

Creating a
better future
together



Shropshire Council's programme for transformation

DRAFT BLUEPRINT

September 2010



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1. Introduction

This blueprint for transforming the way we do things demonstrates our energy and appetite for a bold new approach to community leadership, firmly rooted in better services for local people, in shaping the places where they live. It is about making the Council fit for the new challenges it will face over the next three to five years. The pace of change requires the public sector to do things very differently and to live within our means.

The Council has a strong track record of doing what it promises, having successfully made the transition to a new Unitary Council, and it is now focused on business transformation. Our ambitious programme for change is a positive response to the challenges of reduced funding and other forces, such as the demographics of our ageing population, and the wider take up of new technology.

We have a strong history of effective partnership working to deliver better outcomes for local people, achieving our objectives together and trialling new approaches. We will continue to concentrate on improving quality of life for all Shropshire's people, and on building places that provide them with the benefits of vibrant, self-sufficient and resilient communities, in which to live and work. We will do this by rethinking the 'way we've always done things', to become a fluid and dynamic organisation able to cope well with rapid change and uncertainty.

Being clear and open about what the future may look like for all of us will help us to reshape our services and to continue to achieve the vision of our agreed Community Strategy – 'A Flourishing Shropshire'.



Keith Barrow
Leader of Shropshire Council



Kim Ryley
Chief Executive

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the blueprint is to set out a vision of how Shropshire Council, and the local partners we collaborate with, will change the way it works; based on the things we care about and value. It will set out the main developments we will be putting into place over the next three years, to make us more efficient and effective.

1.2 Objectives

To set out the key principles that will underpin the transformation of Shropshire Council in an understandable, well structured and comprehensive way.

To provide a clear focus on local service delivery, and on putting local people at the heart of everything we do.

To ensure that the design and implementation of the programme of transformation is consistent, cohesive and integrated at every stage.

To check that we are achieving the expected benefits, both during and following implementation of our planned changes.

1.3 Context

Shropshire Council is emerging rapidly from a period of transition into a new single county-wide authority, to enter one of major change and transformation, alongside all local public services.

There are a number of forces driving this need for large scale change:

1.3.1 Rising Public Expectations and Demands

At present, Shropshire residents can take advantage of the excellent, good value public services that are provided by Shropshire Council. However, recent surveys show that public expectations about what we should offer are very high and getting higher. But, whilst residents expect to see more from their local council, they do not wish to pay more in tax for the services that they receive.

1.3.2 Changing Demographics

Over the past 10 years, there has been a real shift in the average age of Shropshire residents, with almost a quarter over retirement age, as well as a large increase (40%) in the number of residents aged over 75. This trend is predicted to continue and accelerate in future.



As a Council this has wide reaching implications for us; some very positive, others providing us with challenges for service delivery. For example:

- Some of the older members of our communities pay feel cut off or isolated
- There are many more highly skilled and motivated volunteers
- There will be more pressures on care services
- Class sizes may continue to shrink, particularly in rural communities, with implications for children's social as well as educational development
- People may wish to access our services in different way. We therefore need to ensure that those wanting to take advantage of our services electronically can do so, but not to the detriment of those who wish to use the more traditional methods.

This means that, as an organisation, we have to think differently about the way we deliver our services, and how our customers want to make the most of these services.

1.3.3 Downturn in the economy and the Public Sector Funding Crunch

Shropshire Council must make savings of £60million over the next three years, because of cuts in Government funding. The results of the Government Spending Review will be announced in October 2010, when more will be known about the scale and nature of the savings required, and how quickly they are expected to be realised.

Although we strongly want to make changes to improve what we do for local people, these funding pressures add a sense of urgency to this and mean we will need to be more inventive. As a result, Shropshire Council does not have the option of standing still. The scale of the budget savings requires a fundamental reappraisal of the role of the local public sector – the Council needs to change it's focus from simply being the provider of services to one that supports local people and communities to do more themselves, and fosters delivery of services from a wider range of voluntary, community and private sector organisations.



The national economic downturn has impacted locally on our businesses and residents, creating an increased role for the council to support and enable the growth of jobs and prosperity in the future.

1.3.4 New Technology

The use of new technology has significantly changed the way that we all live our lives and we expect more, want it quicker and, as a result, are no longer constrained by distance. For Shropshire Council, online access to services can be provided at a fraction of the cost than more staff intensive alternatives, and can be better targeted at individual needs. We can also learn more about our customers, what they want and how they wish to access our services, at the same time. But we know that this form of doing business with us can be a problem, because many of our customers are not able to access our services online yet.

Shropshire is currently on the wrong side of this digital divide, with Broadband accessibility a major barrier that we are working hard to overcome.

1.3.5 Rising Energy Costs and Reducing Carbon Footprints

It is highly likely that we will begin to see less long distance travel, as the cost of fuel continues to increase, and we should not force local people to have to make long journeys to do business with us. This is our opportunity to make more of our most regularly used services available in our market towns. This will, in turn, strengthen these local “service hubs” and make them and their surrounding areas more resilient.

We want to persuade our local partners, like health and the police, to do the same. This will also help our local economy, by keeping public sector jobs local.

1.3.6 A new coalition Government

The new government brings with it new relationships, ways of working and opportunities. These include recognising what we are good at and exploring new ways of doing things. We want to actively embrace the Government's “Big Society” programme and the “localism” agenda, both of which seek to create a climate that empowers local people and communities to shape the places in which they live and work, by:

Giving communities a greater say over their local planning system;

Saving local services and facilities, including post offices and pubs;

Creating a new generation of community organisers that will be trained to support the setting up of neighbourhood groups;

Encouraging people to volunteer and become involved in social action;

Supporting new mutuals, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises, and giving them greater involvement in the running of local public services;

Extending powers for local government by giving councils a new general “power of competence” to get things done quickly.

Given the strong legacy of good quality local government provision in Shropshire, providing excellent value for money services, there is an opportunity for Shropshire Council to fundamentally change the way we do things, through a focus on ‘place’, ‘people’ and ‘changing the way we work’. That’s what our “Creating a Better Future” programme is all about. By making these changes, we will continue to strive to achieve our Community Strategy vision for a ‘Flourishing Shropshire’, now and long into the future.

2. A vision for ‘Working Together, Locally’

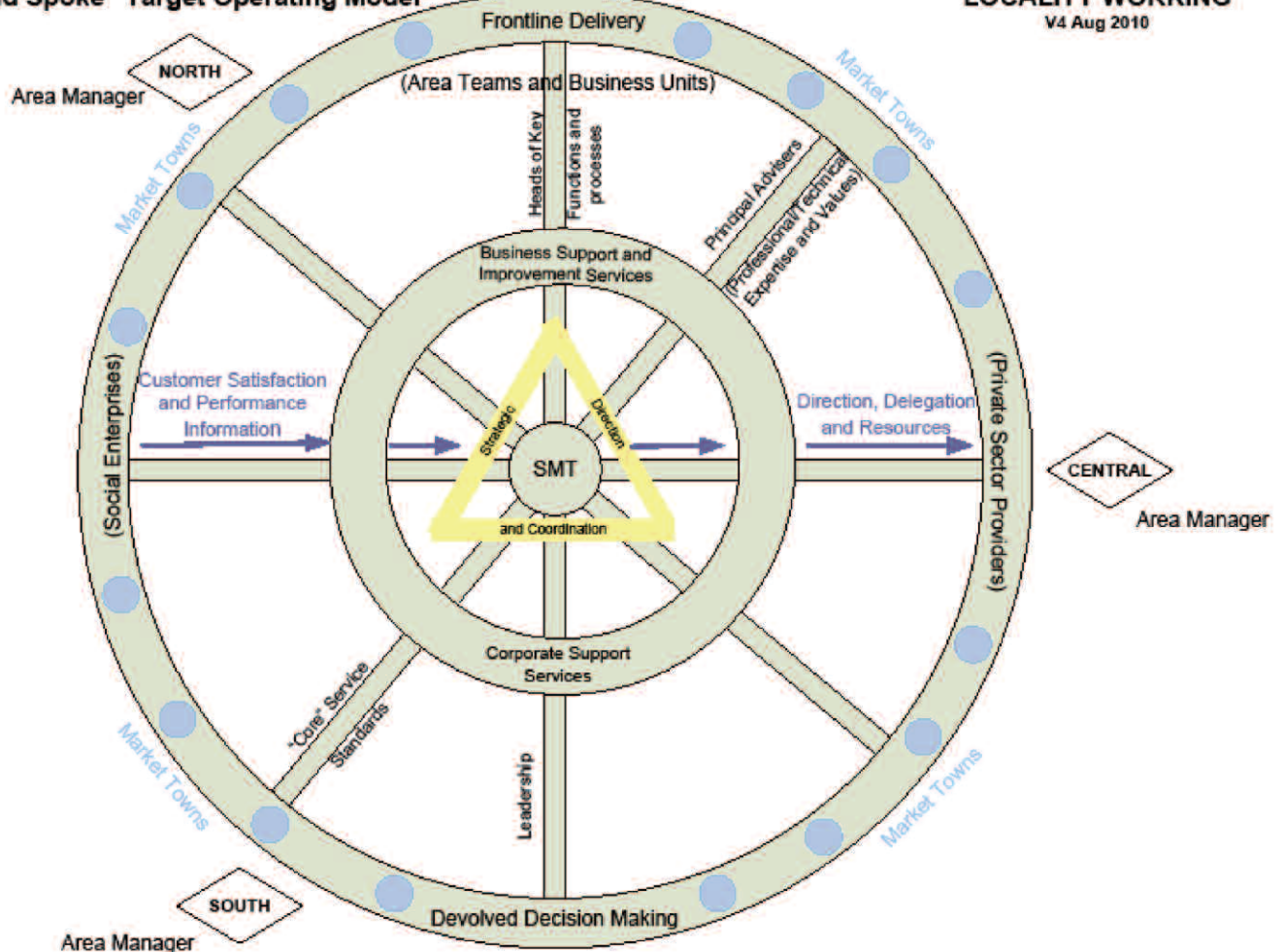
2.1 The main reason for transforming the way we work is to better meet the needs and aspirations of local people. We know that our local residents have a very strong sense of local community, as well as an emotional attachment to the county ; nine in ten (89%) of our residents said they felt they belong ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ strongly to their neighbourhood/village, and a similar proportion (88%) to the county as a whole. When asked about the future of local government in Shropshire, local people’s top priorities were that public services should be accountable to them and be responsive to their wishes, by listening more to, and acting on what they say is most important and valued.

2.2 Working locally in this way underpinned the Business Case for One Shropshire (a new, single Council for the whole county), and this remains fundamental to the way we are responding to the emerging challenges we face. The new 'Target Operating Model' (TOM) for the Council set out below, is a vision of how Shropshire Council will reconfigure itself to deliver better services locally in the future. It is designed to dismantle traditional management hierarchies and empower our front line, based around our unique market town geography. We, with our local partners, will work in a complementary and flexible way, based around bringing together the talents and creative thinking of our staff, rather than being too concerned about the internal bureaucracies of the organisations in which they work.

2.3 The key principles relate to place, people and changing the way we work.

"Hub and Spoke" Target Operating Model

LOCALITY WORKING
V4 Aug 2010



2.4 The operating principles of the model are:

2.4.1 Shaping the places we live and work

- Frontline services will be given the power and resources to make decisions on the best form of service delivery for each part of Shropshire, and will have a physical presence in local service 'hubs', wherever possible, so that they are easy for local people to reach.
- Good service design will meet frontline needs differently, as appropriate to preferences of local people in each place
- Recognising and developing the role of Shropshire's market towns, as local hubs for the communities they serve, and celebrating what makes each of our Shropshire communities distinctively different.
- Changing how we run many of our services, with our local partners, to develop a stronger and more integrated local presence in each area of the county.



2.4.2 Working for and with local people

- Making sure our customers are at the heart of everything we do, and that their satisfaction drives our decision making at all levels.
- Rebalancing the relationship between public sector service providers, local people and their communities of place, to give local people more say in the decisions which most affect their lives.
- Build trust and deeper relationships with our local communities by listening closely to, and talking regularly with them, in ways that are best suited to local circumstances and preferences.
- Help build stronger local connections and networks of social support, to facilitate greater self help by local people, and self reliance in our communities, whilst ensuring that those who cannot help themselves get the help they need from others.
- Provide leadership and democratic accountability through our local councillors that is recognised and valued by local communities.



- Develop more open links between communities and their local representatives (and other public service decision making bodies), with them having the permission to act in the best interest of the communities they serve.
- Improve the way we capture and use information about our customers, at an individual and locality level, to gain a better shared understanding of local priorities, and of how effective we are in improving quality of life for all our residents.
- Closer, co-ordinated working across local public service providers, social entrepreneurs and volunteers, and with private sector partners, to improve life for our local residents.

2.4.3 Changing the way we do things

- Keeping our management costs to a minimum by changing the roles and responsibilities of senior staff, to protect resources for frontline services.
- Strategy will be the responsibility of a small number of senior managers; operational leadership/management roles and professional 'Advisory' roles will be distinct and clearly defined; leadership will be for all managers and will involve bringing out the talents of our staff and being open to new ideas and ways of working.
- Management layers will be kept to a minimum, balancing responsiveness with appropriate control and clear accountabilities.
- Managers and staff will work in teams made up of staff from a range of different service and other local service organisations, and they will be directly accountable for the outcomes each of these teams produces, within a new framework of 'matrix management'
- Corporate Support services will keep their costs to a minimum, and will be designed and run to support the efficient delivery of front line services, with a minimum of bureaucracy.
- Service teams will operate as "business units", and managers will be expected to bring "commerciality and entrepreneurship" to their

role, by finding ways to supplement and get the best impact out of our scarce resources.

- Simplicity and transparency will dictate our organisation design, with closely related activities and functions being grouped together or integrated with one another, to give us economies of scale and make it easier for local people to get everything they need in one place.
- The procurement and the provision of services will be targeted at meeting identified needs to a consistently good standard, and we will not do anything in-house which other providers can do to our standards better or cheaper than we can.
- We will equip our work force, and other local providers to deliver joined-up services that best fit local circumstances and preferences, in a timely and flexible manner, through developing the skills development of our staff, by a wider and better use of technology, and through more effective management and support structures.
- Challenging how we, and other public service providers, make the most of existing finances and new investment opportunities will be a high priority, so that we have locally based or locally responsive, value for money services, that will help shape and improve the places in which local people live and work.

2.5 Our transformation workstreams

Our ambitious programme for transformation comprises six workstreams, each sponsored by a Cabinet Member, and delivering a number of interconnected projects which, taken together, will make the difference to the Council being able to 'work together locally'. These are linked into the Council's new "operating model" (ways of doing things), which concentrates on local places, people, and changing the way we work. In summary these are:

2.5.1 Place

- Locality working – using our market towns to deliver joined up local services that are right for the people that live there. These services will be delivered differently and distinctly, to fit the preferences of local people. This means that the services will be shaped around

each of the market towns and surrounding areas, within a clear framework of minimum standards for all parts of Shropshire.

- Partnership Working – working together with our local partners to create better, more efficient services, that are easily accessible to our customers where they live and work. Delivering a “One Shrop” approach from good quality and effective partnerships, which work together across the public sector to benefit local people.

2.5.2 People

- “Loving our customers” – making sure that our services meet the expectations and aspirations of our customers, and that we get it right first time, every time. We want to make it easier for our customers to do business with us, and give them the choice of how they contact us, using better insight into their needs and preferences to continuously improve our services.
- Community Leadership – supporting our local councillors in their leadership role, and mobilising local communities to participate confidently in the decisions that have an impact on their lives, making their towns and villages better places to live, work and visit.

2.5.3 Changing the way we work

- Creating the Conditions for Success – having the right number of the right people, with the right attitude and skills, in the right place, doing the right things, by creating a flexible workforce with the skills necessary to deliver services which have been transformed for the better.
- Service redesign and improvement – value for money services, that are the best balance between cost, quality and customer satisfaction. We will deliver “more for less”, by doing things differently, working with our local partner organisations and sharing services to reduce costs, and to create a single public sector workforce.



2.5.4 The work of these work streams is set down in sections 3-5.

3 Shaping the places we live and work

3.1 Locality Working

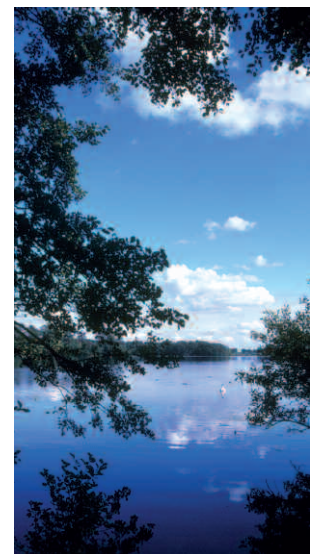
Working locally is something that Shropshire Council already does well. For instance, we operate Multi-Agency Teams (MATS) in 5 of our towns, bringing together a wide range of expert support around the needs of local young people, and we have projects, such as New Century Court in Oswestry and the Foyer in Ludlow, which provide similar linked support around their housing needs.

Our new operating model will redefine the Council's presence in our market towns. By putting more emphasis and capacity at the frontline, the new model will create more flexible teams, better able to reflect and respond to the particular requirements of their local area. Our staff will work closely with community organisers, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises, and with town and parish councils, to respond to the current recession and to build our recovery around the identified strengths of our local communities.

3.1.1 "Place shaper"- Our recently launched Regeneration Prospectus brings together the Local Development Framework and Local Investment Plans for Shropshire. Both of these are supported by a series of detailed, individual, place based appendices. This is an innovative, inclusive approach, supporting local communities to determine their own future development priorities.

This new framework for change will create bottom-up, community centred, economic and planning policies, giving our local communities a much greater say on the planning matters which affect them directly. These **Local Plans** will act as guides to development and investment opportunities, meeting locally identified priorities for better services, infrastructure and facilities.

Our new Market Towns Revitalisation Programme, launched in July 2010, will help to turn these plans into action. A £3m capital fund for physical works and £300k for smaller community schemes are available. Discussions between town and parish councillors and Shropshire Councillors are the starting point for identifying priorities for investment, using outcomes from the regeneration prospectus and from extensive public consultation with local people.



3.1.2 Integrated Service provider - By encouraging and reinforcing the role of our market towns as local service “hubs” and centres for a wider area, we will strengthen links with our increasingly resilient, self reliant and rural communities.

We will “bend” our services, individually and together, to do this more effectively, taking into account what service delivery will feel like to individuals in their community, how they will access our services, how they will engage with the council’s decision making processes, and be represented locally.

Community “Steward” - a pilot to develop a **Community Stewardship Agreement** for local choice in streetscene services is underway in Bridgnorth. It will actively engage and interact with local residents around services such as cleansing, waste recycling and parking provision, with the aim of responding more effectively to community aspirations, “cutting the funding cake according to local wishes”, and being held accountable to community groups and individuals for service performance against a locally set standard.

3.2 Partnership Capacity

Alongside our partners, we will review how our assets, in terms of the local building and facilities we own can focus on our market towns, to provide Shared Accommodation for increasingly joined up and connected local public services, whether in multi disciplinary Locality Teams, through appropriate extension of powers or delegation to local councillors and communities themselves, or as a means of accessing a range of increasingly mobile and demand activated services. One example of these is our planning surgeries operating from open access Customer Service Points and shared facilities (like the Lantern in Shrewsbury).

Many of the services that our most vulnerable local people use are not delivered (or funded) by a single organisation. We want our local partners, like Health and the Police, also to be locality based, integrating what we all do together around what local people want.

This joint working will have the added benefit of improving the way we, in the Council, work with other agencies, to create multi-agency teams that operate with the needs and wishes of our customers at their core. This will eliminate duplication, and align our resources and work efficiently to deliver improved services, whilst making savings in our costs. We will look at practical ways in which frontline teams from different parts of the public and voluntary sectors better meet local needs, and how our work can be made more efficient and effective.

We believe that a bold, new locality based approach to public protection, public health, employment and housing, supported by a local “community budget” will accelerate the rate of change and improvement, and will deliver more efficient and cost effective outcomes for local people. In this way we will also improve our local accountability and make the “Big Society” a reality in Shropshire, as we give local people a greater say and a bigger role in how our local services are run.

We want initially to focus our energy and resource on changing where inequalities and ingrained social attitudes are potentially standing in the way of making our local communities in Shropshire more self-sufficient, cohesive and resilient.

Place Placed Budgeting - We have made a submission to Communities and Local Government to pilot an approach to deliver Priority 3 of the Community Strategy: Healthy, safe, confident people and communities.

Other areas have demonstrated that a place-based approach to problem solving has the potential to achieve significant savings to the public purse and a noticeable improvement in local people's experience of using public services.

Our submission builds on several local initiatives looking at worklessness, family interventions, offender management and drug treatment services and the good practice emerging from the national place based work.

Successful though each of these initiatives are in themselves, to get maximum impact we need help from national government to unlock barriers caused by siloed funding, centralised performance regimes and inflexibility at local level. Place Based working provides the new framework for collaborative working across Shropshire's public services.

For each of the challenges below, we'll test out bold new ways of working to tackle them, initially in the four highest priority neighbourhoods – Oswestry, North East Shrewsbury, Market Drayton and Ludlow. We have deliberately identified a mixture of rural and town locations to trial this work. While adhering to our core objectives, this will enable us to try different ways of working at the same time, so accelerating our learning and shortening the lead in time, in order to rapidly scale up interventions to take effect across the county, where we have evidence that they are effective. We will use them as prototypes to push the boundaries of joint working, develop more insight from our frontline teams and adapt our core approach to service delivery, achieving more substantial savings within three years.

- **Accelerated implementation of 21 Century Welfare:** where streamlined, multi-agency teams cutting away swathes of duplication can save between £1.5 - £3m a year from inefficiencies and a plethora of unnecessary guidance.
- **Tackling health inequalities and substance misuse:** where we want to accelerate the transition to a ring-fenced public health budget targeted on Shropshire's particular health challenges, not the one size fits all approach prescribed by the department of health.
- **Community based approach to civil resilience:** where Shropshire's experience of floods in 2007 points to the potential for strong, self-reliant community activism, as a more cost effective approach, which will lead to more sustainable outcomes than a traditional 'Big State' response.
- **Integrated Offender Management:** where Shropshire already leads the way in West Mercia, but where a central, siloed approach to multi-agency integration challenges like ICT is potentially getting in the way of annual direct savings of at least £800,000, without taking into account the additional on-costs of crime on our communities.



Significant progress towards implementation of the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) project has already been achieved, and we are already a prototype for the West Mercia area. The key aims of IOM are to reduce crime and re-offending and tackle the social exclusion of offenders and their families. Staff from the council, probation and the police have been deployed into the IOM team. It is anticipated that an outreach service will develop in several of the market towns, closer to the target group, jobs and services.

The programme has already undertaken a cost benefit analysis of its impact. For the 2-year testing phase and on a cohort of 30 offenders, it estimates a financial net saving of around £0.5m and a 32% (10 offenders) reduction in re-offending. In addition, a fuller impact assessment shows the social and community safety benefits that arise. While numbers are relatively low compared with urban areas, savings are significant and so is the positive impact on community confidence.

We will be using lessons learnt from a recently completed review of physical activity in Oswestry. The review looked at the total offer in the area, and the resources allocated for physical activity, irrespective of who does it. This approach will help us to understand how to reduce the costs of delivering improvements to outcomes for vulnerable groups, where responsibilities for delivery cut across a number of local organisations at present.

Shropshire and neighbouring Telford and Herefordshire have submitted a proposal for a Local Enterprise Partnership, through which our very active Business Board will be a key player. We envisage that an essential part of its work will be as a catalyst for jobs growth, offering work placements, by creating the conditions that will allow existing businesses to thrive, promoting our sub-region as an attractive inward investment/relocation destination or, importantly, providing the stimulus for business start-up and self employment. We intend to connect the two strands of work in practical ways so that people's journey into employment does not stop at the point when they need a real job. We will build into the offer locally available advice and encouragement to start up businesses to suit Shropshire's geography.

We also envisage substantial scope for social enterprise to develop and are already pursuing this by examining the potential to 'float off' the Council's Training Company as a not-for-profit organisation.

But we think the opportunities are much greater and want to encourage communities to take control of providing some services they need. As an example, by 2031, Shropshire's aged population (those over 85) will grow by 194% to in excess of 20,000 people. This will require expanded social care services and opens up real opportunities for community involvement and enterprise.

3.2.1 The opportunities for working together locally are limitless, with the right infrastructure, support and attitude from Shropshire Council.

Further examples of what we could do;

- Take what we do well now in relation to multi-agency team (MAT) working and develop the MATs, 'super-skilling' the staff to deliver a wider range of services, and developing, where appropriate, more open access opportunities. Also extending the range of services offered from a single facility, for example, by moving from a solely child centred service centre to a family centred one.



- Refine the range of services available in local centres, such as the Discovery Centre, Craven Arms and Severn Centre in Highley, using better understanding of local priorities and needs to inform an appropriate range of interactions with local residents that it would be more cost effective to provide locally, either on a permanent or roving, customer-demand led basis.
- Local village and neighbourhood feeder schools being seen by all as a shared community resource, providing chargeable meeting rooms, play areas, open spaces for the community and local contracts to local firms, where they offer quality and value-for-money.
- Local churches fulfilling their wider role in communities, coupled with volunteer groups providing intergenerational support, social care, safe play and adult learning opportunities
- Local village and neighbourhood pubs providing a focal point for elderly persons meals in the community and catering services or “controlled” environments for young people to enjoy safe recreation.
- Local village and neighbourhood shops providing a range of additional services, including broad places/tele-talk, pay points for council services, hot spots for information, library lending and miniature Tourist Information Points.
- Town and parish Councils running an increased ranged of devolved services, such as public conveniences, litter picking and play areas.
- Community organisations running local food markets, garden share projects, and decentralised community heat and energy schemes, and land/housing trusts providing affordable housing solutions.

4 Working for and with local people

4.1 Loving our customers

We are looking at how we capture and use information about our customers, with the aim of developing a **'right first time' culture** across the council, based on use of **a consistent set of standards** that are clear for all staff and customers and appropriate to local requirements. We will make use of more **localised customer intelligence**, easily accessible to councillors and officers, to help to inform service redesign and more focused service delivery.

We aim to provide customers with an improved and consistent experience, through a single "front door" to local public services, whichever route is used to contact us that makes sense to people in localities. In other words, more direct action from a frontline resource that works as a single system, driving out inefficiencies and improving outcomes for local people, whilst assessing the impact on vulnerable groups to ensure they are not disadvantaged.

We will put the frontline of the organisation where our local communities are, and give our staff the skills, tools and permission they need to be responsive, to focus on early prevention, and to seek practical solutions that are right for that community.

This will mean a significant shift in the way we use our resources, including the way we organise our support services and systems, and manage our physical assets, such as modernising our Library Services and commissioning of Culture, Leisure and Learning services, in order to create an integrated customer offer.

Shropshire Council and Herefordshire Council are one of ten partnerships in the country to receive direct Government support to develop services, in light of changing customer demands, that will result in an innovative approach to delivering libraries services.

The project will consider the use of new models of service, building on both councils' experience in working with communities to run libraries directly, and how we can take advantage of developments in technology. This includes working much more closely with communities on neighbourhood libraries, for example at Peterchurch in Herefordshire the library is run by volunteers in a multi-use centre, and the library in Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire is part run by the private sector.

We are in the process of designing a **Welcome Pack** for new residents, which will be area specific, and will tell people not only about council services, but also other public services that may be of interest to them (e.g. GP surgeries).

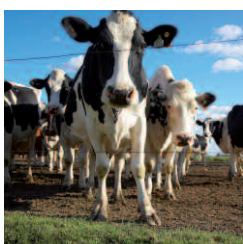
Improvements to the Council's **website** are scheduled for completion by spring 2011, to make it easier for people to serve themselves, as Broadband access in Shropshire becomes more reliable and commonly available. Other **Customer access channels** will be improved to provide even more opportunities for people to serve themselves, such as Digital TV and SMS messaging. These improvements underpin our **channel migration plan**, which will encourage people to self-serve, thereby significantly reducing the cost to the Council of each transaction with us.

4.2 Community Leadership

Working alongside town and parish Councils, we will give people a powerful say in shaping the future for their communities. This is recognised in the work stream focusing on local leadership and, new democratic arrangements, which seeks to put the mechanisms in place for **Developing Elected Members' Community Leadership Role** and for increasing **Participative Democracy and Localised Governance**. This will position the Council at the forefront of community leadership in Shropshire, with better support for local councillors in demonstrating and delivering strong leadership for our citizens, our customers and our partners, for the benefit of the people of Shropshire. We will create an environment that supports social responsibility and civil action, helping our communities to step up to the plate and become more self-sufficient, by removing barriers (e.g. regulations), and providing more local choice to support our communities to find their own solutions to the issues that they face, by pushing decision making and budgets down to the most local level.

Through participatory budgeting and promoting the democratic decision making process (including community led planning), we will achieve better and more extensive engagement and involvement of local people and local partners, with an enhanced emphasis on "bottom up" priority setting.

We have developed draft Terms of Reference for improving our approach to community engagement across the Council and our current engagement activities are being mapped. There is a need for customers and stakeholders to have greater opportunities and involvement in the democratic process and for us to provide an environment that supports and encourages social responsibility and civil action.



Overall, we plan to develop a “together we can” attitude, supporting collective civic action, with our Councillors as active facilitators and enablers, best placed to listen to and advocate on behalf of those often hardest to hear in their communities.

A **comprehensive member learning and development programme** is currently being developed, and will support local councillors in becoming more visible and confident community advocates. This will include support and development for building social capital, particularly in “vulnerable” communities.

This will ensure all councillors are highly skilled, confident, and visible, at the heart of their communities, enthusing and enabling the people of Shropshire to be well represented and supported through the democratic process.

Local councillors will be empowered to make decisions within their areas, through constituted Local Joint Committees, working closely with town and parish councils and with a wide range of local service deliverers.



4.3 Understanding our communities

Shropshire "Working Together, Locally" will mean less reliance on "top down" prescription, and more focus on "bottom up" approaches to service design and delivery. A greatly enhanced role for local citizens and service users is essential, and will be core to redesigning our services to fit local needs and aspirations. Incentivising people to participate in decisions about their local areas will involve us demonstrating, in practice, that their views are valued, will be listened to, and will have real influence.

In recognition that one size does not fit all, we will bring together all the information we know about a place and its citizens, so that we can better understand how to plan our services in an area, in a way that will help us to make a positive contribution to peoples' lives and engender a spirit of community involvement and participation.

We want to work more closely with service users and citizens to give them a greater voice and more control over their own lives, This, in turn, will lead to designing and delivering our services in ways that make them more relevant, efficient and effective for local communities. The crucial role of our Community Regeneration Officers, based in localities, will be reviewed to provide better links between the Council and local communities, acting as a support and resource for communities and partners, as well promoting 'bottom up' and 'top down' understanding, through facilitating the important work of our local Councillors.

Ensuring local people know enough and are motivated to participate in decision-making and service delivery is key to giving them the confidence to really engage and get involved, so it is important to make sure we provide a range of good quality, easy to understand and easy to access information, appropriately targeted at different people.

As well as using what we know from our customer contact intelligence, and our 18 Local Development Framework 'place making plans', to provide a focus for local community aspirations and give direction for investment in each place, we will use a range of community engagement and involvement tools, such as:

- **"Tell me as we go"** - This is about getting information and feedback from customers when they contact us e.g. via comments and complaints, through the website, the Community Regeneration Officers or Local Joint Committees
- **"Down my street"** - Local councillors will be at the heart of their communities, highlighting issues from the 'man on the street' as they arise.
- **Citizens Panel** - Regular use of our Citizen Panel to get rapid feedback on a campaign basis
- **Surveys** - e.g. an annual telephone survey of residents focussing on reputation, value for money and involvement, plus any statutory surveys that we need to do.

We have made a commitment with our key partners to consulting on budgets together – police, health, fire and rescue, and the department for works and pensions, together with the council on one platform, giving people a strong and coherent way to make their views clear, with no confusion about who does what, or the risk of cost-shunting and duplication which has sometimes characterised the past.

5 Changing the way we do things

5.1 Service redesign and improvement

The drivers for and the need for change (as set out in this blueprint) necessitate a fundamental review of what services we provide, how we provide them and, indeed, who is best placed to provide them. In particular, the scale of the savings that we need to deliver, means that continuous improvement of services is not enough on its own to guarantee value for money. Whilst we will continually seek to deliver good value services through balancing cost, quality and customer satisfaction, a fundamental redesign of services across the council, based on the principles in this document, is now needed.

This means:

- Simplicity and transparency will dictate organisation design, with closely related activities and functions being grouped together or integrated with one another;
- Redesigning our corporate support services, to reduce overheads and help frontline services to be more effective;
- Keeping management layers and costs to a minimum;
- Service teams operating as "business units", with managers expected to bring commerciality and entrepreneurship to their role; and
- Managers and staff working in multi-disciplinary and multi-agency teams, with multiple accountabilities for a range of different projects, within a framework of 'matrix management'.

Our services will be flexible, responsive to local need, streamlined and effective in delivering the right services, to the right people, in the right place.

But, the challenges also mean that we are going to have to consider who is best placed to deliver services to local people, and this will mean exploring the potential for:

- Services being delivered by local Social Enterprises – the ‘third sector’ of community and voluntary organisations already plays an important role in delivering services to Shropshire people, but could do more.
- Services being delivered by private sector providers – where they can do so to a good standard at an acceptable cost.
- Stopping doing some things altogether, where there is no compelling reason to continue because the activity does not meet the priorities of our customers.

The balance between the costs of investment to delivering improvements against the outcomes to be achieved will be considered across all our activities, with the expectation that any investment made will see at least three times the level of savings achieved as a result. For example;

- ‘Cost to serve’ information for Shropshire is currently being developed, but initial calculations are similar to those national levels provided by The Society for Information Technology Management (Socitm) which are; Face to Face - £8.23; Phone - £3.21; compared with a web based transaction of £0.30.
- Customer segmentation information has been used to analyse and target individuals most likely to consider paying by direct debit. As a result of this, and other promotional work, there are an additional 2,500 people paying their Council Tax by direct debit: this represents a saving of approximately £4.88 per transaction.
- **NEETS** - Work undertaken through a pilot in Bradford suggest that the cost of a young person who is ‘not in education, employment or training’ (NEET) for 12 months or more is £45K, for resource costs alone. This figure effectively doubles when benefit claims are added in.

Approximately, 300 young people are NEET in Shropshire, of which about 70 remain NEET for more than 12 months. By improving our focus on supporting the 70 individuals, through a progressive package of services that reduces their time as NEETs by half, the **POTENTIAL SAVINGS RANGE IN REVENUE COSTS ALONE: £1.5m - £3m.**



5.2 There are several cross cutting areas of work that underpin the Council's programme for transformation.

The following areas will put the right framework and systems into place to allow the programme to realise its full potential, in terms of an innovative approach to service redesign across the whole Council.

Creating the conditions for success

Staff will need to be equipped with the critical skills to work in new, multi-tasking, more flexible ways, across professional boundaries, at a more local level. A **comprehensive skills audit** has started and will inform the development of a new **staff learning and development programme**. An in-depth review of the roles and responsibilities of the Council's managers is nearing completion. It is the start of a process, which includes a review of staff pay and reward, which will lead to a flatter organisational structure. Improvement to management tools such as the **development of a workforce management system** will allow more effective allocation of resources, and enable a much more flexible way of working.

Our overall goal is to ensure we build the capacity and capability of our workforce. Through effective **Workforce Planning**, we will ensure that we maximise our talent and build for the future. We aim to develop a Talent Management strategy, graduate and apprenticeship programmes, supporting a new approach to organisational design.

Plans are in place to refocus **Learning & Development** to deliver the right offerings for our future skills needs supported by investing in our people to enable cultural change through, for example, Change Champion training and development. Through investment in learning and development, we will have a more engaged workforce and staff will have learning opportunities for personal development and re-skilling, which support career development, where performance and contribution is rewarded.

An Essential Skills Development Framework has been designed to ensure that our managers understand their role in effectively managing their staff. The framework will mean that the training needs of managers are met in a more streamlined and focussed way, and will include a range of development opportunities and methods.

A toolkit to up skill managers across the Council will be in place by the end of September 2010. The aim of the toolkit is to provide managers with additional learning resources to effectively manage staff performance, through the transformation process and beyond.



We are reviewing our **Systems Measures & Outcomes**, to ensure we are capturing intelligence about the workforce and, working in partnership with Northgate, ensuring that we are using the current system to the best advantage.

We will implement a new **Pay & Reward** strategy which rewards performance and contribution, through active performance management. We are developing a new Competency framework, with a clear performance management and benefits approach. This will involve a thorough review of the present terms and conditions of employment for all staff.

Under proposals for a revised senior management structure, the council's corporate management team will be reduced from six directors to a smaller senior team of just two plus the Chief Executive. The restructure marks the start of a wider review of what number and type of managers are needed in the future. This will improve services and reduce overall management costs across the council by at least 20 per cent. Total savings of about £3 million a year are expected from the review. Initial changes are expected in 2010, with the review being completed by Easter 2011.

The proposals will move decision making and resources closer to the frontline, to eliminate unnecessary waste and duplication. There will be less spent on administration and more invested in vital frontline services - where it makes the biggest difference to the lives of local people.

The long term benefit to the organisation is the return on investment that will be obtained through investing in talent and the personal development of our staff.

A Leadership Academy for Shropshire will develop our top team for the whole of our local public sector, building a focus on our shared customer base and collective stake in problem solving into the heart of management development.

There has already been a commitment to a single, joined up approach to public consultation on the tough choices to meet needed savings targets. Hosted by an independent chair, public consultation will be held in a range of venues across the county to bring visibility and focus to the options for change, which, in the past, have been made without the same level of involvement of local communities.

Business Intelligence

There is a need for robust business driven performance management to meet the challenges of value for money, which is informative at a strategic, service and locality level.

A new strategic business intelligence model is being developed that will incorporate performance data, financial data and customer intelligence to support strategic decision making for the organisation as a whole and at a local level. It will ensure all relevant information within the organisation is analysed together in one place and not in service silos.

It is recognised that our performance management is moving away from prescriptive national indicators to a more outcome based, locality driven framework, that is relevant to localities, their particular issues, and the people that live there. This means that performance measuring will be driven by our local priorities in Shropshire, and performance comparisons will be made across Shropshire over time, not against national targets or other authorities which do not reflect Shropshire's unique history, culture and ways of doing things.

The focus of all reporting will shift from 'what' results are, to 'why' those results have occurred, positively and negatively. This will involve bringing what we know about local areas and how they are made up, together with greater use of subjective, perception based indicators of customer satisfaction, linking costs to both perceived and actual performance. This local 'picture' will give decision makers the up to date information needed to make informed choices about local solutions, that meet the needs of their communities, and to deliver value for money services in line with local people's priorities and expectations.

This approach will add value to the work of Shropshire Council, and its partners, by eradicating duplication and minimising bureaucracy. Enhanced systems development, to link the current data bases and to support real-time reporting for effective decision making, will also be required.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

ICT is fundamental to the efficient running of Shropshire Council. Greater investment in technology is needed to provide the modern tools essential to successfully deliver Shropshire "Working Together Locally", and to realise the savings to be made through reconfiguring our services, rationalising our physical assets, and moving to multi disciplined teams working in a flexible way.

The new technology we now need can be broken down into the following broad types:

- **Key business systems for service delivery** - e.g. planning, register of electors, housing, environmental health, local land and planning gazetteer (LLPG), council tax, revenues and benefits.
- **Key corporate systems** - e.g. customer relationship management (CRM), web, document management, e-procurement.
- **Generic systems** - e.g. Microsoft Office, e-mail, intranet.
- **Core financial systems** - e.g. payroll, accounting, debtors, creditors, audit.
- **Corporate Governance** - e.g. Committees, performance monitoring and management.

Prioritising systems development

Many of the projects within the programme for transformation are reliant on having the appropriate systems in place. Systems development will need to be prioritised, as some projects are key to enabling others to move forward in a planned way over the next few years.

For example, we will concentrate on high volume/high cost customer transactions (against the customer satisfaction levels they have), and identify the top 30 to 50 transactions to focus on for improvement by April 2011.

The ability to deliver this is entirely dependant on the development of our website and other self-service channels. Improvements to the Council's website are planned for completion by April 2011, which will also make it easier for people to find out about our services, and to conduct transactions over the internet, which will significantly reduce our costs.

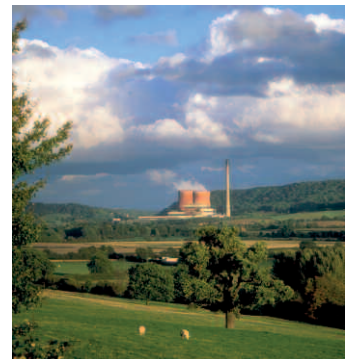


Examples of how systems development will contribute to successful delivery:

- **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** – reducing contact time and duplication of input by replacing the current CRM system, integrating with back office systems and implementing automated services will enable Customer Service advisers to take on more services, and handle more contacts with added value, for example Adult Social Care, Housing, etc.
- **Finance systems** - Place based interventions to reduce cross agency duplication and create efficiencies, through adapting financial management systems to support locally developed, outcome based, spend analysis across partner organisations.
- **Mobile and flexible working** - Enabling staff to carry out their duties out in the field, for what may be long periods of time, and in a more efficient and flexible way, will require staff to be empowered to do their job as they see best, and for appropriate technology to be in place to support this.

Setting up ways to work from home, as well as providing hot desking areas and mobile devices, will promote a more flexible working environment and allow workers to work in the field or to attend their nearest hot desk, rather than travelling regularly to a main office.

This approach will facilitate efficient allocation of resources, and mean less duplication, a reduction in paper based reporting, better communication, and further reductions in the Council's premises costs, carbon emissions and electricity consumption. It will ultimately allow a far more radical approach to reviewing the way we use our physical assets and property.



Assets and Property

We anticipate that, through the programme for transformation, there will be opportunities to release some of our assets for sale and disposal.

We will review our Asset Management Strategy to set out what is critical to the Council's business function, or for the infrastructure of local communities, once new patterns of service access and delivery are established.

It will set out which assets and property will be disposed of, to realise capital receipts or, where appropriate, which could be transferred to local communities for them to operate directly.

Reputation Management

Communication is essential to representing the nature and benefits of this unique Shropshire approach effectively. A Plan is in place to engage the public, town and parish Councils, other local public service providers, contract partners and the voluntary sector, so that we provide a clear and consistent message about how they can become involved in assisting us with this major move to locality based working.

Staff communication and engagement

There is significant evidence linking engaged staff in the workforce with increased performance and customer satisfaction. Other benefits of an engaged workforce include: reduced sickness days, reduced staff turnover, and staff having a better understanding of customers needs.

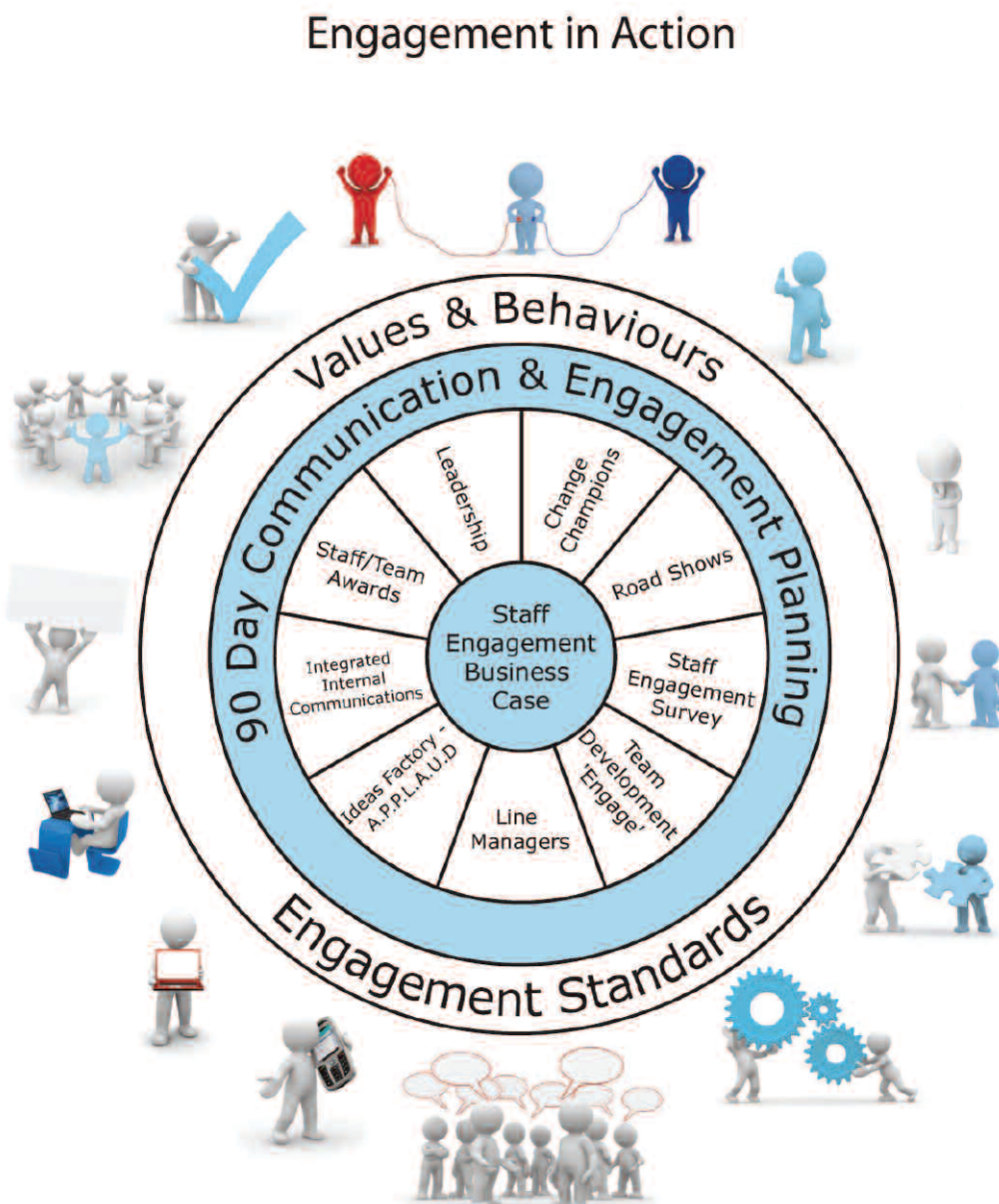
Through our 'Engagement in Action' programme, we plan to create an environment whereby staff feel motivated and supported to actively contribute to the organisation's success, and to foster a strong, shared commitment to its long term goals.

This will be a continuous process as part of the 'day job' and, therefore, requires top level commitment and leadership from senior managers and councillors. It will:

- Support our programme for transformation and the new operating principles, by engaging staff in the changes that are happening over the next 3 years;
- Encourage staff ideas to contribute to innovative improvements for front line services;

- Give individuals and teams a 'voice' to help shape service design and delivery;
- Support improvement planning to be as close to the end user as possible;
- Embed our shared values and behaviours into the organisation consistently; an
- Be part of an integrated internal communications framework.

The diagram below shows the various elements of staff Engagement in Action.



6 Making sure we get the full benefits

6.1 Benefits realisation

It is important that the Council has a clear focus on the intended benefits of this programme for transformation, in order to ensure delivery of the vision for “Working Together, Locally”.

We will, focus on delivering projects which are affordable within the Councils budget and which we know will provide a good rate of return on investment. We will do this by critically assessing the benefits (and, where possible, apply a financial value to the benefits) against the emerging costs, potential impact on various groups within our communities, and associated risks of change.

As progress is made through the programme, we will track (and report) whether or not the expected benefits are being delivered. We will do this through regular performance monitoring of the transformation work streams, using input, output and impact indicators built up over the key areas and themes of activity. We will continually review the benefits to ensure:

- we maximise all opportunities arising from individual projects;
- common benefits are identified and economies of scale considered and applied.

The starting point is to produce a “Benefits Map”, which identifies where (which work streams) the high level benefits will be delivered. The current position is summarised in the following table:



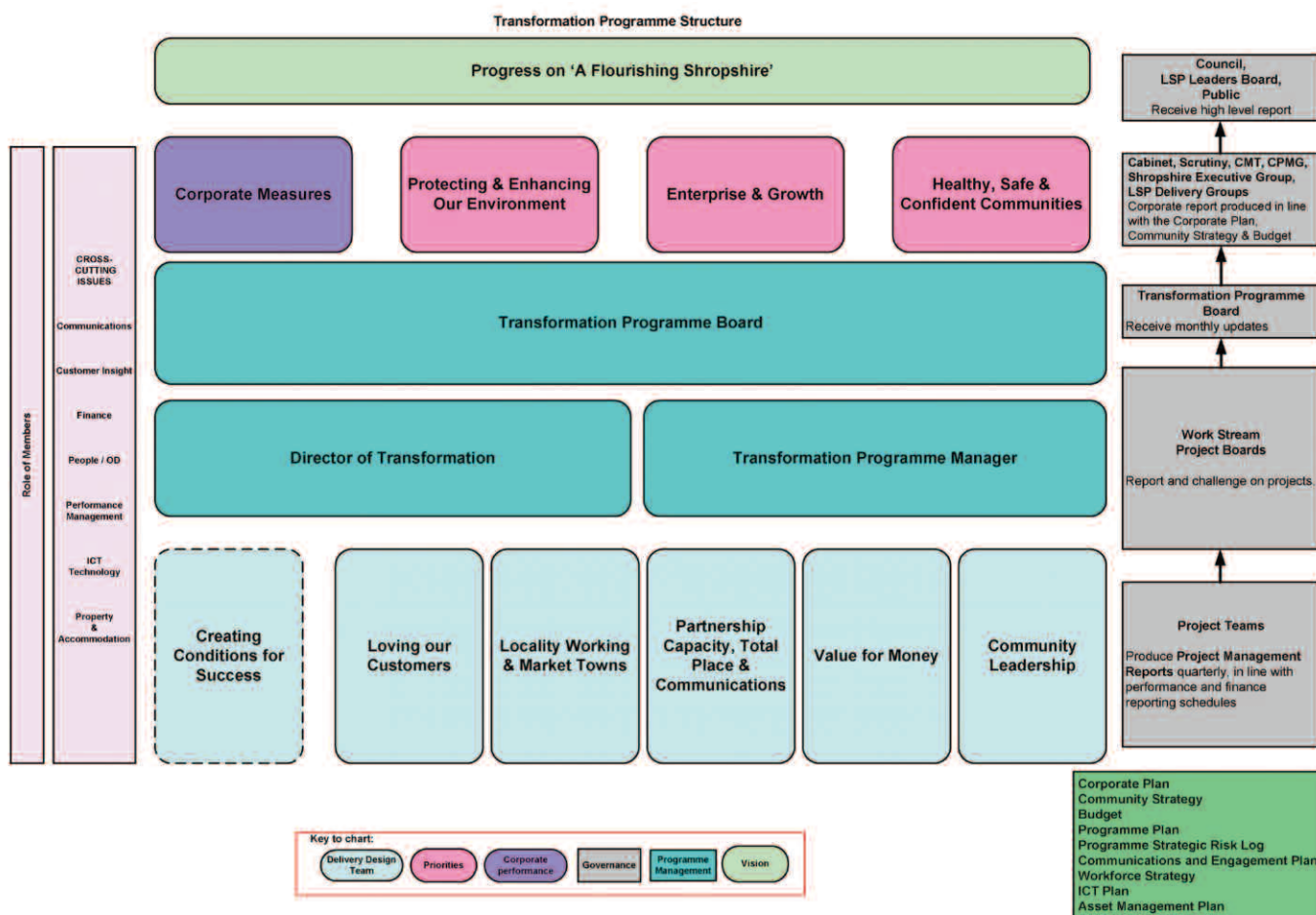
6.2 Benefits realisation overview

	Detail of benefit delivery	Programme for transformation Projects
Place	<p>Maximising value to Shropshire of existing funding streams, including opportunities for Area Based Budgeting.</p> <p>Increased mechanisms for hearing and listening to local voices, and an ability to demonstrate how local knowledge has been built into the cost and design of our services</p> <p>Locally set bespoke services which get away from the one size fits all approach whilst still providing value for money.</p> <p>More Public Access – Fewer Public Buildings - Increased number of multiple service ports, such as one stop shops, and less duplication of delivery in places.</p>	<p>Shropshire Partnership Transformation</p> <p>Managing Shropshire Council's external reputation.</p> <p>Participative democracy and localised governance: supporting a Big Society</p> <p>Place Shaper – Local Plans and Market Towns/Locality Working</p> <p>Community Steward pilot in Bridgnorth for managing street scene services</p> <p>Integrated Service provider – shared delivery platforms.</p>
People	<p>Thriving and well supported local action and interest groups, working with elected representatives to find local solutions to local problems and encourage more self help and self service.</p> <p>Well informed citizens who value the services they receive, and an enhanced reputation, visibility and profile for Shropshire Council in our market towns and villages.</p>	<p>Member Community Leadership and development programme</p> <p>Enhancing the Council's reputation in Shropshire.</p> <p>Participative democracy and localised governance: supporting a Big Society</p> <p>Customer insight projects.</p> <p>Improving our understanding of and the way we interact with customers – various projects such as Signposting, CRM, Right first time, Tell us once, Single view of the customer</p> <p>My Life My Choice</p> <p>Improvements to the way people are able to access services through channels such as website, text messaging, e-mail, digital TV, telephony, social media</p> <p>Remote and mobile working projects</p> <p>Welcome pack for residents</p>
Changing the way we work	<p>Increased range of multi agency and multidisciplinary partnerships available locally and demonstrating shared solutions to tough problems.</p> <p>Ability to demonstrate that, where appropriate, services are being delivered at the lowest possible level, closer to the point of need, with increased choice and ownership of service standards</p> <p>Increased range of service delivery channels and multiple service providers, best fitting local circumstances, managed and owned locally.</p> <p>Increased range of services delivered or able to be accessed locally and more staff based at the frontline.</p>	<p>Staff training and development programme to develop skills and facilitate working flexibly.</p> <p>Workforce planning</p> <p>Revised pay and reward structures to facilitate working flexibly.</p> <p>Consistent set of service standards across the Council.</p> <p>Integrated Service / devolved service provider.</p> <p>Shaping Shropshire Together – targeted multi-agency interventions in hot spot areas and financial inclusion project.</p> <p>Shared support services</p> <p>Using resources effectively and efficiently - various projects</p> <p>Income Generation Projects</p> <p>Carbon Management programme</p>

6.3 We are committed to saving £60m over the next 3- 4 years, through our programme of transformation. We will achieve this by exploring opportunities around service redesign across all our services, and by looking for a range of new vehicles to deliver them e.g. sharing assets, developing the Voluntary and Community Sector to support service delivery, and by moving some areas of service to Trust status or other new models of service provision.

7 Decision making arrangements

7.1 The governance framework of the overall programme for transformation is outlined in the diagram below. It will be led by the Transformation Programme Board, which is a joint member/officer group and which operates as a sub-group of Cabinet.



- 7.2** The Board will meet on a monthly basis and will collectively provide a responsive and efficient forum for discussion between senior councillors and senior officers of Shropshire Council, in relation to both the strategic direction and delivery of the programme for transformation.
- 7.3** The Board will endorse recommendations for action, as well as monitor and evaluate progress in implementing and meeting the deadlines, targets and outcomes of the programme. It will challenge and support the individual work stream leads and managers, as appropriate.
- 7.4** The Board will operate under the delegated authority of Cabinet and senior officers when making decisions, but will make recommendations on matters beyond the scope of this delegation to full Cabinet and Council for formal approval, e.g. major investment into programme activity or large scale service reconfiguration. The Cabinet will receive a formal progress/performance report on the delivery of the programme for transformation on a quarterly basis.

7.5 Overview and Scrutiny

Following a comprehensive review of the Council's scrutiny functions, new committees have been formed, in line with the main themes in our agreed Community Strategy and the Council's corporate priorities.

The review also proposed a common vision and purpose for each scrutiny committee, to make them more effective in both policy making and in recommending where improvement is needed.

Vision

The Overview and Scrutiny function for Shropshire Council will be strongly customer focused, concentrating on identifying ways for the Council and its partners to improve local services and make a positive, sustained difference to the quality of life for local people.

Purpose

- Scrutiny work programmes will be tightly focused on ensuring the delivery of clear outcomes on corporate priorities that make a positive difference for local residents.
- Scrutiny will engage the public and improve services by grounding its work in the day to day experiences of local people.

- Scrutiny will be embedded as a key business improvement tool for the Council.
- Scrutiny will be outward facing and responsive to changing priorities that may arise from external influences.

Helping to inform the Council's decision making process, through examination of the impact of service transformation on local communities, will be an important aspect of the scrutiny work programme.

8 Timeframe for change

- 8.1** Shropshire "Working Together Locally" was agreed by the Transformation Programme Board, as the heart of the programme for transformation, at its meeting on 26 July 2010.
- 8.2** The programme is scheduled to start in October 2010 and will comprise of 3 phases:
1. Phase 1 - October 2010 – April 2011, 'quick wins'.
 2. Phase 2 - April 2011 – April 2012, up to 18 months for major change projects to be initiated and 'run in'.
 3. Phase 3 - April 2012 – September 2013, up to 3 years for long term savings to be realised and changes embedded as the new way we do things around here.
- 8.3** The programme will be managed through the development of one overall 'Roadmap for Transformation'. This will be broken down into 90 day delivery blocks, with key milestones within each block.
- 8.4** A new Shropshire Council Business Plan 2011 – 2013 will be presented to Council on 24 February 2011. The plan will set out the key priorities for Shropshire Council and describe how the work of the programme for transformation contributes towards their delivery, incorporating the outcomes from the Government's October 2010 Spending Review.



