffing expenditure	3,832,302	(140,225)	There are some vacant posts in this area
	Operational expenditure	972,962	128,535	Budget realignment to reflect savings have reduced operational budgets in this area.

**2024/25 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000**

Description		Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Fostering, Adoption and Permanence	Adoption support	1,230,567	37,568	There has been an increase in the cost of adoption allowance in the first part of the year. Agency adoption fees are volatile and the projection in this area will be kept under review as the year progresses.
	Staffing expenditure	1,889,857	(62,874)	There are some vacant posts in this area
Family Safeguarding	Operational expenditure	2,817,301	171,057	The main drivers of the forecast overspend are legal expenses and assessments, both of which are linked to placement cost pressures in recent years.
Safeguarding, Management and Partnerships	Staffing expenditure	1,845,437	656,381	A budget saving of £300,000 arising from a short-term investment in staffing ending has been applied to this area, as has the Service overall vacancy factor saving of £126,000. Both of these staffing related pressures are more than offset by savings from vacancies in service areas - see above.
Variations under £50k		1,344,344	(75,310)	
<b>Total</b>		<b>48,602,402</b>	<b>619,604</b>	
Independent Review	Staffing expenditure	705,450	2,647	Forecast expenditure assumes that a currently vacant post is recruited to.
	Operational expenditure	114,376	29,165	The forecast position arises from overspends in areas including interpreter fees and payments to Change Grow Live.
<b>Total Children's Safeguarding &amp; Family Support</b>		<b>49,422,228</b>	<b>651,416</b>	
<b>Education &amp; Skills</b>				
Transport		3,848,142	(99,307)	There has been a significant increase in families choosing enabling modes of school travel assistance including an uptake of personal budgets that are funded Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
Traded Advisory Services		65,448	168,749	Grant income which was available to support services in this area in 2023/24 (e.g. Ukraine grant) is no longer available in 2024/25 creating budgetary pressure. Services are being reviewed in this context.
Specialist Services		562,064	247,585	Significant additional expenditure has been incurred in Educational Psychology due to the use of agency staff to process statutory assessments.
Premature retirement costs		1,171,024	140,797	Savings targets have been applied to this area, which covers the costs of teachers who prematurely retired, with the local authority picking up premature retirement costs. This policy ceased some years ago, but annual costs continue to be incurred through the duration of teachers retirement. Savings targets were applied on the basis of demography, but at present this impact is not being seen on costs.
Under £50K		7,147,048	190,485	This variance includes the £142K vacancy factor for Education & Skills
Use of One Off Funding			(58,147)	Maximisation of grant funding. A review of expenditure against grant conditions has reduced the amount that is able to be applied to ongoing expenditure
<b>Total Education &amp; Skills</b>		<b>12,793,726</b>	<b>590,162</b>	
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>				

**2024/25 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000**

Description		Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Coroners Court	Contracted services	266,450	67,800	Pressure on budget from services being delivered by the Coroner and associated services. Demand for Post Mortems and body conveyancing is increasing costs
	Variations under £50k - GF Services	230,376	(34,303)	
Sexual Health	Contracted services	(5,600)	56,141	Pressure within contract identified within consumables supply contracts and initiatives
	Variations under £50k-Public Health	314,630	(72,012)	
Public Health Grant	Underspend/(Overspend) to/(from) Reserve		15,871	underspends against public health funded budgets transferred from Public Health reserve
<b>Total Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>		<b>805,856</b>	<b>33,497</b>	
<b>Neighbourhood &amp; Enforcement Services</b>				
Enforcement	Income - Car Parking	(55,570)	143,204	Shortfall against budgeted income from car parking
	Income - FPN	(46,980)	58,327	Shortfall against budgeted income
	Variations under £50k	810,353	(4,655)	
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services	Variations under £50k	5,421,736	11,717	
Highways, Engineering & Project Delivery	Supplies & Services - Street Lighting	1,979,350	175,620	Increased Maintenance Costs
	Supplies & Services - Street Lighting		13,471	Increased Energy Usage
	Supplies & Services - Street Lighting		36,361	Increased Energy Costs - Difference between 6% average rate and actual rates
	Supplies & Services - Street Lighting		53,959	Energy Green levy introduced in 24/25
	Reserves - Street Lighting		(312,804)	Use of Reserves
	Reserves - Street Lighting		(63,652)	Use of one-off reserves
	Supplies & Services - Flood Barriers		33,392	Unbudgeted costs incurred for responding to flooding including supporting deployment of Ironbridge flood barriers
	Variations under £50k	8,786,636	21,691	
Strategic Transport & Highway Network Management	Supplies & Services - Concessionary Travel	1,675,700	(54,797)	Reduction in operating costs
	Variations under £50k	9,927	(13,484)	
Safer & Stronger Communities	Variations under £50k	(2,149,550)	0	
Waste & Neighbourhood Services	Waste Treatment	6,456,430	(73,656)	Reduction in Waste Tonnages and associated Treatment processing costs
	Variations under £50k	10,256,720	13,625	
<b>Total Neighbourhood &amp; Enforcement Services</b>		<b>33,144,752</b>	<b>38,320</b>	
<b>Prosperity &amp; Investment</b>				

**2024/25 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000**

Description	Description	Budget	Total Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Building Innovation Telford	Premises - Addenbrooke House	-	120,442	Running costs and NNDR of Addenbrooke House up to transfer of property.
	Premises - Lakewood Court	-	140,000	Costs associated with fire door replacements.
	Premises - The Place	422,630	(151,558)	One off underspends.
	Premises - Oakengates Leisure	(3,678,080)	(203,121)	One off NNDR rebates and reduced in year NNDR.
	Income	(3,678,080)	0	Slippage on capital schemes impacting levels of income offset by use of one off reserves.
	Variations under £50k	-	(171,537)	One of use of Grant, S106 and reserve to support in year pressures.
Development Management	Income - Planning applications & Building Control	(2,625,900)	200,000	Estimated based upon a downturn in year to date trends compared to 23/24. This will be monitored monthly and can fluctuate up or down.
Regeneration & Investment	PIP Income	(10,467,570)	911,182	Delay in Growth Fund capital schemes impacting on phasing of income. There is a benefit in relation to the associated lower borrowing costs which is included in the Treasury benefit reported under Finance.
	Income - Earthworks savings target	(200,000)	200,000	Alternative for site identified that will deliver improved outputs.
	Net - Southwater MSCP & Hall Court	(221,090)	52,461	Shortfall on income, although a much improved position than 23/24.
Strategic Planning	Variations under £50k	1,107,320	(136,962)	
	Variations under £50k	8,891,069	100,627	
<b>Total Prosperity &amp; Investment</b>		<b>(6,771,621)</b>	<b>1,061,534</b>	
<b>Corporate</b>				
S31 Grant	Business Rates Retention Scheme Top Up		(69,000)	Additional top up inflation 24.25
WME Dividend		(590,000)	(226,315)	Dividend received from WME higher than budgeted
Council Wide		(22,830,097)	(1,558,000)	Various corporate underspends including pensions and provision for savings shortfalls net of potential costs. To be updated as the year progresses.
<b>Total Corporate</b>		<b>(23,420,097)</b>	<b>(1,853,315)</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>157,295,840</b>	<b>5,261,077</b>	

0 0

157,295,840

0

**APPENDIX C**

**Capital Approvals - by Service Area**

**Slippage**

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>24/25 £</b>	<b>25/26 £</b>	<b>26/27 £</b>	<b>27/28 £</b>
All Other School Schemes	Education & Skills	Grant	(2,795,690.20)	2,795,690.20		
Social Care Capital Grant	Adult Social Care	Grant	(5,497.52)	5,497.52		
Levelling Up Fund	Prosperity & Investment	Grant	(2,450,000.00)	2,450,000.00		
Levelling Up Fund	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential		(800,000.00)	800,000.00	
Pride in Your High Street	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(397,511.37)	397,511.37		
Property Investment Portfolio	Prosperity & Investment	Prudential	(3,950,000.00)		3,950,000.00	
ICT Investment Programme	Finance, People and IDT	Prudential		(345,000.00)	345,000.00	
			<b>(9,598,699.09)</b>	<b>4,503,699.09</b>	<b>5,095,000.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**Treasury Management & Prudential Indicators****Overall Treasury Portfolio at 30 September 2024 - £m**

	Budget	Latest Estimate
Estimated Total External Borrowing (@ 31.03.2025)	493.7	423.2
Investments (@ 31.03.2025)	15.0	15.0
<b>Net Borrowing</b>	<b>478.7</b>	<b>408.2</b>

**Capital Expenditure & Commitments - £m**

This indicator shows actual capital expenditure for the previous year and planned capital expenditure for 3 years. The table below reflects approvals throughout the year at Full Council, including those proposed in this report

Capital Expenditure/Funding	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Grant Funded	38.79	43.64	0.10
Prudential Borrowing	41.86	99.92	56.30
Capital Receipts	4.61	5.14	6.00
Revenue / External	7.52	6.34	0.13
	<b>92.78</b>	<b>155.03</b>	<b>62.53</b>

**Capital Financing Requirement/ Borrowing - £m**

The Capital Financing Requirement is the underlying need to borrow money over the long term. If outstanding borrowing is higher than the CFR this would indicate we are borrowing in advance of need.

	Latest Projections			
	31/03/25	31/03/26	31/03/27	
Loans CFR	551.3	649.5	703.9	
Estimated Outstanding Borrowing	423.2	523.1	579.4	✓Outstanding Borrowing is lower than the underlying need to borrow

**Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary (Debt)**

The Authorised Limit for borrowing is the maximum amount the Council may borrow at any point in the year. The Operational Boundary is the maximum amount that the Council would normally borrow at any time during the year.

	24/25			25/26			26/27			
	31/03/2025			31/03/26			31/03/26			
Authorised Limit for borrowing - indicator set	655.0			745.0			765.0			✓Outstanding Borrowing (above) is below both the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary
Operational Boundary for external debt - indicator set	635.0			725.0			745.0			

**Security**

The Council considers security, liquidity and yield, in that order, when making investment decisions.

Credit ratings remain an important element of assessing credit risk, but they are not a sole feature in the Council's assessment of counterparty credit risk.

The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted credit score of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments would be assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit Risk Indicator	Target	Actual - 30/9/2024	
Portfolio average credit score	6 or lower (which is equivalent to a credit rating of A or higher)	1.51	✓ The Average credit score for investments is within the target set

**Maturity Structure**

This indicator highlights the existence of any large concentrations of fixed rate debt needing to be replaced at times of uncertainty over interest rates and is designed to protect against excessive exposures to interest rate changes in any one period, in particular in the course of the next ten years.

Maturity Structure	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Current	Within Limit
Up to 1 year	0%	70%	28%	✓
1 year to 2 years	0%	30%	21%	✓
2 years to 5 years	0%	50%	9%	✓
5 years to 10 years	0%	75%	12%	✓
10 years to 20 years	0%	75%	5%	✓
20 years to 30 years	0%	75%	2%	✓
30 years to 40 years	0%	100%	3%	✓
40 years to 50 years	0%	100%	14%	✓
Over 50 years	0%	100%	6%	✓

**Principal sums invested for periods longer than one year**

		31/03/2025	31/03/26	31/03/26	
Indicator Set	Limit on principal invested longer than 364 days	95%	95%	95%	✓currently 0% invested beyond 1 year

**Ratio Affordability Measure**

Ratio of finance cost to net revenue stream (%)	24/25	25/26	26/27	
Indicator Set	8.54%	9.27%	9.42%	
Current	7.60%	7.06%	8.89%	✓Financing cost to net revenue stream is lower than budgeted mainly due to slippage



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Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

Thursday 5 December 2024

### Thrive Telford

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Ollie Vickers - Cabinet Member for the Economy
<b>Lead Director:</b>	James Dunn, Director: Prosperity & Investment
<b>Service Area:</b>	Strategic Planning, Inward Investment & Business Support
<b>Report Author:</b>	Gavin Ashford – Group Manager Strategic Planning, Inward Investment & Business Support
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 384260 <b>Email:</b> gavin.ashford1@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Wednesday 17 April 2024
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT – 5 November 2024 Business Briefing – 21 November 2024 Cabinet – 5 December 2024

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Note progress of the Thrive Telford programme.

#### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update and note the achievements of the Telford & Wrekin 'Thrive Telford' programme which is investing £5.8 million of government funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to projects across the Borough.

#### 3.0 Background

- 3.1 UKSPF has replaced European Structural & Investment Fund (ESIF) post Brexit by providing financial support to places across the UK. Each local authority area

was awarded an amount of funding rather than distribution through open competition. UKSPF seeks to invest in: building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances.

- 3.2 The Inward Investment & Business Support Team led the development of the Investment Plan submission and post approval the development, implementation and delivery of the 'Thrive Telford' programme, with support of the Councils Cabinet lead for economy.
- 3.3 The total amount of funding allocated to Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) was £5,841,346 split between £1,500,000 capital and £4,341,346 revenue.
- 3.4 Delivery of the Thrive Telford programme began in February 2023. Implementation phases continued into Summer 24 with a current programme end date of 31 March 2025. The Government in the recent budget announced that the programme will be extended for a further year and we await details of the extension including any changes to priorities.

#### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

##### *Introduction*

- 4.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025. It was the previous government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Programme (ESIF). It provides lead local authorities funding for communities, places, businesses, people and skills and supports delivering on the following objectives:
- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging
  - Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest
  - Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
  - Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency
- 4.2 The Government set three UKSPF investment priorities, each of these contain objectives, intervention outlines, outputs, outcomes and impacts. The priorities include:
- Supporting Local Business
  - People and Skills
  - Communities and Place

*Telford and Wrekin UKSPF Programme - Thrive Telford*

## Thrive Telford

- 4.3 The Telford & Wrekin Investment Plan identified challenges and opportunities that contributed to UKSPF priorities at a local level. The challenges responded to evidence gathered through statistics, reports, strategies, data, intelligence and surveys and the opportunities build upon best practice, collaboration, gaps in provision and strategic vision.
- 4.4 The Investment Plan funding totalled £5,841,346 (£1,500,000 capital and £4,341,346 revenue). The spend profile is detailed as follows:

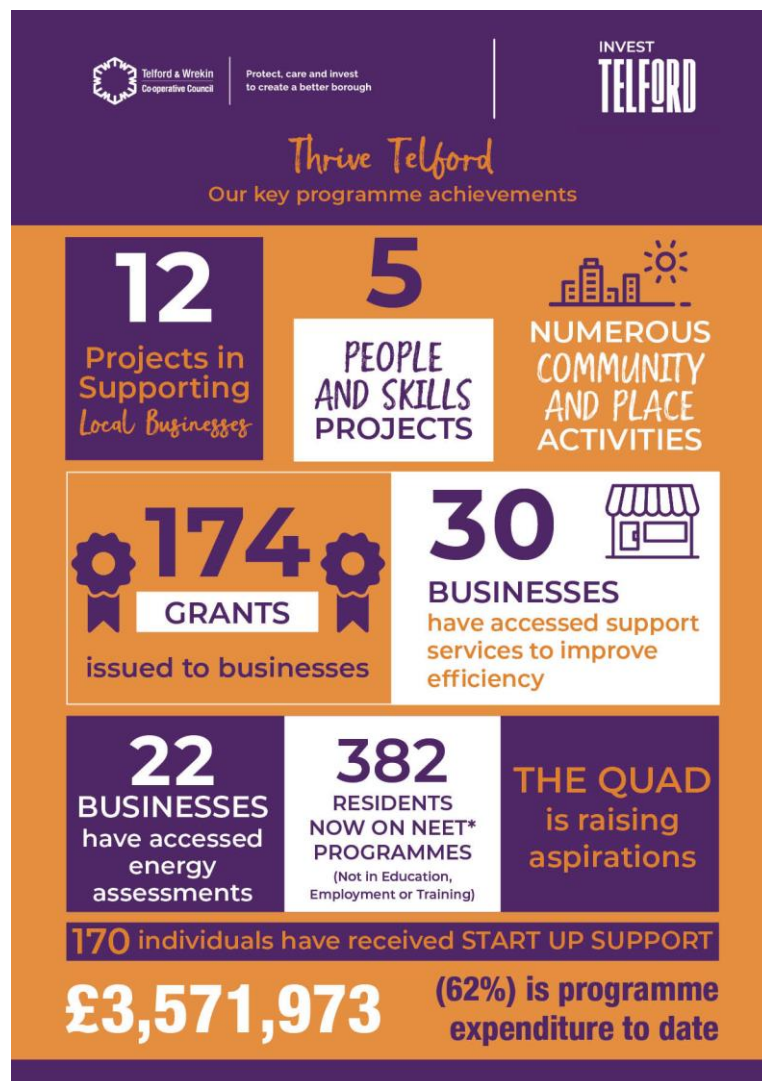
	<b>2023/2024</b>	<b>2024/2025</b>	<b>Total Allocation</b>
<b>Communities and Place</b>	£147,600	£258,170	£405,770
<b>Supporting Local Business</b>	£1,543,873	£2,460,617	£4,006,490
<b>People and Skills</b>	£338,554	£865,626	£1,204,180
<b>Oversight and management</b>	£125,479	£99,427	£224,906
<b>Total Allocation</b>	<b>£2,157,506</b>	<b>£3,683,840</b>	<b>£5,841,346</b>

### *Thrive Telford – Investment Panel*

- 4.5 As part of the UKSPF Investment Plan submission process, a programme governance structure was created. The UKSPF Investment Panel was created and is chaired by Graham Wynn OBE. The Investment Panel has proved invaluable in both supporting the development of the Investment Plan submission but also on an ongoing basis as the Thrive Telford programme develops.
- 4.6 Membership of the board contains representation from Telford & Wrekin College, Department for Work and Pensions, The Telford Business Board, Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Business and Community and Voluntary sector representation. The board also has Council officer representation. The role of the Investment Panel is to act as a critical friend, review performance and provide a decision making function for programme matters including investments.

*Programme progress*

4.7



*Programme Thematic Summaries*

*Community & Place*

4.8 Funding within this Investment Priority is being led as part of the Telford & Wrekin Safer, Stronger Communities Programme. Projects are either delivered in-house by the Safer Stronger Communities team or passed to suppliers to deliver activities.

4.9 Projects within the theme aim to drive crime and anti-social behaviour rates down by tackling root causes that are linked to the most deprived neighbourhoods and helping people to feel safer in their homes and communities through projects targeted at young people. The funding within the theme is split into two projects;

- Local sports facilities, tournaments, teams & leagues (E10); and
- Community engagement schemes, local regeneration (E12).

4.10 Within the current financial year activities within E10 and E12 are regarded as proceeding well and within timescales. Tables 5 shows progress against the projects in the theme against the project outputs.

Table 2 – Community & Place progress against outputs

<b>Output - E10 Local Sports Intervention Output Position</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Number of facilities supported/created	5	3	2
Number of leagues, tournaments, teams supported	20	7	13
<b>Output - E12 Community Engagement Output Position</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Number of local events or activities supported	20	6	14
Number of events/participating programmes	10	16	0

4.11 Since launch, the types of projects that have been funded to date have been varied and are set out below:

- Make a change competition
- Youth groups
- Urban Games
- Wild Families
- Rugby tournament
- Weekly Friday night football
- Self-defence sessions
- Park play equipment
- Community fitness tracks
- School Kabaddi sessions
- Afterschool hockey/football sessions
- Crucial Crew
- Magical Mind coaching
- Telford Bike Hub

#### 4.12 Community & Place - Case Studies

##### **St Giles**

St Giles are working with Telford & Wrekin to roll out their Desist and Transform program across the Borough. They are a lived life experience organisation, which employs workers who have previously experienced the issues facing our young people. They provide education and build awareness for young people in areas including risks and consequences of knife crime, county lines, criminal justice and other gang related crime. They have been a key partner for us so far helping us deliver positive outcomes, they work with young on a 121 basis and group work.

##### **Telford Kicks**

Telford kicks is a free to attend football initiative that happens at 8 key locations across the Borough and is free to attend. Locations are picked linked to facilities available but also where we have known ASB issues amongst our young people. It aims to give young people constructive activity with trusted adults to prevent them from engaging in ASB.



Each location averages over 20 young people per session, so in a week we are now seeing number above rising above 200

Key partners are engaged – West Mercia Police, BVT, Great Dawley Town Council and Lawley Parish and Dawley Hamlets among Town & Parish Council supporting the initiative and sign posting young people.

### Urban Games

A free to attend sports programme during school holidays, saw its best overall attendance in sessions this October since the programme began last year. From Chinese dancing to American style wrestling, the Urban Games, offers young people of all ages, free activities during the school holidays with one parent saying: *"It helps us get the kids out of the house without having to spend so much money"*. The programme saw more than 300 participants enjoy a host of sports as well as craft, wildlife and dance activities. The venues were across Telford and Wrekin in the areas where the council's Safer & Stronger Communities project operates.

### School Kabaddi Workshops

During South Asian Heritage Month 2023, the Safer & Stronger Communities (SCC) in partnership with Sport England and the Telford and Wrekin Interfaith Council, supported schools and local communities to access Kabaddi, a cultural sport firmly rooted in South Asia. A total of 19 local schools took part which saw 1,525 pupils participating.

### *People & Skills*

- 4.13 Delivery in the People & Skills cuts across two projects with different objectives. The first provides employment support for economically inactive people and the second funds local skills needs. The funding allocation totals £1,204,180.

### **Employment Support for Economically Inactive People**

- 4.14 Funding for the project is targeted at residents that required support to move into employment, training or education in moving people away from benefits and/or from being economically inactive. Three of the Programmes commenced delivery in October 2023 and, following development work undertaken with schools, Risk of NEET commenced delivery in February 2024.
- 4.15 The project is split into 4 areas of delivery across three providers including Shropshire Youth Support Trust, ANTA education and School of Coding the areas have a total of **382 residents** participating in programmes and include:
- Economically Inactive and at a significant disadvantage for entry into the labour market
  - Risk of Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET)
  - NEET
  - NEET re-engagement

### Take up over view for NEET programmes



### Case Studies – People & Skills

#### Illustrations of Impact: School of Coding

Digital Telford

## Case Study

P A

On my first day I was abit nervous, but it felt normal once I had started. From the experience I had from my last session, the course will provide me with the necessary skills and knowledge to advance in my current career path, which is aligned with my long term goal of becoming a software developer. I have learned new skills.

My communication skills have been improved and are so much better than before. These skills can be used at work places and in every day life. I will be happy to recommend anyone who is interested. I am enjoying the courses and look forward to learn more.

Digital Telford

Digital Telford

## Case Study

D G

I had a great first day and have enjoyed the programme so far. I have learnt some basic skills and will be able to use these in the future. I have learnt how to use microsoft properly which has enabled me to develop my essential digital skills. I have had the help from the team to amend my CV to enure it is up to standard. We have covered soft skills, what employers want and how to manage emails. I recommended my friend when I heard about the programme as I believed this is something he would benefit from too. He has also joined and we are enjoying learning new skills to help us develop and grow.

Digital Telford

### **Risk of NEET – ANTA Education**

**About** - Learner has been attending mainstream school on modified timetable and struggles with confidence, anger management and engagement with learning due to mental health barriers.

**Support Provided** - The learner provided support on a 1:1 basis through the Level 1 Health and Safety in Construction training. They have gone on to pass the course at the first attempt. Further support is being offered with CITB revision with an objective of getting a green card.

**Outcomes achieved** - With a lot of patience, 1:1 support and providing the right learning environment, managed to get the fully engaged in the course. Every session attended and fully immersed in the content. Massive boost to confidence - passing the exam on his first attempt. Working hard on their revision for the CITB exam. Mum cried when she was told about the progress and said he has never received praise before!

### **NEET – ANTA Education**

**About** - Participant was struggling to find employment and could not evidence previous qualifications and achievements this was a barrier to gaining employment. Did not hold a CSCS card to support with working on site.

**Support Provided** - Provided 1-1 support. Able to access previous qualifications Fast tracked participant through the CSCS learning to achieve the green card. Facilitated meetings with an employer to gain employment.

**Outcomes achieved** - Participant is now in employment. Survived three weeks. Enjoying the job More positive mental health and outlook.

### **NEET re-engagement**

**About** - Participant suffers from anxiety and struggling to overcome this barrier. Out of work for 4 months- starting to lose a sense of structure, confidence, concept of time and any motivation for life. Felt couldn't engage with people especially in a social or group settings.

**Support Provided** - 1-1 sessions – aim to engage and attend, encourage to come to the centre and to slowly start meeting new people. Responded well and overtime eventually attended small group sessions and began working towards the Level 1 H&S in Construction.

**Outcomes achieved** - The participant passed the qualification. Increased confidence. Successfully applied for a job with MOD Donnington. Enjoying his job. Improved confidence and motivation levels. Reduced anxiety levels.

### *Supporting Local Business*

- 4.16 The delivery approaches, adopted by Telford & Wrekin Council, have enabled funding to directly focus on the local challenges facing businesses, identified within the Investment Plan and to continue support that proved to work well in previously funded programmes. The business support projects address business

recovery, start-up, growth and innovation. In addition, the funding provides a new incubation and accelerator facility as part of the Digital Skills and Enterprise Hub being delivered within Station Quarter, Telford Town Centre.

- 4.17 The latest project spend across the Supporting Local Business theme is £2,718,516, representing 68% of the total thematic allocation.
- 4.18 The grant funds available to businesses and community organisations are set out below. Further information can be found on the Invest Telford website at [Thrive Telford - Invest Telford](#):

**Grant funds:**

- Small Grants Fund - Offers businesses small grants of up to £2,499 to undertake projects to support growth by the purchase of small items of equipment or to access third part support to develop the business.
- Large Grants Fund - Offers businesses larger grants of up to £20,000 to undertake projects to support growth through the purchase of capital items.
- Export Grants Fund - supports SME businesses to export with the aim of becoming more aware of the opportunities presented by trading in overseas markets, addressing barriers to trading internationally, enhancing international trade capabilities and increasing the value of goods and services exported. Fully funded grants of up to £3,000 are available to businesses.
- Marches Energy Grant - The project provides energy assessments and seeks to support the Net Zero agenda. Once the assessment has been complete the business can access a separate grant programme to implement measures identified from the assessment.

**Business support:**

- Business Development Fund - Offers, offers businesses access to specialist consultancy or third party support with the aim of driving business growth.
- Business Advice Service - This project provides SME businesses access to a pool of specialist consultants whereby they can access 1:1 support. Support could be strategic, financial planning, digital, sales and marketing etc.
- Events Programme - Business events have included in person events, webinars, workshops and networking sessions, delivered by the Invest Telford Team or by partner organisations. Events are promoted through targeted marketing campaigns, Invest Telford website, weekly Business Enterprise newsletter and social media. The topics covered have included showcasing skills and start-up support, decarbonisation.
- Business Start Up Service - The Business Start Up-Service, seeks to support business creation through the provision of 1:1 support and access to courses that will equip individuals with the skills and knowledge to get their business off to a positive start.

- Business Growth Enabler - The project offers a strategic business analysis and growth service to help businesses better understand themselves and to develop plans to realise significant improvements across all areas of operation.
- Innovate Telford - Delivered by the Councils Innovation Partner, European Innovation, aims to boost innovation in local SMEs and empower businesses to harness innovation for growth.

*The Quad – Station Quarter*



- 4.19 The programme is contributing funding towards the fit out of Floors 3 and 4 of the Quad Building. Floor 3, which will be managed by, European Innovation, also delivering the UKSPF start-up and innovation provision. The TWC Business Support team, will operate from the third floor and will develop a wrap-around support package for businesses to access in supporting their growth and development plans.
- 4.20 Floor 1 will be occupied by Telford College offering maths and digital focused courses, whereas Harper Adams (Floor 2) will be offering robotics, automation, and engineering-based courses. There are clear benefits in having a breadth of operators offering these services close to the town centre for residents and businesses alike to access.

*Case studies - Supporting Local Businesses*



# CASE STUDY: Ghost Dog Films

## Expanding global reach with UKSPF funding

Ghost Dog Films, an independent video game and film company based in Telford, received funding from Telford & Wrekin Council's Export Grant Fund scheme. This funding enabled the company to implement AI-generated translations and localise content for its film "Crucible of the Vampire" and video game "Spider Mall," facilitating entry into new international markets.

### Project description:

With support from UKSPF, the grant was used to implement AI-generated translations to create localised subtitles and metadata for "Crucible of the Vampire" and "Spider Mall." The initiative aimed to expand the reach of these titles into new international markets, specifically targeting France, Belgium, Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Russia, Turkey, and Japan.

### Outcomes and impact:

- **Market expansion:** Localised subtitles will enable Ghost Dog Films to penetrate new international markets, enhancing global sales and audience engagement.
- **Revenue growth:** The project is expected to generate additional income by tapping into new territories.
- **Enhanced accessibility:** Localised content will make films and games more accessible to non-English speaking audiences.
- **Social responsibility:** Ghost Dog Films is committed to creating inclusive and accessible content for a diverse global audience. This project reflects the company's dedication to cultural inclusivity and accessibility in the entertainment industry.
- **Sustainability:** The project aligns with the company's goal of sustainable growth by reducing the need for manual translation efforts through AI technology. This approach not only cuts costs but also speeds up the process, allowing for quicker market entry.

Funding source:  
Export Grant Fund

Funding value:  
£1,500

Project start date:  
March 2024

Project completion date:  
April 2024





# CASE STUDY: Thermal Matters

## Expanding innovation and market reach in food safety with UKSPF funding

Thermal Matters was formed in 2020 during the COVID-19 lockdown. Redundancy provided the founders with an opportunity to develop a long-envisioned innovation aimed at improving food quality, safety, and traceability in chilled and frozen food manufacturing. Their unique system offers efficiency savings by reducing energy consumption for chilling and freezing processes and can eliminate waste associated with food testing. With several parts of the system pending patents, the company has successfully released its first three device types and installed its first system at a global brand's UK factory.

### Project description:

The grant will be utilised to purchase specialised temperature measurement and calibration equipment. This equipment is crucial for ensuring that Thermal Matters' products are designed, developed, and operated to deliver accurate measurements and high-quality data. The project aims to enhance the reliability and effectiveness of the company's temperature monitoring devices, facilitating the introduction of new products to the market.

### Outcomes and Impact:

**-Productivity increases:** The project will enable the company to bring forward vital additions to its product range by several months, overcoming cash flow constraints.

**-Market expansion:** Thermal Matters plans to expand its supply to food manufacturers worldwide. Discussions are already underway with distributors in the US and Australia, and the company is seeking to establish a presence in Holland and Germany.

**-Environmental benefits:** The system will eliminate waste associated with temperature testing in food factories by preventing the destruction of tested products. Additionally, it will improve the efficiency of chilling and freezing processes, reducing energy consumption. A recent consultation with a food manufacturer highlighted potential savings of approximately £500,000 per annum in electricity costs, with further efficiencies in time and labour.

Funding source:  
Small Grant Fund

Funding value:  
£2822

Project start date:  
October 2023

Project completion date:  
February 2024



**Thermal Matters**

# CASE STUDY: KDS Solutions Limited

## Expanding service offerings with advanced technology through UKSPF funding

KDS Solutions Limited, a well-established manufacturer of electrical distribution equipment, has secured funding from Telford & Wrekin Council's Large Grant Fund scheme. This funding will be utilised to purchase critical infrastructure, enabling the company to continue its growth trajectory, improve efficiency, and enter new markets.

KDS Solutions Limited has been a key player in the manufacturing sector for over two decades, specialising in low-voltage (LV) electrical distribution equipment for commercial and industrial building sectors. The company holds ISO accreditations 9001, 45001, and 14001 and is a manufacturing partner for Schneider and Eaton Electric. Over the years, KDS Solutions has built a robust reputation for quality and reliability, serving a diverse range of sectors including industrial, health, MOD, data centres, education, and commercial.

### Project description:

The grant will be used to purchase a modular workshop, test equipment, a gantry crane, and specialist test equipment. This investment will support the company's recent growth by providing essential infrastructure for their new premises located on Orchard Business Park in Telford, enabling KDS Solutions to operate more efficiently and expand into new markets.

### Outcomes and impact:

- **Efficiency gains:** The new equipment will significantly enhance productivity between the two sites, reducing travel costs and packaging.
- **Service expansion:** Introduction of a customised trunking offer and the capability to support data centre opportunities with major companies like Amazon.
- **Sustainability:** The project supports the UK Net Zero Strategy by minimising transportation between production sites, thereby reducing the associated carbon emissions. The new equipment will also improve manual handling and safety, contributing to a healthier workplace.
- **Social responsibility:** KDS Solutions is committed to job creation and supporting the local community by providing stable employment opportunities. The company's growth strategy is expected to lead to further job creation beyond the commitments made in this program.

**Funding source:**  
Large Grant Fund

**Funding value:**  
£20,000

**Project start date:**  
April 2024

**Project completion date:**  
September 2024

**Jobs created:**  
3

**Jobs safeguarded:**  
6



# CASE STUDY: Coopers Gourmet Food

## Leveraging solar energy with UKSPF funding

Coopers Gourmet Food, based at Coopers Sausage Rolls, Poynton Road Roden, Telford, Shropshire, TF6 6EN, has been a key player in the food manufacturing sector since 1991. Specialising in gourmet sausage rolls, gastro pies, quiches, pork pies, and sweet tray bakes, Coopers received funding from Telford & Wrekin Council's Business Development Fund to enhance their solar energy utilisation.

### Project description:

The UKSPF grant is being used to purchase industry knowledge and bespoke hardware to optimise Coopers' photovoltaic (PV) system. This project aims to fully utilise the energy produced by their solar panels, minimising reliance on grid electricity and enhancing their environmental sustainability.

### Outcomes and impact:

- **Energy efficiency:** Full utilisation of solar energy, reducing reliance on grid power and cutting CO2 emissions.
- **Cost savings:** Lower energy costs, allowing Coopers to be more competitive in the market.
- **Productivity gains:** More efficient operation of chillers and freezers, especially during summer months.
- **Sustainability:** Utilising the PV system aligns with the UK Net Zero Strategy by reducing grid energy consumption and CO2 emissions. This also positions Coopers to achieve B-Corp accreditation, appealing to larger enterprises requiring high energy standards.

**Funding source:**  
Business Development Fund

**Funding value:**  
£7,000

**Project start date:**  
January 2024

**Project completion date:**  
March 2024

**Jobs created:**  
1



## 5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The council was allocated £5.8 million of UKSPF. Therefore, to access the funds, an Investment Plan was submitted that summarised intentions to invest this allocation for the benefit of Telford and Wrekin communities.
- 5.2 By not submitting an Investment plan the Council and its area would not have benefitted from the allocated funding.
- 5.3 Internal approvals and discussions were provided on projects to be included in the Investment Plan submission. The projects included within the plan were designed to maximise business, skills and community support.

## 6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 The following are considered as risks to the programme:
- Effectively a two year programme delivery window, due to delay from the previous Government – short timeframe to develop and implement a programme of ambition and complexity; schemes must deliver with little time or scope for the programme to take remedial action.
  - Back profiling of funding (UKSPF requirement).
  - Funding constraints imposed on staffing capacity for delivery
  - Levels of take up for some projects less than expected with minimal time to re-allocate funds or develop alternative projects.
  - Need for clarity from government on extensions or successor funding streams.
  - Need to monitor delivery of projects beyond the end of the funding period.
  - Start-up and growth funding has supported numerous businesses and failure to provide continuity may impact on future economic growth.

## 7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 The programme supports the following Council priorities:
- every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
  - everyone benefits from a thriving economy
  - all neighbourhoods are a great place to live
  - a community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services
- 7.2 The Telford Thrive programme makes a significant contribution to a number of the Council priorities. It contributes to *‘everyone benefitting from a thriving economy’* given the focus on supporting local businesses through the allocation of around 70% to business support and the part-funding of the flagship Quad building station quarter development that will help raise aspirations of young people and provide them with skills for the modern economy.



- 7.3 There are also funding towards both ensuring *'all neighbourhoods are a great place to live'* and *'every child, young person and adult lives well in their community'* through working to engage with young people and reduce crime or antisocial behaviour and participating more positively in local neighbourhoods.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The Council was successful in bidding for UKSPF grant and was awarded total funding of £5.8m from MHCLG spanning 3 years. The grant ceases on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 when all expenditure must be defrayed. The grant conditions stipulates that grant claims are approved by S151 Officer and these are submitted half yearly and claimed on actual defrayed expenditure basis. The grant claims are supported with input from Finance and key information provided by the Service area. We will have claimed £3.6m up to September 2024 and have a profiled spend of £2.2m over the remaining months of the 24/25 financial year.

## **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 9.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central government funding initiative to support local authorities to invest in communities and place, support for local businesses and people and skill. The Fund operates UK-wide and uses the financial assistance powers in the UK Internal Market Act 2020 to deliver funding to places across the UK.
- 9.2 The Council was given responsibility for developing an investment plan for approval by the UK government and delivery of the Fund thereafter. It is governed by an agreement between the central government and Telford and Wrekin Council.
- 9.3 The Council has the power to undertake the activities set out within this report.
- 9.4 Proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources and any additional funding secured for the programme.

## **10.0 Ward Implications**

- 10.1 The Telford Thrive programme operates across all wards. Business operating in and residents living in the borough have opportunity to apply for grants and opportunities through the programme.

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

- 11.1 The programme contributes greatly towards the aspiration of improving social and economic influences across TWC, this includes:
- Support for both new business creation and development (export, growth, productivity, boosting innovation, contribute to Net Zero) to improve economic prosperity (good jobs, economic prosperity etc.).

- Engaging and addressing NEET categories and economically inactive members of the community by getting them to participate more fully in training, education or employment and improve life chances.
- Upskilling employees in the workplace in enhancing career progression opportunities.
- Engaging with young people to reduce crime and cut anti-social behaviour in making neighbourhoods better and safer places for all to live and increasing life chances of younger members of the community.
- In addressing health inequalities growing businesses are able to offer more well paid and secure employment opportunities. It is known that these are key drivers in people's economic, physician & mental well-being.

## 12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 UKSPF funded projects, depending on the eligibility of specific projects within the three themes, are open to both businesses (Supporting Local Businesses/People & Skills) and members of the community (Community and Place/People & Skills) resident or operating in Telford & Wrekin.
- 12.2 In meeting Public Sector Equality Duty obligations, as part of the monitoring procedures, all business support and people and skills projects are required to report on equality, diversity and inclusion and evidence how activities benefit the wider community. Procedures and systems are in place to monitor, collate and evidence the externally procured Projects and measures will be in place to capture standard data for all internal Projects.

## 13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 13.1 The Telford Thrive programme supports activity that contributes to addressing climate change and meeting the objectives of the Councils Carbon Neutral Action Plan. The Clean Growth project provides energy assessments to businesses and community buildings with a view to cutting carbon emissions and contributing to Net Zero. Following assessment these organisations can then apply to access a grant fund to implement the measures identified in the assessments. More broadly business grant applicants are asked how their projects can contribute towards addressing climate change.
- 13.2 Further, schemes in the Community & Place theme help introduce young people to nature and explain the importance of maintaining the environment for future generations.

## 14.0 Report Sign Off

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Finance	29/10/2024	29/10/2024	AEM
Legal	29/10/2024	29/10/2024	RP



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Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

5 December 2024

### Armed Forces Covenant Annual Report

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Raj Mehta - Cabinet Member: Inclusion, Engagement, Equalities & Civic Pride
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Anthea Lowe - Director: Policy & Governance
<b>Service Area:</b>	Policy & Governance
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jon Power – Policy, Insight, Partnerships & Elections Service Delivery Manager
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	Tel: 01952 380141 <b>Email:</b> jon.power@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT – 5 November 2024 Business Briefing – 21 November 2024 Cabinet – 5 December 2024

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- 1.1 Notes the progress made developing the Council's "offer" to the borough's Armed Forces community;
- 1.2 Endorses the proposed restructure of the Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board; and,
- 1.3 Approves the £10,000 funding for the Armed Forces community cafes for the next two years.

#### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To provide an update on the work to meet the Council's commitments to the Armed Forces Covenant and in support of our Armed Forces community during 2023-2024.

### **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 The Armed Forces Covenant is a pledge that acknowledges and understands that those who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy and society that they serve. In November 2022, the Armed Forces Act 2021 introduced a legal obligation for local authorities to pay due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when carrying out their functions in respect of education, housing and healthcare.
- 3.2 Telford & Wrekin Council signed one of the first Armed Forces Community Covenants (as it was then known) in the UK in 2012 and since this date, significant progress has been made in the delivery of our commitments to the Covenant. There is currently a strong infrastructure in place including an outward facing Strategic Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board (SAFCPB), which is made up of approximately sixty partners (this has doubled in the last twelve months) including Armed Forces and non-Armed Forces charities, the NHS, DWP and the private sector.

### **Summary of Progress**

- 4.1 In 2021, a significant investment was made by the Council in the appointment of an Armed Forces Partnership Officer (AFPO) who acts both on a strategic level advising subject leads on all matters related to the Covenant whilst also handling referrals from our Armed Forces community. This has led to a significant year on year increase of complex referrals that we receive primarily from our Adult Social Care Practitioners, partner organisations and Borough Councillors. The definition of 'complex' is defined as an individual having two or more support needs which often requires a multi-agency approach.
- 4.2 Having delivered a first event in 2019, the Council continues to hold an annual Armed Forces Day celebration event for Armed Forces' families and local residents supporting and recognising the contribution of our Armed Forces community. This year's event was held on the Sunday of Armed Forces Week, in June, and included family entertainment and activities, representation from the Armed Forces and Armed Forces charities as well as the promotion of multi-agency support e.g. recruitment, Armed Forces Covenant outreach and wellbeing services.
- 4.3 Our Armed Forces Staff Network, which was established in 2023, is chaired by the Director: Prosperity & Investment, continues to meet regularly and membership now stands at twenty employees. The Network is open to veterans, Reservists, Cadet Volunteers, family members and staff who have an interest in championing awareness of equality for our Armed Forces community and acting as an ally. The overarching aim of the Staff Network is to positively support and influence the future of our employees, our communities and our local businesses and organisations making a real difference with regards to our commitments to the Armed Forces Covenant and equality and diversity. At a recent meeting, the Network agreed to invite employees from within our educational establishments as

we are aware of a significant number of spouses and veterans working within our schools.

### Armed Forces' Outreach

- 4.4 In 2023, the Council employed a fixed-term Armed Forces Outreach Worker which was funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund (AFCTF) however, the grant expired on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024. In July 2024, we employed an Armed Forces Volunteer Co-ordinator (fixed term for 12 months and funded by the AFCTF) who will manage a team of volunteers (from our Armed Forces community) bringing first-hand knowledge, understanding of, and empathy to, the needs of this community.
- 4.5 The Armed Forces have a strong culture of looking after their own, borne out of the nature of service and reinforced by values and standards which expect selfless commitment and loyalty in relation to the team. Living and working closely together can blur boundaries between personal and professional life. In this environment, identifying issues and/or asking for help can have wider reaching implications. This reinforces a reluctance to ask for help that can often extend into civilian life post-service and can result in unnecessary escalation of issues and, in some instances, avoidable tragedy. To this end, over the last twelve months, we have continued to broaden our outreach activities through closer multi-agency partnership working, across the borough, to reach as many individuals as possible:
- Bake & Banter Sessions are meeting weekly from the 5<sup>th</sup> October to the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at the Telford Interfaith Council.
  - Models for Heroes (M4H) Group meets the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday afternoon of each month at Leegomery – the room hire is funded by the Councillors' Pride Fund. M4H supports former and current members of the Armed Forces & Emergency Service by promoting the use of model making as a therapeutic and meaningful activity.
  - Veterans' & Spouses' Craft & Sewing Group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Friday afternoon of each month at Strickland House in Wellington.
  - Armed Forces Community Art Lessons, for six weeks, launched on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at the Hub, Donnington.
  - An Armed Forces Community Drop-In Session, on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month, at the Sambrook Centre in Stirchley.
- 4.6 Our Armed Forces Outreach provision is designed to provide help and support to all our Serving personnel, veterans and their families and we work closely with Services charities and other organisations such as our Town & Parish Councils, Age UK, Citizens Advice and Telford Mind. One of our most recent, and significant, successes has been the introduction of Veterans' Cafes, delivered by Telford Mind, and supported by Great Dawley Town Council, Madeley Town Council and Donnington & Muxton Parish Council. These Cafés meet twice a month in Dawley and once a month in Madeley and Donnington. The Cafes are available on a drop-in basis and to date, there have been over 1,000 attendances.
- 4.7 The aim of these Cafes is to fill the void caused by isolation and detachment after service and also to provide a platform for social interaction and camaraderie. The

Cafes are positively changing the lives of veterans and family members with attendance numbers continuing to grow in Dawley and Donnington. Attendance numbers, however, remain low in Madeley.

#### 4.8 Recent feedback received about the Cafes includes:

“I felt isolated before coming here. Now I have met like-minded people and made new friends”.

“It’s like another family. We all have something in common”.

“Helpful information about other services and activities for veterans”.

### Advocacy

4.9 In 2020, the Council received the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS) Gold Award demonstrating that the Council is an exemplar employer advocating support to defence people issues, to partner organisations and customers. The Award, which also formally recognised the Council’s continued support to our Armed Forces community, is granted for a five year period and so expires in 2025 with work ongoing, through the Armed Forces Staff Network, to ensure a successful renewal.

4.10 A key focus of our Armed Forces Covenant commitment is to support local businesses and organisations to sign up in support of our Armed Forces community. To date, and since 2011, **151** organisations, across Telford & Wrekin have signed – **35** of these signatories have taken place in the last 12 months. Amongst 27 Town & Parish Councils, a total of 26 have also signed the Covenant. We are constantly receiving feedback about how these organisations have benefited greatly from being able to build a reputation as being Forces-friendly – at a time when public support for our Armed Forces is at an all-time high. It should be noted that these figures do not include organisations that serve our residents but have their Headquarters outside of the borough e.g. Shropshire Fire Service, Shrewsbury & Telford Hospitals Trust (SaTH) etc.

## **5.0 Moving Forward**

### Armed Forces Community Hub

5.1 It has become apparent that, across the borough, we are creating a network in which our veterans, and their families, can share their experiences and not only access support but also offer it to others. Real friendships continue to be formed and individuals, for example, are offering lifts to others not just to the events but also to hospital appointments etc. Not only have we managed to tap into a wealth of experience on the part of those involved but also, camaraderie, which is vital to the health and wellbeing of this community. This is thanks, in no small part, to the support that we are receiving from our partners, Borough Councillors and Town & Parish Councils.

5.2 To maintain this success, it is proposed that the borough, and our Armed Forces community, would benefit greatly from having an accessible, and multi-purpose, Armed Forces Community Hub offering a safe environment with a single point of focus for Armed Forces personnel, service leavers, veterans and their

families/dependents. This would be the next phase in the evolution of support to our Armed Forces community whilst ensuring its sustainability. The Hub would provide timely, ongoing and appropriate support/signposting using a multi-disciplined approach of joined up working whilst promoting high levels of engagement, increased confidence, resilience and well-being and the facilitation of skills transfer back into the community.

- 5.3 The Hub will focus on working with veterans to stabilise their lives where this is needed and support them back into work (where appropriate) resulting in real job outcomes and improving their quality of life. The Hub will also provide quicker referral routes/access to specialist services including Veterans UK, SSAFA, the NHS Veterans' Mental Health Services, Combat Stress and the Veteran's Gateway. Assistance with claims to DWP Benefits, Homelessness/Housing Advice, Drug and Alcohol Services, War Pensions and the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme will be available. A wrap-around service in a single location will result in less travel, less form filling, less referral appointments and a truly in-depth service that meets most of the client's needs.
- 5.4 Key features and benefits of the Hub will include:
- An easily accessible location in the heart of the community.
  - A partnership approach. Working together with military services and charities will result in a person-centred approach with bespoke support from charities and organisations ensuring that their services are not duplicated.
  - A social space where clients can attend various activities and meet other like-minded individuals resulting in reduced isolation and increased integration with their peers.
  - A community focused local service with local connections and opportunities and a defined objective of transferring veteran's and service leaver's skills back into the community e.g. employment, volunteering or other meaningful occupation.
  - Access to advice and information surgeries. A safe and non-judgemental environment which instils a feeling of trust regardless of background and where veterans are happy to engage.
- 5.5 The concept of a Veterans' Hub is a hugely successful one that has been evolving at least since the Falklands Conflict and has gained momentum since the UK's involvement in the Middle East and during the decades since. The Association of Service Drop-In Centres (ASDIC) represents and links Veterans' Drop-Ins across the UK and they refer to this as a "movement led largely by veterans for veterans". Successful examples, to date, include the Herefordshire Veterans Support Centre, the Wigan Armed Forces Community HQ and the Pontefract 5 Towns Veterans Support Hub CIC.
- 5.6 The successful establishment of the Hub will be achieved by working together with our residents, Armed Forces Covenant partners and other valued organisations to collectively deliver the best that we can for our Armed Forces community truly demonstrating the Co-operative values that provide the framework for how we work as a Council. It is, therefore, proposed that the Hub will be delivered through the formation of a Community Interest Community (CIC) or through partnership with an existing CIC or registered charity. A newly formed



CIC will be governed by a board of Trustees including our existing Armed Forces Covenant partners.

- 5.7 Funding will be provided from both public donations and grants from existing organisations such as the Veterans Foundation which has established a substantial grants programme to support registered charities and other not-for profit organisations in providing assistance to those in need among Serving Armed Forces personnel, veterans, and their immediate families. The Foundation gives priority to charities and organisations who can demonstrate that they are directly involved in the provision of support to the Armed Forces community. Grants of up to a maximum of £30,000 are available for one year or a multi-year grant for up to three years (e.g., £10,000 per year over three years). Furthermore, grants of up to a maximum of £75,000 are available for the exclusive use of salary costs over a three-year period, with the maximum annual grant being £25,000 (e.g., £25,000 per year over three years).
- 5.8 Following agreement in principle for the establishment of an Armed Forces Community Hub, a comprehensive consultation exercise will be conducted with our Armed Forces community through face-to-face events and an online survey. The aim of the consultation will be to further identify an understanding of veterans, their identities and needs and the value they bring. We will also seek to gather information on existing services whilst evaluating their effectiveness to ensure a holistic approach through partnership working.

#### Restructure of the Strategic Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board

- 5.9 The Telford & Wrekin Strategic Armed Forces Partnership Board, since it was formed in 2017, has achieved a considerable amount for our Armed Forces community including an extensive Armed Forces Outreach & Support programme. The Partnership has also overseen the production of the first Telford & Wrekin Joint Armed Forces Strategic Needs Assessment, the establishment of a dedicated Armed Forces Partnership Team at Telford & Wrekin Council and a significant increase of local Covenant signatories including working with local GP Practices to support them in becoming Veteran Friendly Accredited through the Royal College of General Practitioner Scheme.
- 5.10 The Partnership Board has continued to increase in numbers and now stands at sixty plus and, with the introduction of the recent Armed Forces Act, this would appear to be an opportune time to restructure the existing Partnership Board structure. The attached draft Proposal, at Appendix A, aims to continue the momentum that has been achieved whilst also ensuring an appropriate scrutiny and core infrastructure is in place which will be able to adapt to the needs of our Armed Forces community. The draft Proposal has allocated existing and new partners to different Delivery Boards/Groups and full consultation is taking place with Partners. To date, responses from Board members have been fully in favour of the proposals and understand the need for the changes.

#### Relaunch of the Veterans' Café

- 5.11 Since the launch of the Veterans' Cafes (initially known as Calm Cafes for Veterans) in January 2022, they have continued to grow from strength to strength attracting Service personnel, veterans and family members in both Dawley and

Donnington. However, the number of veterans attending the monthly Café at Madeley remains quite low despite support from Madeley Town Council and the Borough Councillors. It is therefore proposed that an alternative Armed Forces Outreach support is offered through regular attendance at the Live Well Hub which meets weekly at the Madeley Library inside the Anstice. This will enable us, through partnership working, to better support our Armed Forces community whilst also finding a stronger sense of connection across the ward.

- 5.12 Currently, the Veterans' Cafes are funded through one-off funding that was approved by Cabinet in March 2022 for a two year period. The costs associated with delivery of the Cafes have been more conservative than originally anticipated and so there are some funds remaining. It is expected that this will enable the ongoing funding of the Veterans' Cafes until March 2025. Approval is sought for additional funding of £10,000 over a two year period to enable the ongoing delivery of the Cafes. The average cost of holding one Café event is £150. Taking this approach, the provision of one-off funding will enable work on the delivery of the Hub mentioned at para 5.1 to 5.8 above to take place before undertaking a wholesale review of our Armed Forces offer across the Borough.

## **6.0 Alternative Options**

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to approve the proposals described in this report. However, this will increase unmet need within the Armed Forces community and potentially increase demand on acute services of both the Council and its partners.

## **7.0 Key Risks**

- 7.1 Without the funding and proposals set out within this report, the Council cannot maintain its current service provision to the Armed Forces Community or meet future need if our ambition to deliver an Armed Forces Community Hub is not developed.

## **8.0 Council Priorities**

- 8.1 The proposals set out in this report supports the following Council priority:
- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
  - All neighbourhoods are a great place to live
  - Everyone benefits from a thriving economy

## **9.0 Financial Implications**

- 9.1 The Armed Forces volunteer co-ordinator post will be funded from the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund (AFCTF). The additional funding of £10k recommended in this report will be met from one offs.

## **10.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 10.1 Under the Armed Forces Act 2021, the Council has a legal duty to ensure that it considers armed forces service when delivering some of its statutory functions. Whilst not directly related to the provisions of the Armed Forces Act, the proposals

contained in this report provide an innovative way to address and discharge some of those duties.

10.2 Advice will be provided on an ongoing basis in respect of the proposals contained in this report and specific legal implications relating to the individual proposals will be provided at the appropriate time.

### **11.0 Ward Implications**

11.1 The proposed developments set out in this report will have positive impact for the armed forces community across the borough.

### **12.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

12.1 The proposed approach to supporting the borough's Armed Forces community aims to:

- support the mental wellbeing of veterans and their families;
- ensure that barriers to services by the families of those currently Serving or veterans and their families are removed.

### **13.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

13.1 The proposed approach in this report is focussed on addressing the barriers faced by the Armed Forces community playing their full role in society. In addition to this report, this commitment is articulated in the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022 to 2026 and the Council's commitment to treat military service as a protected characteristic.

### **14.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

14.1 There are no direct climate change and environmental implications from this report

### **15.0 Background Papers**

15.1 None

### **16.0 Appendices**

16.1 Appendix A: Draft Proposal for the New Telford & Wrekin Armed Forces Covenant Delivery Structure.

### **17.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Legal	29/10/2024	29/10/2024	RP
Finance	29/10/2024	31/10/2024	AEM

**TELFORD & WREKIN ARMED FORCES COVENANT  
DELIVERY STRUCTURE- DRAFT PROPOSAL**

**Strategic Armed Forces Covenant Delivery Board (SAFCDB)**

The purpose of the SAFCDB will be to give strategic direction to the delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant across Telford & Wrekin. The Board will meet quarterly and receive updates from the sub-groups. The Board will be responsible for delivering, and monitoring, an Action Plan which will build on the work that has already taken place and set clear actions for the collaborative delivery of services to support our Armed Forces community and fulfil our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. The Board will further produce an annual report to Telford & Wrekin Council's Cabinet and Senior Management Team.

CHAIR: T&WC Armed Forces Champion (elected member)	West Midlands Reserve Forces & Cadets Association Regional Employment Engagement Director
T&WC Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Armed Forces Covenant	Army Centre HQ – SO2 at Venning Barracks, Donnington.
T&WC Policy & Development Manager	T&WC Housing
Telford Mind	T&WC Education
Royal British Legion	Defence Transition Service
SSAFA	Age UK
WM Police	DWP
Shrewsbury & Telford Health Trust	Wrekin Housing Group
<i>NHS Shropshire, Telford &amp; Wrekin Integrated Care Board*</i>	T&WC Armed Forces Partnership Officer

**Partnership Group**

The Partnership Group will be made up of valued organisations and local businesses that have signed the Armed Forces Covenant. The Group will be responsible for delivering and monitoring a range of programmes that support our Armed Forces community. Meetings will be held twice a year where attendees will have the opportunity to share ideas and network. Membership will be sufficiently flexible to enable further interested parties to attend on an ad hoc basis.

<i>Service Family Federations*</i>	YSS
<i>Representative from the High Sherriff Office*</i>	TACT/Branches
<i>Representative from the Shropshire Lord Lieutenant Office*</i>	Telford Interfaith Council
<i>Shropshire Fire &amp; Rescue*</i>	KiP/Stay
Samaritans	Combat Stress
Citizens Advice	Walking With The Wounded
<i>RAF Association*</i>	Red Cross
Allsports Coaches Coaching Academy	Forces Employment Charity
<i>Shropshire Association of Local Councils*</i>	Pertemps
Telford & Wrekin CVS	RBSL
Citizens Advice	Central HIVE (Army)
Shropshire Chamber of Commerce	Home Instead
HIVE RAF Cosford	Help for Heroes
<i>Existing Covenant signatories across the borough*</i>	<i>Telford College*</i>
Lanyon Bowdler	Home Instead
Wolverhampton University	Energize STW
Fodens Solicitors	T&WC Armed Forces Partnership Officer

### **Armed Forces Outreach Steering Group**

The Outreach Steering Group will develop and progress the delivery of the Telford & Wrekin Armed Forces Outreach programme. The Group will meet quarterly/twice a year, to be decided by attendees, and will also oversee the delivery of the Telford & Wrekin Armed Forces & Veterans Forum which will meet quarterly around the borough to seek the views of our Armed Forces community etc.

Telford Mind	Leegomery Community Centre
Great Dawley Town Council	Armed Forces Outreach Project Volunteers
Madeley Town Council	T&WC Volunteer Co-ordinator
Donnington & Muxton Parish Council	T&WC Armed Forces Partnership Officer
Allsports Coaches Coaching Academy	Independent Living Centre
Smallwoods	Newport Navy Club
Newport Town Council	Oakengates Town Council
Telford & Wrekin Breakfast Clubs	



Telford & Wrekin  
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest  
to create a better borough

## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Cabinet

Thursday 5 December 2024

### Councillors' Pride Fund 2023-24: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Raj Mehta - Cabinet Member: Inclusion, Engagement, Equalities & Civic Pride	
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Katherine Kynaston - Director: Housing, Customer and Commercial Services	
<b>Service Area:</b>	Housing, Customer & Commercial Services	
<b>Report Author:</b>	Fran Bache - Community Funding Officer (Community Services)	
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 385103	<b>Email:</b> fran.bache@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision	
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable	
<b>Report considered by:</b>	SMT - 5 November 2024 Business Briefing - 21 November 2024 Cabinet - 5 December 2024	

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Notes the continued impact of the Councillors' Pride Fund in supporting Councillors to deliver the Council's five priorities in their ward to protect, care and invest in order to create a better borough.
- 1.2 Notes the importance of this funding in offering a bespoke response to need in individual communities and in supporting community organisations to thrive and offer valued services to residents.



## Councillors Pride Fund 2023-24: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough

1.3 Notes the additional funding that applications to this scheme have secured through match funding of projects to the value of £163,064.

1.4 Notes the final deadline for applications in the year 2024-25 is 1 February 2025.

### **2.0 Purpose of Report**

2.1 To update Cabinet on the impact of the Councillors' Pride Fund allocated during the financial year 2023/24.

### **3.0 Background**

3.1 The Councillors' Pride Fund was established in 2015 following development of the "Ward Cooperative Fund" and previously the "Your Money Your Projects Scheme" (2011). Until 2020 the annual allocation per ward Councillor stood at £2,000.

3.2 The Fund enables Councillors to deliver the [Council's five priorities](#) in their ward to protect, care and invest in order to create a better borough.

3.3 The Fund enables a relatively small amount of money to make a big difference at a local level. This includes support for small community groups that would find accessing other grant funding difficult but who are able to make a significant, positive impact on the lives of individuals and communities they support.

3.4 In 2023/24 each Councillor had a total of **£5,000** to allocate to projects in their ward.

### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

#### **4.1 Councillors' Pride Fund 2023/24**

4.2 The 2023 fund opened in early June 2023 and ran until 1 February 2024. During this time a total of 335 applications were received and awarded, many of these applications were supported by multiple Councillors with colleagues opting to join forces to enable their funding to go further.

4.3 In 2023 Councillors allocated £270,000 taking the total grant funding allocated since 2011 to **£1,998,000**.

4.4 Councillors and applicants are encouraged to seek match funding for their grants to ensure the funding can go further. In 2023 total match funding of £163,064 was achieved, meaning that for every £1 allocated from the Councillors' Pride Fund, an additional 60p of match funding was secured. Sources of match funding included for example, Town and Parish Councils, other grant funders and the applicants own financial contribution to a project.

4.5 In the last five years the Councillors' Pride Fund has attracted over £800,000 in match funding meaning that in excess of £2,097,000 has been allocated to

schemes across the Borough through the Councillors' Pride Fund and match funding since April 2019.

4.6 This report highlights how Councillors have used the funding to support the Council's priorities in 2023.

4.7 **Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community**

4.6.1 During 2023 the largest proportion of applications (over 50%) supported the priority 'Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community', with grant funding giving individuals the opportunity to thrive and engage in their community.

4.6.2 Activities for **children and young people** were supported by many, ranging from uniformed groups, youth clubs, sporting activities, playgroups, school trips and more. These activities ensure children have access to a range of opportunities to support their development with grants enabling activities to either be free or at a reduced cost.

4.6.3 A number of schools have been supported to provide enrichment activities to children, offering opportunities that may otherwise be unavailable to them.

- A total of £5,850 with £1,000 of match funding was granted in Malinslee & Dawley Bank, Woodside, Lawley, The Nedge and Hadley & Leegomery to enable pupils to take part in trips and residential activities.
- In Priorslee funding was awarded to provide transition workshops for pupils in Year 6 at Redhill and Priorslee Primary Academies, preparing pupils for their upcoming educational changes.
- Outdoor facilities that promote learning and physical development have also been supported, including in Madeley & Sutton Hill where a £1,000 grant has seen the creation of a space at Sir Alexander Fleming School where children can work with and cook the vegetables they have grown (pictured).
- In Ironbridge Gorge, a grant was awarded to Coalbrookdale and Ironbridge Primary School to create an outdoor space for students to access holistic growth opportunities as well as maintaining current features in the school grounds such as the miniature Ironbridge, outdoor learning spaces and benches.
- In Shawbirch & Dothill a £500 grant has contributed towards new outdoor gym equipment in the school's grounds to increase levels of physical activity amongst pupils.



*Outdoor workspace at Sir Alexander Fleming School*

4.6.4 **Community and voluntary groups also received support for the activities they provide to children and young people** in the Borough. For example,

- In St Georges, a £200 grant was given to PSG Junior Football Club to support with the running costs of the club in providing regular football training and games for children in the area.
- In Madeley & Sutton Hill a £350 grant contributed to coach hire to take Madeley & Sutton Hill Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers on a division trip to Chester Zoo. This was also supported by a £650 grant from Lawley and £325 grant from Woodside as Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers across the Borough came together for the event.
- In Hadley & Leegomery funding has supported the Caribbean Sunshine Community Steel Band to receive 15 weeks of tutoring to support the children and young people to learn new music together.

4.6.5 Groups and services supporting **older residents** across the Borough have also received funding to support their activities, giving residents an opportunity to meet people, take part in activities and events and benefit from opportunities for social interaction. Examples include:

- Support from Councillors across Arleston & College, Haygate & Park and Ercall enabled visitors to the Belmont Community Hall Pensioners Lunch Club to benefit from two free lunches and a Christmas lunch.
- A £300 grant to support activities and trips for the luncheon club at Turnpike Court in St Georges.

4.6.6 **The Armed Forces community** were supported with a variety of projects aimed at supporting Veterans.

## Councillors Pride Fund 2023-24: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough

- In Dawley & Aqueduct and Horsehay & Lightmoor funding was granted for a Veteran's Christmas meal, plus match funding was received.
- In Donnington and Muxton £2,800 was allocated to facilitate the delivery of a new Veterans' Café in the ward. Veterans' Cafes offer an early intervention service to those who are experiencing poor emotional and mental health. They aim to fill the void caused by isolation and detachment after Service whilst also providing a platform for social interaction and comradery. The Cafe is run by Telford Mind with trained staff who are able to signpost veterans to Service, and non-Service charities and groups where necessary.
- In Arleston & College £500 was allocated to purchase a new football kit for players of the Telford & Wrekin Veteran's Football Club.
- In Hadley & Leegomery £300 was allocated to support the delivery of the Models for Heroes Telford Project.
- In Lawley, a £450 grant with £150 of match funding has seen the Lawley War Memorial, nearby benches and surrounding grounds cleaned to maintain the area as a peaceful space for residents to reflect and pay their respects.



The cafe offers the space to bring the veteran community together, to get the support they need and to meet and talk to like minded people



For more information please email [talk2@telford-mind.co.uk](mailto:talk2@telford-mind.co.uk) or call 07434869248



Protect, care and invest to create a better borough

### *Promotion of the new Veteran's Café in Donnington*

- 4.6.7 **The impact of the Cost of Living Crisis** continues to be felt by local residents, a number of services were supported to continue through Councillors funding including,

## Councillors Pride Fund 2023-24: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough

- In Horsehay & Lightmoor funding has enabled the delivery of Cost of Living Events in Lightmoor Village, providing the light relief of entertainment whilst also signposting residents to services for support.
- In Priorslee a £1,000 grant to Telford Gurdwara supported the provision of the Warm Spaces and Food for all Projects, and a £250 grant supported the Warm Welcoming Space at St Peters Church.
- In Haygate & Park funding supported the delivery of a warm space at Telford After Care Team.
- In Wrockwardine Wood & Trench a £500 grant was allocated to Holy Trinity Church to support their foodbank and warm space.
- In Madeley & Sutton Hill funding was allocated to support the delivery of a warm and welcoming space offered by the St Vincent de Paul Society alongside a grant to support the Madeley Baptist Church Winter Warmer (you can see the impact of the Boroughs Warm Spaces as demonstrated [in this video of the Winter Warmer at Madeley Baptist Church](#)).
- The Donnington Winter Snug was also supported with a £300 grant.
- Councillors in The Nedge also awarded a grant to Telford Park School to assist with providing uniform, school shoes and PE kit to pupils where costs are a barrier.
- In Shawbirch & Dothill and Haygate & Park a grant was given to buy food to support the Wrekin View Community Fridge which benefits the local community and the children and parents in the Educational Trust.

4.6.8 Again this year more **defibrillators** were installed across the Borough ensuring lifesaving equipment is close to hand for residents 24/7. This includes;

- New defibrillators in Oakengates & Ketley Bank outside Maddocks Social Club and Holy Trinity Parish Church.
- In Woodside, a new defibrillator was installed outside Park Lane Centre (pictured).
- In Overdale & The Rock three new accessible community defibrillators have been located in Overdale, Old Park and The Rock.
- In Lawley funding enabled a new defibrillator at Lawley Community Centre.

## Councillors Pride Fund 2023-24: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough

- A £1,200 grant to Maninplace from The Nedge and Donnington wards enabled them to purchase practice mannequins, training defibrillators and resources to support delivery of first aid training to staff members who will be able to administer support to their clients.
- And finally Councillors in Arleston & College, Ercall and Haygate & Park have supported a new initiative to train at least 100 residents in CPR with a total of £2,093 awarded to the scheme.



*New defibrillator at Park Lane Centre, Woodside*

- 4.6.9 Many Councillors have sought to provide families with opportunities for **recreational activities**, enabling many to have the opportunity to visit the seaside this year thanks to Councillors' Pride Funding. Awards included £1,000 allocated in Woodside for a family trip to Barmouth (pictured) and £600 allocated in Lawley plus £600 match funding for a trip to Llandudno. Whilst Councillors in Brookside and The Nedge allocated £1,100 for a family trip to Wicksteed Park.



*A day out in Barmouth for Woodside residents*

### 4.7 **Everyone benefits from a thriving economy**

- 4.7.1 Councillors opted to support the local economy and promote local areas through the provision of events across the Borough. This enabled residents to take part in and make the most of the opportunities around them as well as marking the heritage of the Borough and providing historical attractions/information for residents and visitors. Events included:



## Councillors Pride Fund 2023-24: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough

- The Ironbridge Gorge Brass Band Festival in Ironbridge Gorge which received £500 towards setting up the stage area.
- A £500 grant supported the Malinslee Big Picnic by bringing an additional free attraction to the event in order to appeal to a wide range of visitors.
- A Community and Food Festival was held in Lawley to celebrate and promote the local area with grant funding meaning food could be available for attendees to sample.
- In Edgmond two events were supported, one event brought runners to the local area to enjoy an organised 10km fun run, and another saw people of all ages enjoy a music and entertainment event in the village.
- Whilst in The Nedge a £300 grant supported a Family Fun Day hosted by the Afro Cultural Heritage CIC. An event aimed at bringing all communities together to enjoy activities.



### *Events supported in The Nedge and Edgmond*

#### 4.7.2 The **heritage of the Borough** was marked in:

- St Georges with a £2,600 grant to install a new bench at the old Women's Institute site at Station Hill to remember those who worked in the industrial and mining industries.
- In Ironbridge Gorge, a £900 grant contributed towards creating a permanent memorial to those that lost their life in the Coalport Ferry Disaster. Also in Ironbridge Gorge a £400 grant contributed towards creating an information plaque to celebrate the opening of Jackfield Halt in 1934, to be located in the original location along the Severn Valley Way.

#### 4.8 All neighbourhoods are a great place to live

4.8.1 During 2023, Councillors recognised the importance of place with almost a quarter of applications investing funds to ensure neighbourhoods have great facilities. Improvement works were varied with examples including:

4.8.2 **Improvements to play areas in the Borough**, for example:

- In Newport North Broomfield Play area received £1,650 to carry out repairs and improvements (pictured) such as ground repairs, new swing chains and flat and cradle seats, repainting of equipment and repairs to fencing and to the football goal area.
- In Shawbirch & Dothill a £2,332 grant has enabled repairs and improvements at Severn Drive playground.
- In Oakengates & Ketley Bank a £3,000 grant has contributed towards the introduction of inclusive play equipment and upgrading existing equipment at Hartshill Park, Ketley Bank Park and Wombridge Common Play Area.
- In Wrockwardine Wood & Trench a £1,000 grant contributed towards upgrading the equipment at Wombridge Common Play Area and adding a piece of inclusive play equipment.
- And in Admaston & Bratton a £1,000 grant has been used to make improvements to Bratton Play Area.



*Improvements at Broomfield Play Area in Newport North*

4.8.3 **Local areas were also enhanced** such as:

- In Hadley & Leegomery grant funding was used to paint a mural on the bridge on the boundary of the Parishes to brighten up the area and to also discourage tagging and vandalism.

## Councillors Pride Fund 2023-24: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough

- In Muxton two new wooden carvings at Granville Country Park were commissioned adding further attraction to the area.
- In Ketley, community facilities were developed with the introduction of two new standalone Community Libraries, one by Ketley Community Centre and the other by Meadows Primary School.
- And a £4,000 grant was used in Madeley & Sutton Hill to set up a new Community Library at Sutton Hill Community Centre.



*New wood carving at Granville Country Park, a new Community Library at Ketley Community Centre, mural brightening up a bridge in Hadley & Leegomery*

- 4.8.4 New grit bins have been installed to support residents over the colder months in the wards of Ercall, Newport East, Newport North and Lawley.
- 4.9 **Our natural environment is protected, and the Council is taking a leading role in tackling the climate emergency**



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4.9.1 Maintaining the Borough's natural environment remained a focus for Councillors this year with projects such as;

4.9.2 A grant to Randlay Primary School & Nursery in The Nedge supporting the school to purchase gardening equipment for use in the forest school area and to purchase litter picking equipment to encourage the children to take part in keeping their communities clean. In Haygate & Park a £237 grant was used to purchase, plant, and maintain six fruit trees in the corner of Murphy's Field to complement the existing flora and fauna as well as increase the biodiversity in this green space.

4.9.3 **Supporting the wildlife** that maintain ecosystem balance was also a consideration for many Councillors.

- In Newport East hedgehog highways (pictured) were introduced in the allotment fencing at Meadow View Road enabling hedgehogs to pass through in search of food, water and shelter.
- In Oakengates & Ketley Bank a £300 grant has seen the introduction of bird boxes, bat boxes and bug hotels in Hartshill Park, Wombridge Green Guarantee Site and across the ward.
- All four Newport wards supported the introduction of aeration equipment at Newport canal (pictured) to maintain oxygen levels in the water and avoid fish deaths.
- And in Horsehay & Lightmoor a grant of £500 contributed towards a project to install reeds in Horsehay Pool to provide a habitat for local wildlife.



*A hedgehog highway in Newport East and aeration equipment at Newport Canal*

4.9.4 **Considering our impact on the climate** saw the purchase of thermal imaging cameras in Newport East. These cameras can be borrowed by residents to check for cold spots in their homes. The project will also provide support and information

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on ways to improve insulation in homes to reduce fuel consumption and energy costs.

4.9.5 Works in the rural community have also been carried out to mitigate against the impacts of climate change and assist during adverse weather conditions to minimise risk. Works carried out in the ward of Ercall Magna included checking the downstream system at Ellerdine along the right of way to ascertain work required and a contribution to those works, a day of investigation works at Catsbrich to ensure the various systems are working and maintenance of ditches/grips at the other end of Ellerdine plus the provision of flood signs and cones for use when flooding is a risk.

### 4.10 **A community-focussed, innovative Council providing efficient, effective and quality services.**

4.10.1 Councillors have supported this priority in a variety of ways, such as:

4.10.2 The **safety of local residents** has been taken seriously with the introduction of CCTV cameras and associated equipment;

- In Priorslee a £630 grant enabled the extension of a lighting column in Wandworth Way to accommodate CCTV.
- In Dawley & Aqueduct a £500 grant attracted £500 of match funding from the Parish to replace CCTV in Dawley High Street.

4.10.3 **Road safety** has also been a key element of this year's fund with:

- A £500 grant in Newport West enabling a traffic mirror to be installed at the exit of Beaumaris Road on to Longford Road and a grant contributed to road safety mirrors in Overdale & The Rock.
- In Arleston & College a £600 grant contributed to speed limit roundels and a visibility mirror.
- In Admaston & Bratton a £500 grant with match of £1,000 from the Parish has seen the introduction of traffic calming measures on the B5063 at Bratton, including signs to indicate the speed limit and 'Welcome to Bratton' signs to identify the area as residential.
- And in Church Aston & Lilleshall a £4,000 road safety scheme is being introduced at The Humbers and Liddles Bank in Church Aston with the addition of speed cushions.

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- Speed Indicator Devices are being introduced outside Teagues Bridge Primary School with a grant of £2,000 from Councillors in Wrockwardine Wood & Trench
- And a traffic survey was conducted in Wrockwardine outside Longdon upon Tern Village Hall and Allscott Meads Primary School enabling a review of traffic speed in the area.

### 4.10.4 The fund has also seen the introduction of **new streetlights to increase nighttime visibility and reduce safety fears.**

- In Newport West, a grant of £1,000 contributed towards two solar streetlights for a dark pathway at the back of The Larches.
- In Oakengates & Ketley Bank a £2,750 grant with match funding received from Safer & Stronger Communities, has seen two mains powered streetlights installed on Withington Close and one mains powered streetlight on Church Parade.

### 4.10.5 Concerns for residents' **safety around water** saw a £280 grant to install a lifebuoy at Millwood Mere in Church Aston & Lilleshall (with £150 match funding) and in Dawley & Aqueduct a water safety throwline was installed at Dawley Hamlets Local Nature Reserve with a £340 grant.



*New lifebuoy at Millward Mere and throwline at Dawley Hamlets Local Nature Reserve*

## 4.11 Next Steps

- 4.11.1 The Councillors Pride Fund continues for 2024-25, with each Councillor having a further £5,000 to allocate to their ward.



4.11.2 Councillors are reminded that the deadline for submitting allocations is 1 February 2025.

## **5 Alternative Options**

5.1 The Councillors' Pride Fund is in its ninth year with its predecessors going back over a decade. As a Co-operative Council, communities are at the heart of everything the Council does. The Councillors' Pride Fund is firmly rooted in the programme of support offered to establish strong, safe, healthy and vibrant communities.

## **6 Key Risks**

6.1 The Councillors' Pride Fund operates under a grant application process with successful applicants subject to agreement to grant terms and conditions before the payment of any grant, processes are in place to mitigate the risks associated with grant giving.

6.2 Spot monitoring of the Councillors' Pride Fund takes place with projects picked at random to ensure monies are spent as agreed. Monitoring is proportionate to the level of funding received.

## **7.0 Council Priorities**

7.1 All applications to the Councillors' Pride Fund must address one or more of the Council Priorities, these are:

- Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
- Everyone benefits from a thriving economy
- All neighbourhoods area a great place to live
- Our natural environment is protected, and the Council is taking a leading role in tackling the climate emergency
- A community-focussed, innovative Council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 The 2023/24 budget allocation for the Councillors' Pride Fund is £270k which provides funding of £5k per Ward Councillor. All of this budget is funded from one offs (On Your Side Investment Programme).

8.2 The Finance Team work with the Community Funding Officer throughout the year to ensure that the funding is allocated to Wards.

## **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

9.1 The general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 allows local authorities to do anything which individuals generally may do which

includes making funding available for projects such as those identified in this report, provided that such funding is part of the budget and policy framework.

9.2 In reaching decisions about the allocation of funding, it is necessary to ensure that such decisions are made in a fair, reasonable and transparent manner and take account of the public sector equality duty. The budget is subject to consultation on an annual basis as well as being considered by the Council's scrutiny committee and, therefore, the appropriate processes have been followed.

9.3 Ongoing legal advice will be provided in respect of this scheme and individual projects, as required.

9.4 This report does not raise any specific implications for HR.

## **10.0 Ward Implications**

10.1 This report has a positive borough wide impact, all wards within the borough are allocated funding based on the number of ward Councillors in that area.

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

11.1 The Councillors' Pride Fund continues to have a positive impact on the health, social and economic wellbeing of residents. The scheme distributes funding to a range of projects which positively impact at least one of these areas of a resident's life from enabling residents to engage in social and wellbeing activities, accessing physical activity, our local green spaces or contributing to their communities and promoting the borough. Many projects funded by the scheme impact on all three areas with applications that support the social wellbeing of residents also likely to support their health due to the positive impact social interaction is known to have on health.

## **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

12.1 As a local authority serving a mixed rural and urban geographical area with an increasingly diverse population illustrated by the 2021 Census, we recognise the importance of equity of service and fostering inclusion, as well as celebrating and promoting diversity.

12.2 The Councillors' Pride Fund supports Councillors to engage with their entire community and understand their specific needs when developing proposals and ensures they meet the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, s149, Equality Act 2010, including to;

- eliminate unlawful discrimination,
- advance equality of opportunity, and
- foster good relations.

### 13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications

13.1 As this report demonstrates the Councillors' Pride Fund is one of many ways in which the Council is helping to support the wider Climate Change Borough Partnership to meet its aspirations on this agenda.

### 14.0 Background Papers

1. Cabinet Paper, 4 January 2024: [Councillors' Pride Fund 2022-23: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough](#)
2. Cabinet Paper, 13 October 2022: [Councillors' Pride Fund 2021-22: Helping to Protect, Care and Invest to Create a Better Borough](#)
3. Cabinet Paper, 23 September 2021: [Councillors' Pride Fund - Helping to Protect, Care and Invest in our Communities.](#)
4. Business Briefing, 27 February 2020: Councillors' Pride Fund Update (due at Cabinet 19 March 2020, postponed due to the pandemic)

### 15.0 Appendices

Not applicable.

### 16.0 Report Sign Off

Signed off by	Date sent	Date signed off	Initials
Finance	21/10/2024	29/10/2024	AEM
Legal	21/10/2024	29/10/2024	RP
Director	21/10/2024	24/10/2024	KK