



Date: Wednesday, 12 July 2017

Time: 12.30 pm

Venue: Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Contact: Jane Palmer, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01743 257712
Email: jane.palmer@shropshire.gov.uk

CABINET

TO FOLLOW REPORT (S)

3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 21 June 2017. **TO FOLLOW**

Contact: Jane Palmer Tel: 01743 257712

9 Economic Growth Strategy (Pages 7 - 90)

Lead Member – Councillor Nic Laurens – Portfolio Holder for Economy and Growth

Report of the Director of Place and Enterprise **TO FOLLOW**

Contact: George Candler Tel: 01743 255003

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Committee and Date

Cabinet

12 July 2017

CABINET

**Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2017 in the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND
12.30 pm - 1.05 pm**

Responsible Officer: Jane Palmer
Email: jane.palmer@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257712

Present

Councillor Peter Nutting (Leader)
Councillors Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader), Joyce Barrow, Lezley Picton, Robert Macey, Nic Laurens, Nicholas Bardsley, Lee Chapman and Steve Davenport

11 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Minnery.

12 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None were declared.

13 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 31 May 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

14 Public Question Time

No questions had been received from members of the public.

15 Scrutiny Items

There were no scrutiny matters for consideration.

16 Financial Outturn 2016/17 [Revised]

The Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance [Section 151 Officer] explained that the report reflected all necessary changes that had been made as a result of an

amendment to correct the matching of Housing Benefit and Subsidy Grant; the changes were minor and had no material impact. The corrected report was a final and unambiguous copy for future reference.

Responding to a Member's query regarding the level of schools balances, the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance stated that he could provide a breakdown of the figures if required.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Outturn for the Revenue Budget for 2016/17 be noted and is an underspend of £0.894m, this represents 0.16% of the original gross budget of £568.8m.
- ii. That the level of general balance be noted and stands at £14.698m, which is above the anticipated level.
- iii. That the Outturn for the Housing Revenue Account for 2016/17 be noted and is an underspend of £1.417m and the level of the Housing Revenue Account reserve stands at £9.031m (2015/16 £5.824m).
- iv. That the increase in the level of Earmarked Reserves and Provisions (excluding delegated school balances) of £2.508m in 2016/17 be noted.
- v. That the level of school balances stand at £6.280m (2015/16 £7.173m) be noted.
- vi. Approve net budget variations of £0.481m to the 2016/17 capital programme, detailed in Appendix 5/Table 6 and the re-profiled 2016/17 capital budget of £54.432m.
- vii. That the re-profiled capital budgets of £80.529m for 2017/18, including slippage of £9.288m from 2016/17, £26.081m for 2018/19 and £2.320m for 2019/20 as detailed in Appendix 5 /Table 9, be approved.
- viii. That the outturn expenditure set out in Appendix 5 of £44.986m, representing 83% of the revised capital budget for 2016/17, be accepted.
- ix. That retaining a balance of capital receipts set aside of £18.370m as at 31st March 2017 to generate a one-off Minimum Revenue Provision saving of £0.418m in 2017/18 be approved.

17 Quarter 4 Performance Report 2016/17

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support presented the report on the Council's performance against its key outcomes for Quarter 4 2016/17. He drew attention to the link within the report to the online performance portal to be used in conjunction with the information within the report.

Responding to a Member's query regarding the number of staff redundancies in schools, the Head of Human Resources and Development stated that the redundancy costs were borne by the Council. She agreed to provide information on the numbers of school staff redundancies to Cabinet members

RESOLVED:

- i) That the key underlying and emerging issues in the reports and appendices be considered; and
- ii) That the performance portal be reviewed and performance areas to be considered in greater detail or referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee be identified.

18 Community Right to Bid: Process Amendment

The Portfolio Holder for Communities presented a report detailing minor amendments to the Community Right to Bid process.

Following concerns raised relating to the timing of local Member/s being informed of any such bids, it was agreed that the local Member would be informed early in the process; any necessary changes to the process would be made accordingly to ensure that the local Member/s were informed in a timely manner.

RESOLVED:

That the following amendments to the Community Right to Bid process be made:

- Remove "Constituted Community / Voluntary Group from the list of organisation' that can nominate (this type is not a qualifying organisation under the Legislation). This type of body could come under the "unincorporated" body provided it meets the requirements of this definition.
- Request more detailed information from the nominator, Parish Council and Community Enablement Officer (to enable more effective and efficient consideration of whether the asset should be listed as an Asset of Community Value).

19 Community Asset Transfer Policy Amendment

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support presented the report from the Director of Place and Enterprise detailing minor amendments to the Community Asset Transfer Policy to ensure that it remained efficient and effective.

RESOLVED:

That the following amendments to the Community Asset Transfer Policy be approved:

- Add Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) as a qualifying organisation
- Amend the guidance timescales for completion/progression of each step in the process in accordance with the flowchart attached to the report.

20 Public Space Protection Order for Shrewsbury Town Centre

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services presented a report from the Director of Public Health on the results of the consultation and proposed amendments to the draft Public Spaces Protection Order [PSPO] that was being proposed in response to growing concern and evidence that anti-social behaviour was affecting local businesses, residents, visitors and local agencies within Shrewsbury Town Centre.

Members were in support of the PSPO, the first to be implemented in Shropshire, and requested that a progress report on the efficacy of the Order be made in 12 months' time.

RESOLVED:

- i) That, with any necessary amendments, the Local Authority implements the Public Spaces Protection Order as detailed in Appendix A with an effective commencement date of 1st August 2017.
- ii) That the Authority use Fixed Penalty Notices, in appropriate circumstances, where there is reason to believe that an offence under the Public Space Protection Order has been committed by any person.
- iii) That the level of the Fixed Penalty Notice for a breach of the Public Space Protection Order be set at £75.00 and that if paid within 10 days of the date of the Fixed Penalty Notice a reduced fee of £50.00 will be accepted.
- iv) That the Trading Standards and Licensing Operations Manager be instructed to publish the Public Spaces Protection Order as detailed in Appendix A and cause to be erected notices in accordance with Regulations made under the Anti-social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014.
- v) That, for the purpose of discharging the Public Spaces Protection Order as detailed in Appendix A, the Trading Standards and Licensing Operations Manager publish and cause to be erected notices in accordance with Regulations made under the Anti-social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014.
- vi) That an update report on the efficacy of the PSPO be made to Cabinet in 12 months' time.

21 Shropshire Council Local Plan Review

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services presented a report from the Director of Place and Enterprise seeking approval for the publication of a revised version of the Council's Local Development Scheme and to provide a summary of the feedback received from the recent consultation on Issues and Strategic Options for the Shropshire Local Plan review. He stressed that the timescales for the process needed to be adhered to and added that the consultation responses would soon be published on the Council's website.

It was noted that, pending the adoption of the reviewed Local Plan, the strength of the current Local Plan remained undiminished and remained in force.

RESOLVED:

- i) That, subject to the need for minor amendments and editing, the updated Local Development Scheme (LDS), attached as appendix A to the report, be approved;
- ii) That authority be delegated to the Director of Place and Enterprise, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services to approve and publish the final version of the document.

22 Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy, 2018 to 2023

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Leisure presented a report from the Director of Place and Enterprise seeking approval for an Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy for Shropshire. She stressed that the Council needed to prioritise its financial support in this service area for the future.

In response to a Member's comments relating to the retention of swimming facilities in the centre of Shrewsbury, the Leader stated that he was unable to give assurances at this time but he would investigate the retention of swimming facilities in the centre of the town.

Referring to section 4 of the report and Tier 3 Community Leisure Centres, the Portfolio Holder stated that three of the six Community Leisure Centres listed were still under the Council's direct management but the aim was to achieve a cost neutral position to the Council by the end of 2018/19. A Member commented that she could see no reason why the respective local Parish Councils would not wish to support such good facilities in their own areas. The Portfolio Holder agreed and added that management of such facilities by local community groups was often beneficial to the facility.

Members noted the intention to hold an event in September 2017 to co-design the Action Plan with local communities and report the outcomes of this event to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2018 to 2023, be approved; and
- ii) That authority be delegated to the Director of Place and Enterprise, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Leisure and a broad range of interested parties, to co-develop, implement and review a detailed five year Action Plan linked to the delivery of the Strategy.

23 Exclusion of the Public and Press

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and Paragraph 10.4 (3) of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following item/s.

24 Exempt Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the confidential Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 31 May 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

Signed: (Leader)

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Date:



Committee and Date

Cabinet

12 July 2017

Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy 2017 - 2021

Responsible Officer George Candler, Director - Place and Enterprise
e-mail: george.candler@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 258671

1. Summary

- 1.1 Economic growth is one of the key priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan and the Council recognises that it has a significant role to play in supporting the successful and sustainable growth of Shropshire's economy.
- 1.2 A new draft Economic Growth Strategy was presented to Cabinet on the 1st March 2017. Cabinet noted the progress made in developing the draft document and agreed to issue the strategy for a period of 7 weeks of public consultation.
- 1.3 This consultation has been concluded, feedback has been reviewed and has informed the final strategy that is now presented to Cabinet for agreement. A copy of the consultation summary and ESIA are appended to this report.
- 1.4 The Economic Growth Strategy 2017 - 2021 sets the strategic direction for economic growth for Shropshire over the next 5 years. An action plan will sit alongside this strategy and will be reviewed annually and the evaluation of achievements and updates will be reported to Cabinet.
- 1.5 Subject to agreement of the final Economic Growth Strategy, a communications plan will be prepared and this will include a formal launch of the final strategy in September 2017.

2. Recommendations

- A** Cabinet agrees the final Economic Growth Strategy 2017 – 2021 following feedback from the public consultation.
- B** Endorses the approach of reviewing the action plan annually and to the preparation of a communications plan to support the dissemination of the strategy.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 Shropshire's economy is in a good position and has generally been performing well, however it has the potential to develop and expand and in so doing raise its economic productivity. There are a number of current challenges and future trends that, without a strategic economic approach and in the absence of targeted actions to address them, mean that the economy of Shropshire is likely to under-perform.
- 3.2 A key risk is that Shropshire is falling behind regional and national averages in economic output from businesses and employee earnings and this is leading to lower economic productivity compared to the West Midlands and UK as well as some of the surrounding authority areas. There is a declining population of traditional working age (16-64) in Shropshire and a particular lack of younger people staying in the County to work so talent and skills are being lost from the county.
- 3.3 The retention of existing business, the ability to develop and retain skills and talent and successfully attract new inward investment from outside Shropshire are all key objectives to addressing these challenges and supporting a step change in economic performance.
- 3.4 The Council has a key role to play in each of these objectives and a significant opportunity to use its own investment power, services and influences to maximise economic growth. There are six priority actions for the Council that are detailed in the Strategy. These have not changed as a result of the consultation and are as follows:
- Target actions and resources on economic opportunities
 - Enable businesses to grow and succeed
 - Deliver infrastructure to support growth
 - Meet skill's needs of businesses and people's aspirations for work
 - Promote Shropshire to investors
 - Build our reputation as a Council that is 'good to do business with'
- 3.5 The Council cannot deliver growth in isolation and does not have control over all actions and activities that will generate economic growth. Working with the West Midlands Combined Authority and Marches LEP as our key strategic partnerships and with our neighbouring authorities in England and Wales is important for us to deliver our strategy and is an approach that is supported by Government through its Industrial Strategy. Shropshire is a part of a broader economic geography and will increase profile from joining larger investment propositions and campaigns.
- 3.6 Our vision will only be achieved by working collaboratively across the public and private sectors and with our communities. Notably continued work and close collaboration with the Shropshire Business Board, which represents the key sectors in the county, is fundamental to drive the economic prosperity and to champion the area to those within and outside Shropshire. In addition and alongside the Board, continuing to build on collaborative work with our partners in Higher and Further

Education, the Constellation Partnership with Cheshire East relating to High Speed 2, the Growing Mid Wales partnership and Midlands Engine will be a focus.

- 3.7 Now is an important opportunity to communicate the importance of growth and work in partnership with Shropshire Business Board, the Marches LEP and other stakeholders to achieve the best possible outcomes of a growing economy for the benefit of our people and businesses. A clear communications and relationship plan will underpin the delivery of the Strategy.
- 3.8 An ESIIA has been completed alongside the consultation and is attached at Appendix 4. The benefits of growing the local economy are anticipated to positively impact on many societal groups within the county. And whilst this strategy is economically focused there will be many benefits associated with a resilient economy and increased economic productivity such as increased employment opportunity, provision of housing, infrastructure benefits, facilities and utilities.
- 3.9 The strategy is fully intended to be a working document through the annual review of progress and monitoring of changes in the economic, policy and strategic landscape. The Council will seek to engage with people in the Protected Characteristic groupings, particularly where low levels of responses to public consultation have been received to date and with groupings and their advocates where links may usefully be made with specific target groups.
- 3.10 Alongside this the Council will also continue to look at best practice, engage with and encourage comments and ideas from local residents and businesses and actively encourage the participation of local community groups, organisations and networks in the development and delivery of the Economic Growth Strategy. Therefore the ESIIA will be regularly updated over the 5-year term of the strategy.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Increasing the business base of Shropshire is directly related to generating business rates that the Council receives. Retaining businesses and attracting new companies will support and raise the business rate income for the Council. This has become increasingly relevant given Government's changes to business rate retention by 2020.
- 4.2 An investment strategy is being prepared for developing the key employment sites and this will inform an updated and detailed capital investment programme for the Council, which is an integral part of the Financial Strategy.
- 4.3 The Economic Growth Strategy will help to inform how the council makes the best use of the £1m that has been allocated for economic growth from the New Homes Bonus reserve, as set out in the Council's Revenue Monitoring Report of 9th November 2016.

5. Background

- 5.1 Creating a prosperous economy is one of the three high-level outcomes in the Corporate Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19. Developing a clear economic vision and strategy is a key milestone in setting out the Council's commitment and ambition to grow the local economy and deliver this Corporate Plan outcome.
- 5.2 As well as taking into account the content of the Council's own Corporate Plan and vision to 'make Shropshire a great place to live, learn and work', there is significant evidence and analysed findings that sit behind the draft Economic Growth Strategy. This includes the commissioned research report with IPPR North (jointly commissioned with University Centre Shrewsbury) to help Shropshire develop a new economic vision and socio-economic research produced by the Council's Policy, Performance and Intelligence team.
- 5.3 The regional and national economic picture and context has also been considered in the development of the Economic Growth strategy. In particular in the national context, the UK Industrial Strategy green paper and Shropshire's responses to this, and regionally the Marches LEP ambitions for growth in the Strategic Economic Plan as well as the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Strategic Economic Plan to 2030. Shropshire's role as a Non-constituent Member of the WMCA is an important development in the evolution of partnership arrangements with the wider West Midlands region and the mutual and shared benefits of growth.

5.4 Feedback from Consultation

The draft Economic Growth Strategy 2017 – 2021 (including the background information and research reports) was published on Shropshire Council's consultation portal on 13th March 2017 and the official period of public consultation ran until 28th April 2017. During this period, there were a number of methods of consultation and engagement used; consultation feedback survey, email feedback options for more detailed comments, presentations and discussions at meetings and events and workshops and focus groups.

- 5.5 Over 4,000 individuals were notified of the opportunity to feedback on the draft Strategy including businesses, stakeholders, town and parish councils, statutory bodies, communities and residents. During the consultation period 25 face to face meetings and presentations were delivered and a further 21 organisations and networks were formally written to alerting them of the consultation.
- 5.6 The consultation exercise resulted in a response of 46 surveys and 26 written responses. There was a good geographical spread of participants from across the county reflecting both urban and rural areas. Many of these written responses were very thorough and included a number of detailed points. The analysis of the responses from participants showed broad support for the six priorities and vision with common themes emerging, these include;
- Communities and town and parish councils want to be engaged going forward
 - The vision should be simpler, punchy and powerful
 - Greater emphasis on skills, employment and health linkages

- Historic assets and natural environment should be made clearer and importance of green infrastructure highlighted.
- Add more about business start-ups and their importance to the Shropshire economy
- Impacts and opportunities of Brexit
- Community focused businesses and social enterprises should be referenced
- Greater importance of visitor economy and agricultural sectors
- Ageing demographic as an opportunity for economic activity
- Council needs to communicate more effectively
- The importance of building economic and strategic partnerships
- Balancing investment and growth with protecting natural and rural environment

The full consultation summary is attached to this report at Appendix 2.

- 5.7 Since the end of the consultation period, officers have analysed the consultation responses received and strengthened and added references within the strategy to address a number of the key points that were raised. A table setting out the key comments and responses called 'you said, we did' has been prepared (and is attached at Appendix 3). Those participants who submitted a response and have requested feedback will be sent a report detailing the main findings. This report will also be published on the Shropshire Council website.
- 5.8 There are four targets in the Strategy that have been based on evidence from the current Local Plan together with recent studies and forecasts. None of the comments received from the consultation exercise alter these targets. These are targets for the 5 year period of the study and progress against these will be monitored and reported annually to Cabinet.
- 5.9 An annual review of the action plan, that will contain all of the actions from the strategy, will also be undertaken and progress together with any updates will be reported to Cabinet. These actions are defined as immediate (next 6 months), short term (within the next 2 years), medium term (within 2 to 5 years) and longer term (over 5 years).

6. Additional Information

- 6.1 The UK Industrial Strategy green paper was consulted upon earlier this year and Shropshire Council and its partners including representatives of the Shropshire Business Board submitted responses highlighting specific areas of opportunity and some of the key challenges being faced. This is important for the Economic Growth Strategy as it provides the Central Government and national context and will provide a valuable platform on which to engage with Government departments going forward.
- 6.2 The Midlands Engine Strategy was launched in March 2017 by Government and sets out how the Government wants the Midlands to become the growth engine for the whole of the UK economy. The West Midlands Combined Authority is a key player in the realisation of this Strategy and vision. The key challenge the strategy highlights is that the Midlands lags behind the UK in terms of economic productivity

(by approximately 15%) and the actions that can be implemented to help reverse this trend. This is important because this is also the key challenge for Shropshire and what the Economic Growth Strategy is primarily seeking to address with actions identified being able to contribute to the delivery of the wider Midlands Strategy.

- 6.3 Subject to Cabinet sign off of the final Economic Growth Strategy, there is a proposed launch of the strategy and an opportunity to share with partners, stakeholders and the business and investor community the positive progress being made in Shropshire and the focus on strategic economic activity. A number of key speakers and guests will be involved in the event, which is planned for the 26th September 2017.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The new Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire for 2017 to 2021 presented in this report is setting out a clear ambition and set of actions to increase economic productivity.
- 7.2 The consultation exercise has been valuable in gathering feedback and informing the preparation of the final document. It has engaged a cross section of stakeholders and communities of Shropshire and has generated a number of common themes that have been incorporated into the Strategy.
- 7.3 The final Strategy now presents the opportunity for the Council to be bold, committed and focused in its leadership role to generate growth for the benefit and prosperity of its businesses and residents over the next five years.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Cabinet report 1st March 2017 'Draft Economic Growth Strategy 2017 – 2021'

Corporate Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19

Building an economic vision for Shropshire, IPPR North, February 2017

Shropshire Economic Profile, January 2017

Marches LEP Strategic Economic Plan and Ambitions for Growth

West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan

Midlands Engine Strategy, March 2017

Building our Industrial Strategy Green Paper, January 2017 and Shropshire Council response April 2017

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Nic Laurens, Portfolio Holder for Economy and Growth

Local Members

All

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021

Appendix 2 – Economic Growth Strategy Consultation 2017 Feedback Report

Appendix 3 – ‘You said, we did’

Appendix 4 – Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

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Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire 2017–2021





Introduction

This strategy sets out Shropshire Council's commitment and ambition to grow the local economy of the County.

It has taken into account the recently commissioned work with consultants IPPR North to develop a new economic vision alongside our own corporate plan and vision to 'make Shropshire a great place to live, learn and work'. It also links into and informs the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan and European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) Strategy. The objectives of the strategy also link to the West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan and the national

economic picture, in particular the modern Industrial Strategy for the UK.

The aim of this economic growth strategy is to provide the vision and ambition that will direct the actions Shropshire Council will take to achieve increased economic productivity and a prosperous and resilient economy.

Shropshire Council is committed in its role to grow the local economy and this includes our ability to invest in the economic growth agenda and to accelerate activity through our financial resources. An action plan will be produced to support this strategy that will inform the level of investment and timeframe



Our values as a Council and our approach to growth across the services within our own organisation will influence the success of this strategy. Equally we must engage effectively with people to communicate our growth ambitions and what we are doing to achieve them. We have and will continue to develop a commercial, enterprising and innovative approach which we are instilling into the culture of our organisation to help deliver our strategy.

However, we do recognise that Shropshire Council does not have control over all actions and activities that will generate economic growth. Therefore our vision will only be achieved by working collaboratively

across the public and private sectors and with our communities. We will commit to working with our strategic partners including the Marches LEP, Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise sector (VCSE), Town Councils, West Midlands Combined Authority and neighbouring authorities for the benefit of Shropshire's economy, businesses and residents.

'Building an economic vision for Shropshire – A report by IPPR North', February 2017 has informed this strategy. The IPPR North report (jointly commissioned with the University Centre Shrewsbury) is centred on four themes: people, place, private businesses and public services

and has made thirteen recommendations linked to these. Our strategy does not repeat these but has taken these recommendations into account in setting out the actions here.

There is a wealth of evidence and analysed findings that sit behind this document including a research report from IPPR North, Oxford Economics forecasts and the Shropshire Socio Economic Context report produced by the Council's Policy, Performance and Intelligence team.



The Vision

Our Economic Growth Vision for Shropshire...

To be the best place to do business and invest, renowned for its pool of local talent and expertise. We will strive to maximise our economic potential and increase productivity by fully utilising the benefits of our special environment and high quality assets.

Shropshire is a high quality location and has a generally well performing economy. It has one of the best natural and historic environments in England. It already has a reputation for being a fantastic place to live, and an economically active population with higher levels of qualifications than the national or regional average. Shropshire communities enjoy an exceptional high quality of life and environment, with vibrant historic market towns, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and one of the highest concentrations of historic monuments and buildings in the country. We will use these assets to attract investment and will continue to nurture them to ensure they are sustained for current and future generations to enjoy.



Our objectives

There is however, a step change needed in Shropshire's economic productivity. It has significant potential to do more and do it better. To realise our ambition to facilitate sustainable economic growth, Shropshire Council will be focused and committed to achieve maximum economic productivity from the assets and opportunities across the County. This will be based on three key objectives:

- Support and grow new and existing businesses
- Attract inward investment
- Develop and retain talent and skills

Delivering our Vision – priority actions and targets

To deliver against this vision we have six priority actions:

1. **Target** actions and resources where there are economic opportunities
2. **Enable** businesses to start, grow and succeed
3. **Deliver** infrastructure to support growth
4. **Meet** skills needs of businesses and people's aspirations for work
5. **Promote** Shropshire to investors
6. **Build** our reputation as a Council that is 'good to do business with'



As part of an organisational communications strategy, we will define a clear communications and relationship plan to underpin these objectives for economic growth. This plan will centre on regular communications with residents, businesses and key stakeholders. We will work collaboratively with our partners and neighbours, to ensure that delivery agencies understand our vision and to influence decision makers in Central Government.

This ongoing two-way conversation will define clear messages and re-iterate the objectives of our economic growth strategy. We will continue to build on relationships with businesses, organisations and networks to achieve shared objectives, and maximise communication channels for effective and positive outcomes. We will also continue to look at opportunities to improve the resilience of our towns and communities, maintaining Shropshire as great place to live and work.

In order to qualify our ambition for growth, and to support the Marches LEP ambitions and targets to build 70,000 new homes and create 40,000 new jobs by 2031, together with the West Midlands Combined Authority ambitious plans for growth, this strategy sets the following targets in Shropshire over the next 5 years (to 2021);

- Increase GVA (currently £6 billion) by 12%
- £300 million of private sector investment
- At least 3,700 new jobs
- 1,375 new homes per annum

These targets are ambitious, and importantly are informed by evidence from the current Local Plan together with recent studies and forecasts including work by Oxford Economics.

The following sections set out each of the six priority actions, which will be managed through a detailed action plan.

1. Target actions and resources on Economic Opportunities

There are a number of key opportunities that have been considered in the preparation of this strategy. This will be the focus of our future activity, working to maximise and promote these opportunities for the economic wellbeing and success of Shropshire.

- **Strategic location and economic relationships**

The geographic location and economic landscape of Shropshire provides an increasingly significant opportunity and one which we should promote and capitalise on. We are in a unique location situated within the West Midlands Combined Authority and Midlands Engine, on the border of the Northern Powerhouse and the boundary of Wales. This is a major opportunity given the status of these economic regions by Central Government and the collaborative cross border benefits with Mid Wales, particularly for infrastructure and skills.

Immediate actions:

- Participate in the West Midlands Combined Authority as a non-constituent member for the benefit of Shropshire and focus on the key areas of collaboration that are set out in the Strategic Economic Plan to 2030 to accelerate economic growth, employment and productivity and focus on mutual priority actions, including specifically the Land Commission and Growth Company.
- Work collaboratively with local authority partners and other LEP areas to help deliver the priorities within the Marches ESIF strategy and ensure that Shropshire benefits from the resources available in current and future programmes.
- Align with the Midlands Engine strategy and identify the benefits and opportunities for Shropshire linked to priority projects and key economic sectors.



Short/medium term actions:

- Work with Powys Council and Growing Mid Wales Partnership to understand the opportunities for collaboration on shared agendas – currently infrastructure and skills.
- Work with key partners across Cheshire and Staffordshire to align economic growth and infrastructure priorities in the North East of the County and ensure we are 'HS2 ready'.
- Position investment opportunities within promotional campaigns and collateral presenting the economic opportunities in the West Midlands Regions and other regions adjoining Shropshire.
- Assist the tourism and visitor economy sector partners to promote Shropshire as a destination and maximise the built and natural heritage assets throughout the county.

● Major employment sites and growth corridors

There will be further opportunities to bring forward new employment land to meet our economic needs and we will work with developers and partners to prepare existing sites for occupation and to identify and prioritise deliverable future sites based on a return on investment. We want to build on our rich legacy of quality business, high added value, quality of life and sustainability. The adopted Local Plan is currently under review with a target submission date to the planning inspectorate of December 2018. It provides the framework for housing and economic delivery across the county ensuring that we have a plan-led approach to achieving sustainable development.

Having readily available serviced employment sites in the right locations is key to our growth strategy and fundamental to increasing our economic productivity. In terms of meeting the needs of Shropshire based companies including those who are starting up and expanding, and to meet the requirements of other businesses and developers outside of the county looking to relocate and invest in the county. We will be bold, ambitious and forward thinking in our methods and approach to prioritising sites, and investing resources where needed to bring these sites forward for employment activity. This will be clearly presented in our investment strategy.

The strategic corridors and growth zones are clustered into the following:

- M54/A5 East growth corridor – this is linked to investment in Telford and the clustering and supply chain opportunities from existing and future companies in close proximity to this part of the County. This is a key road and rail transport corridor which reinforces Shropshire’s close proximity to the West Midlands and the growth potential that will develop from the Land Commission as part of the Combined Authority structure. We recognise that there are site constraints in some of these urban centres, but there are also opportunities:
 - To support the cluster of activities and key sectors in Bridgnorth and work with existing companies on future plans.
 - For the Council to work with neighbouring Telford and Wrekin Council and other key stakeholders to play a leading role in capitalising on opportunities arising from the redevelopment of the former Ironbridge Power Station.
- A5 west growth corridor including the site for Oswestry Innovation Park and Oswestry as the second largest historic market town in the County.
- Central Shropshire – Shrewsbury is a nationally renowned historic County town and serves a much wider catchment including Mid Wales. Opportunities within the town centre and the major employment sites at Shrewsbury Business Park, Battlefield, and the Sustainable Urban Extensions to the South and West of the town.



- North East Shropshire and the A41 growth corridor linking to the M54 – related to the HS2 hub at Crewe and links to the North West to Cheshire and beyond. Includes the historic market towns of Whitchurch and Market Drayton together with the MOD owned site, Clive Barracks at Tern Hill, which will become available for development in 2022.
- A49 growth corridor related to strategic north-south road and rail links that connect Craven Arms and the key historic market towns of Ludlow and Church Stretton, with the proposed Crewe Hub and linking into Herefordshire, specifically to Leominster and Hereford.

Immediate actions:

- Produce a growth investment strategy for the key employment sites.
- Develop a project pipeline for the next 10 to 15 years. This will include the short and medium term priorities and set out what enabling works the sites will need to come forward. This will include Council owned sites, as well as understanding any interventions critical to third party owned sites that will contribute to our growth objectives. (This is aligned with the current Local Plan review.)

Short/medium term actions:

- Work with the Marches LEP and West Midlands Combined Authority to articulate the offer that Shropshire has for employment growth and work to secure funding to support this.
- Work with the Department for International Trade and the Midlands Investment Hub to present clearly the strategic employment sites in Shropshire.
- Develop a growth strategy for each of our key market towns. (Aligned with the current Local Plan Review.)



• Target growing and under-represented sectors

Shropshire and the Marches have a number of sectors that are performing well and where there are extremely successful companies operating in the locality. Our strategy includes working with companies in these sectors to support their growth and ongoing success. We will support innovative and advancing solutions in these sectors to enable their growth in an ever competing global economy. We have identified six existing sectors where there is growth potential, particularly with an emphasis on technologies and innovation;

- Advanced manufacturing including engineering, agri-food and agri-tech
- Food and drink processing
- Health and social care
- Visitor economy (and heritage based businesses)
- Environmental science and technologies
- Creative and digital industries

As part of our strategy to increase investment in these sectors, we will set out specific and clear actions relating to each of them. This will include supporting work on the development of the Agri-Tech west offer, a cross LEP initiative that is being led by Harper Adams University. We are committed to working with the health and higher education sectors on opportunities for us to become an area renowned for advancements in health and social care technologies and digital solutions. There will be a strategic view of the visitor economy for Shropshire and the wider Marches area, this will be an opportunity to develop strategic linkages and a coherent approach to marketing the County on a national and international scale. There is a specific action for us to optimise the knowledge that exists in Shropshire within the environmental science and technologies sector and to align this with the Government's agenda to promote smart and clean technologies and a low carbon economy. We will take a coherent approach to the creative and digital industries sector and understand the network and business to business opportunities for increasing productivity.

As the implications of Brexit and the details of the deal that the UK Government negotiates with Europe becomes clearer, we will work with sectors and partners to fully understand the opportunities and issues specifically for Shropshire and the wider Marches area. This will include implications for the agricultural sector in particular and we will engage with local and national organisations to capture their full input, information and intelligence.

As well as growth and existing sectors, we will also target growing under-represented sectors in our current economy, but those that are linked to the sector strengths we have. Financial and professional services and retail are particular sectors we can target. There is already a presence of companies operating across these sectors (including national retail, independent retailers, legal, accountancy, banking, business administration, land and property agents, architects and building contractors servicing the heritage sector) which are fundamental to the business processes of companies across other sectors both within Shropshire and beyond the County. We have scope to develop this and to promote our location and business base to existing and new companies.

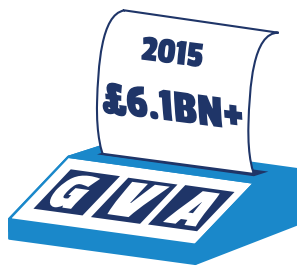
Immediate actions:

- Use this strategy to clearly set out the sectoral propositions and actions relating to each of these with partners and quantify the economic impacts of each sector.
- Work with partners including the Marches Centre for Manufacturing and Technology in Shropshire and support partnership priorities in the engineering cluster.
- Prepare a coherent visitor economy strategy alongside the sector, including those which provide a heritage based offer, that clearly sets out the ambitions and opportunities and is clear on the Council's role within it.
- Work with colleagues across the Marches to develop a position statement on key considerations arising from Brexit for our businesses and economy.

Short/medium term actions:

- Support growth opportunities in the agri-tech sector by working with Harper Adams University and partners to become leaders in this field and develop the agri-tech West proposition.
- Develop an approach with the agricultural sector in preparation for Brexit and work with the Marches LEP and neighbouring authorities to explore the opportunities to play a key role in influencing Central Government.
- Explore and define the scope for the digital health and social care sector in Shropshire working with colleagues in the HE sector (particularly University Centre Shrewsbury) and health sector (including existing centres of excellence).
- Work with our existing HQ businesses in the advanced manufacturing sector to help promote Shropshire and its successes to external partners.
- Strategically understand Shropshire's natural and historic environment assets, knowledge and expertise, and the ways in which they can be used as resources. This links to the University Centre Shrewsbury ambitions to become a centre of excellence for environmental sciences, technology and management and create an environmental innovation hub.
- Review the previous study carried out into creative industries and set this in the current context of increased digitisation, social media and innovation in the sector. We will also learn from successes elsewhere e.g. Coventry and Warwickshire.





High levels of businesses survive at least 3 years

67.9%

compared to 59.4% nationally

● Identifying External Funding Opportunities

Shropshire Council and its partners will be open to the opportunities provided by UK Government, European and other funding bodies, including Growth Deal and the European Structural and Investment Fund. Such investment is already being utilised positively to deliver economic growth in Shropshire and we will continue to do so. When funding opportunities align with local growth priorities, we will seek to provide the advice, capacity and expertise to take advantage of these, to maximise investment which will grow the local economy in the county.

Immediate actions:

- Maximise the amount of funding secured from Europe to deliver economic growth across Shropshire and ensure effective delivery of those already funded.
- Fully utilise the funding currently secured for economic growth projects through Growth Deal and other UK government sources.
- Maintain intelligence of potential funding opportunities for projects in our pipeline

Short/medium term actions:

- Work with the Marches LEP to understand the opportunities for funding post Brexit.
- Advocate the importance of our projects with potential funders and collaborate to tackle issues and deliver priorities.
- Work with partners to secure external funding to bring forward projects.

2. Enable businesses to start, grow and succeed

There are over 15,480 businesses in Shropshire with the vast majority of these classed as small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) where the number of employees is less than 250. Continuing the positive work already in place to support this SME base, including supporting start-up businesses through the Marches Growth Hub and our Shropshire Hub, remains a key action in our strategy. The relationships and track record of success with this group of companies will not be underestimated in terms of the importance that they play in our economy.

We will identify fast growing companies and work with those who have potential to increase output and employee numbers through our business relationship management function. We will also continue to work with our partners to ensure that we develop the best business support offer and ensure that Shropshire businesses benefit from external opportunities which will meet their needs.

We will build on our existing programme of engagement and collaboration with our larger companies, supporting their growth potential and the spin-off benefits from their presence in Shropshire. This includes business chain opportunities (linked to under-represented sectors identified above) and their involvement in generating solutions to common challenges, for example the Marches Centre for Manufacturing and Technology.

The Shropshire Business Board will continue to be a key partner in delivering our growth agenda and we will work with board members to continually build on the relationships and opportunities that are generated from this close collaboration. These members will have an increasingly important role to act as champions for Shropshire and to support representations to Government on key policy issues and future changes.





Immediate actions:

- Continue to support the Marches LEP in delivery of the Marches Growth Hub website.
- Continue successful delivery of the Marches Growth Hub, Shropshire and business support provision, working closely with key delivery partners, in particular the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce, local authority project partners, the Business Board, and the universities and colleges to deliver a gold standard support package for SMEs.
- Continue to develop the Shropshire hub's outreach programme of business support provision and events.
- Work closely with the Marches Centre for Manufacturing and Technology in the development of a satellite Growth Hub based in Bridgnorth.
- Ongoing business relationship management with our existing companies and key account management with our major employers.
- Work with and support the growth of supply chain companies across the sectors and provide efficient and effective responses to their queries.
- Continue to service the Business Board and work collaboratively with board members to achieve this strategy for growth, working with them to review and evaluate progress annually.



the average number
of jobs per
enterprise

12,000

the number of businesses
who employ
less than 4 people



Upto March 2017

1,980 businesses

or individuals visited the
Growth Hub for
business support



Short/medium term actions:

- Record effectively all engagement with companies and communicate this internally within the Council with relevant departments to ensure businesses receive a joined up approach.
- Identify those sites that could provide incubator opportunities and space for smaller businesses in the County to expand.
- Produce a responsive and relevant programme of business events, liaising closely with the business community and our key partners.
- Continue to build strong relationships with key business support providers.
- Through a robust business plan ensure the ongoing success and sustainability of the business support model and offer in Shropshire.



15,480
enterprises
registered in Shropshire

82.4%
of people aged
16-64 are
economically active

3. Deliver Infrastructure to support growth

The delivery of high quality infrastructure to meet the needs of businesses and residents is essential to the implementation of this economic growth strategy for Shropshire. We will ensure that the infrastructure is fit for purpose by putting in place a coherent strategy and clear programme to address the issues and fulfil future requirements. We will also ensure through delivery that we integrate the key principles of natural infrastructure such as waterways and green corridors. A list of all immediate and short/medium term actions related to transport infrastructure, digital connectivity, utilities capacity, housing and local place infrastructure is summarised at the end of this section.

Shropshire Council's Strategic Programme Board will maintain an overview of all economic growth and infrastructure projects which are led by the Council or where the Council has a role in enabling partners to deliver. Options and opportunities to use renewable energy measures, reduce carbon emissions and the integration of low carbon district heating will be key considerations for projects. The design of new developments will be encouraged to consider the use of sustainable construction techniques, resource efficiencies and how new proposals positively address impacts of pollution.

Transport infrastructure:

There are a series of local, regional and national challenges to transport infrastructure provision to enable growth and the development of new homes and employment space in Shropshire. The transport infrastructure in Shropshire is of particular regional importance and the Council's involvement with Midlands Connect is key to enhancing its capacity.

Shropshire Council and the Marches LEP is actively engaged with Midlands Connect at Board level. The Marches LEP has also produced a Strategic Corridors study, supported by the three Local Authorities, which is informing the Midlands Connect programme.



Through the Marches LEP we have identified our strategic transport corridors which are vital to deliver growth across the Marches area. These are the strategic road and rail networks that are the responsibility of Highways England and Network Rail and which will require investment from Central Government to improve them, providing benefits that spread beyond Shropshire onto the regional footprint.

Our engagement with Highways England, as it develops Route Improvement Strategies, is focussing on improvements to the A49 and A5, together with secondary impacts caused by 'pinch points' on both the Strategic Road Network and the local highway network. The resolution of those 'pinch points' on routes accessing European and global markets through the Welsh and North West ports, will have a beneficial impact both regionally and locally. The Council is also working with the Road Rail partnership, a statutory body with Network Rail and Highways England that is enabling conversations about linking improvements to railway infrastructure to growth opportunities.

Shropshire Council, through its active involvement within West Midland Rail Ltd is already gaining service improvements for the Shrewsbury to Birmingham service, together with later and improved Sunday services.

Shropshire continues to input its development proposals into both the Midlands Connect process and the periodic Rail industry consultations to enable the use of rail to enable growth in those rail connected Shropshire market towns, which will support the wider WMCA Strategic Economic Plan objectives. An example of this would be the extension of the electrification from Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury. Electrification will not only help to achieve added potential economic benefits but will provide ongoing environmental benefits to those towns served by services.

The ever tightening public purse and the increasingly competitive environment to secure public investment into infrastructure means we must be smart and clear about our priorities and look at innovative ways to deliver schemes including co-ordinating



with neighbouring authorities where appropriate. We have been successful in securing investment into some of our transformational local schemes including the Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Package, Oxon Link Road and feasibility funding for the North West Relief Road for Shrewsbury. We need to continue to demonstrate clearly the case for investment and articulate with partners how investment in our infrastructure facilitates economic growth.

Digital connectivity:

Ensuring that mobile connectivity and broadband provision across Shropshire supports our ambitions for growth and fulfils the requirements of how our residents and employers choose to live and work is extremely important. The role of our Connecting Shropshire programme is key as is our responsibility to continue to put forward the case for greater investment in mobile and broadband coverage and for this to be specific to meet the needs of our primarily rural geography.

Digital connectivity is now fundamental for businesses whether global, small or for individuals in Shropshire working from home. Provision and reliability of the digital network will enable all aspects of business to operate and grow and will be a basic requirement of any investors looking to locate here.



54,336 premises
now have access to
superfast broadband



Utilities capacity:

We know that on some of our existing and future housing and employment sites there are constraints as a result of the lack of capacity in some of the utilities. We will work closely with landowners, tenants and utility providers to foster the effective planning of infrastructure investment in Shropshire, to understand capacity constraints and to explore ways of addressing these where it is possible to do so. We acknowledge that our role within this can be limited and there may be opportunities for the market and for investors to address such constraints. For example, we have engaged with Scottish Power Energy Networks in helping to secure significant investment proposals in the north of the County to improve electricity infrastructure by 2021. There may also be opportunities to look at our own abilities and opportunities to produce some of our own supply – for example district heat networks.

Housing:

The availability of housing of the right type, quality and cost, and in the right location to meet the needs of the population and to ensure that Shropshire remains an attractive place to live forms part of our growth strategy. It is an important consideration for businesses that employees will be able to secure the type of housing they want and for our balanced approach to growth with increased homes, jobs and productivity. This will need to align with our housing strategy and the Local Plan review.

We recognise that the delivery of housing is not always in our control as a Council but we must support the supply of housing through a plan-led approach and the broad distribution and allocation of strategic sites. We will also need to support the delivery of sustainable residential development which provides appropriate access to local facilities, services and infrastructure, whilst also conserving our high quality natural and historic environments. There are different requirements for different segments



of our population and the needs of older people compared to graduates and families must be considered in the strategic planning of housing. There is a particular need to consider adequate provision for starter and affordable accommodation to help retain and attract families and young professionals to the area.

We will work in partnership with communities, registered providers and the private sector to ensure opportunities are available for the market to continue to deliver homes at a sufficient rate to meet needs. We will be developing new innovative housing solutions to scope and deliver homes that meet the needs of our communities and support the wider adult social care agenda, as well as support a growing economy. A range of delivery mechanisms will be explored including opportunities for direct delivery by Shropshire Council, an example of this is the 'One Shropshire' scheme. We will also engage with the Homes and Communities Agency to explore how programmes they operate can be implemented in Shropshire together with full consideration of the actions proposed in the Government's Housing White Paper: Fixing our broken housing market (February 2017).

Local place infrastructure:

There are many facilities and assets that contribute to a place and the Council's role in place shaping is important in the context of economic growth because it helps to create the conditions and environment that attracts people and businesses to Shropshire. This links to the Council's leisure and cultural strategies, the provision and standard of schools in the County, the provision of public services and the use of public assets.

The way in which we will utilise the high quality natural environment and attractiveness of the historic and built environment to promote Shropshire to investors will be referred to again below. Within this infrastructure context it is also important to highlight the role of the Council in helping to shape the proposition of Shropshire as a place to live and work.



All actions related to infrastructure to support growth

Immediate actions:

- Refresh and update our infrastructure investment plan and programme to support growth over the short, medium and long term (this will need to be continually reviewed and updated).
- Continue the roll out of the Connecting Shropshire programme and promote the case for increased mobile and broadband coverage with Central Government and providers.

Short/medium term actions:

- Deliver the schemes already in the programme that have secured funding and maximise the positive impacts of them to the economy and communities e.g. Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Package.
- Continue to work with utility providers both at a strategic level to communicate Shropshire's vision and growth objectives and at a local scheme level to seek to deliver the optimal solutions for employment and housing developments.
- Through the Council's role as planning authority, promote high quality design solutions to underpin the delivery of sustainable new development and seek to address future economic barriers.
- Promote a strategic 'plan-led' approach to housing and employment development and use the local plan review to support this.
- Work with the Homes & Communities Agency, communities, Registered Providers, Trusts and the private sector to help bring forward the supply of new homes.
- Develop and deliver new innovative housing solutions to meet our residents' needs.
- Consider use of our own assets, services and skills in ways that continue to support place making and deliver economic growth.

4. Meet skills needs and people's aspirations for work

We will need to support potential across all segments of the working age population to maximise our full economic output. In support of this we will prepare a skills strategy that meets the future needs and growth opportunities for Shropshire's economy and which aligns with the Marches LEP skills strategy and action plan. Our strategy will be focused both from the business perspective taking into account what skills companies need currently and into the future, and a people perspective to ensure that those who want to work can access the training provision and tools that will lead to employment.

We recognise that the Council has a role to play in helping to match the skills needs of existing companies, and future projections of business activity, with training and learning provision from our educational institutions and providers. This will apply through all stages of learning from schools, FE colleges, the HE sector and adult training providers. We can help to share information from our intelligence about skills needs, introduce businesses and education providers to each other, and communicate known future development plans and growing sectors so that schools can inform and prepare young people who may take these opportunities in the future.

We will use the opportunities from the apprenticeship levy to recruit apprentices into our own organisation as well as work with businesses on the apprenticeship plan for the County. We will work with centres of excellence and Higher and Further Education sectors to develop more centres in Shropshire that provide vocational learning, opportunities for collaboration with businesses and to ultimately support more apprenticeship positions.

We want to support collaboration between research and business as this will be a key route to seeing the development of innovative solutions and new technologies in some of our target sectors and will help give Shropshire a leading edge in some of these. We see the presence of the HE sector in the County as essential going forward alongside working with HE institutions based outside our area in neighbouring authorities and with whom a number of our businesses work with and have connections to.



The current demographic of Shropshire is well evidenced and documented. We need to work within this context and maximise the opportunities this provides us. We need to find ways of supporting a younger workforce and retaining the talent and skills of young people and graduates in the County. This is linked to the housing offer, affordability of the area, and supporting cultural and vibrant hubs in the key towns. We need to support the 'middle' range of our working population by encouraging those people who are likely to be professional individuals or couples and families to live and then stay in Shropshire. Providing the opportunities of good quality employment and future development potential in the work place for ambitious residents to progress are key factors for this demographic of the local population.

Some of those working locally are under-employed, working in roles that they are over-qualified for. This creates two key problems, one that there is the chance that these people will leave Shropshire to take on 'better' employment outside of the County and these skills and resources (and those of their families potentially) are then lost. Secondly, whilst these people are in these roles and not progressing then vacancies for lower skilled people are not available. Tackling in-work progression by working with companies and attracting new companies into Shropshire with higher qualified opportunities for work is part of our strategy.

Our increasing older population provides Shropshire with an opportunity for those that want to work within this age group. There is a pool of labour for volunteering opportunities within businesses and communities, and knowledge or skills to share with a new generation of entrepreneurs through mentoring and coaching. This could lead to volunteering hubs in the community and potential to work with other public service providers to help deal with demands and build community resilience.

Whilst there is lower unemployment in Shropshire compared to regional and national averages, our strategy recognises the barriers facing some of our residents in accessing employment. These challenges can be complex and may relate to health and well-being issues as well as a lack of skills. This calls for a joint public sector approach between Health and Employment services to deliver support to individuals in a more holistic way.



In particular, this strategy recognises the link between employment and mental health and how being actively engaged in work can help reduce and prevent some of the impacts of poor mental health and low levels of confidence and self-esteem. It is estimated that mental ill-health costs the UK economy £70 billion per year through lost productivity, social benefits and health care. Therefore working with employers to create a working environment that supports staff mental wellbeing and collaborating with partners who support those with mental health issues to access the labour market will have social and economic benefit.

Immediate actions:

- Prepare a detailed skills plan for Shropshire working collaboratively with businesses and education and training providers to ensure this is evidence based and targeted on actions to address the challenges specific to us e.g. encouraging an increase in higher qualified and better paid jobs.
- Continue to work with schools and colleges to facilitate relationships with businesses and help to foster entrepreneurship and ensure young people are aware of future opportunities for employment in Shropshire.

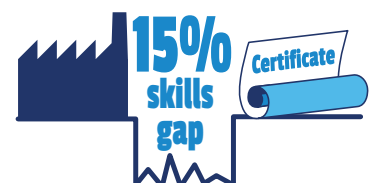


Short/medium term actions:

- Agree a way of sharing information on future developments and sector growth with schools, colleges and universities to support young people to make informed decisions about their careers.
- Implement the Council's apprenticeship plan and work with vocational facilities and providers to support skills provision for identified key sectors.
- Continue to collaborate on initiatives and programmes with the FE and HE sector that will benefit Shropshire businesses and economy.
- Working with businesses to explore initiatives to facilitate in work progression, this could relate to retraining courses and programmes and some up-skilling.
- Work with the community and voluntary sector and public service partners to understand the volunteering capacities and opportunities and help to facilitate where appropriate.
- Continue to support projects and programmes to ensure that Shropshire benefits from the European Social Fund.
- Explore best practice in multi-agency approaches to supporting individuals with health and employment skills needs and align this with the Government's new Work and Health Programme.
- Raise the awareness of mental health and wellbeing with employers through networks and opportunities for sharing best practice and engaging in key initiatives such as organisational campaigns and support and advice.



**of the population
have at least one
qualification**



**Businesses reporting
a skills gap**

**Shropshire's population
is becoming more
highly skilled**



5. Promote Shropshire to investors

To attract new investment into Shropshire we will need to promote our offer clearly and effectively in the national and international market place. This will require communicating a strong identity and clear messages as to why investors should choose Shropshire to commit their resources over other locations.

We need to be bold and confident and sell the benefits that Shropshire can offer to businesses and investors. Understanding what the private sector is looking for when making investment decisions is key to informing the approach we take. Fundamentally this needs to be about generating confidence in the market opportunities and locational benefits of investing in Shropshire, enabling businesses to be successful and make a financial return on investment. In addition to bespoke requirements that will be specific to each enquiry, the components set out in this strategy will be fundamental to their considerations.

The quality of our environment for people to work, live in and visit forms one of the County's greatest assets. It will form part of our proposition to investors and we will fully utilise the opportunity for us to promote our strong heritage, cultural, and natural offer. The attractive combination we have to offer includes the mixture of market towns and within them the retail and historic cores, cultural activities, and open spaces. Our countryside offers a diverse and widely celebrated range of landscapes, and offers a rich array of historic villages and farms, country houses, ancient monuments, parks and gardens, canals, rivers and wildlife sites. Their sustainable economic future is important, not least to the many businesses which trade off this offer.

We have a strong relationship in place with the Department of International Trade and we will ensure that this is developed going forward, with specific sector leads.

We will promote our economic growth ambitions and opportunities with Central Government as well as with the private sector and we can do this in a number of ways. In particular we will work with our MPs to increase engagement with Ministers and support our approach to key businesses and responses to opportunities that are announced centrally.



We will work with the Shropshire Business Board, stakeholders and private sector networks to develop and implement our promotional activities. These partners and networks are key to providing the business experience of Shropshire and we will continue to develop our portfolio of Case Studies.

We will have a clear approach to promotional campaigns and the collaborative opportunities for promoting ourselves, this will include on a Marches LEP, West Midlands Combined Authority and Midlands Engine footprint as appropriate. It will also involve collaboration with neighbouring authorities and wider economic initiatives in some instances.

Immediate actions:

- Prepare an investment proposition for Shropshire based on why people and businesses should invest/locate/work here.
- Continue to build upon our Invest in Shropshire website and social media presence.

Short/medium term actions:

- Agree the suite of promotional material to communicate the proposition. This will include an investment prospectus and map.
- Grow the investment brand for Shropshire based on our vision and economic ambitions.
- Produce an engagement plan that includes the strategy for targeting potential investors, and use existing relationships and linkages with companies already here to support this.
- Set out which campaigns, conferences and networks we want to target and be involved in, for example through the Midlands Engine and Invest in Great campaign (DIT)

6. Build our reputation as a Council that is 'good to do business with'

In setting out this strategy we are demonstrating our serious commitment to support growth in Shropshire's economy. We therefore need to ensure that we work in the most effective, efficient and intelligent ways within our organisation to achieve this, including commercial and enterprising solutions and approaches (as outlined in the Commercial Strategy) and targeting our resources where they will have greatest impacts.

We will listen to and understand business needs, both existing and new, and instil the need for timely and clear responses and decisions across all services that have a role in economic growth. We have an excellent track record of successfully securing external funding to deliver economic growth priorities and we will continue to maximise opportunities and resource to deliver the economic aspirations within this strategy.

We want to be a Council that organisations, partners and businesses have positive experiences of working with.

Immediate actions:

- Continue the strong relationship with Shropshire Business Board.
- Listen to feedback and use this to inform future working and our approaches as a Council.
- Internal review of functions to ensure an 'end to end' offer is provided to businesses.
- Continually assess the growth culture of the organisation to ensure that across all services we are working as positively and pro-actively as is possible.

Short/medium term actions:

- Develop the right culture across the organisation by developing specific workforce development packages for colleagues.
- Develop a 'wrap around' support package for major investment into the County.

Performance and monitoring

An action plan sits alongside this strategy and will be set out as immediate (6 months), short term (next 2 years), medium term (next 5 years) and long term (beyond 5 years). This action plan, along with the overall targets will be reviewed regularly and updated annually by Shropshire Council for the duration of this strategy.

References

The following is a list of all the strategies, documents and papers referenced within the Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire 2017-2021

Building an Economic Vision for Shropshire – A Report by IPPR North (2017)

European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) Strategy 2014-2020

Marches LEP Strategic Corridors Study

Marches LEP Three Year Skills Plan 2017-2020

Marches Local Enterprise (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan

Midland Engine Strategy (2017)

Oxford Economic Baseline Forecasts for Shropshire, 2012-2036

Shropshire Council Commercial Strategy 2017-2021

Shropshire Council Corporate Plan 2016/2017

Shropshire Council Local Plan Partial Review 2016-2036*

Shropshire Economic Profile 2017

West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)

UK Government - Building Our Industrial Strategy: Green Paper (2017)

UK Government Housing White Paper: Fixing our Broken Housing Market (2017)

*Shropshire Council is reviewing its adopted Local Plan and consulted on 'Issues and Strategic Options' in January 2017.

Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire 2017–2021

May 2017

Feedback and Insight Team, Commissioning Support, Shropshire Council

1. Methodology

Developing a clear economic vision and strategy is a key milestone in setting out the Council's ambition to grow the local economy. This is one of the key objectives of the Council's corporate plan 2016/17 to 2018/19. The consultation on the draft Economic Growth Strategy ran from the 13th March to the 28th April 2017. The consultation was posted on Shropshire Council's consultation portal and included a range of background information and research reports.

Engagement opportunities included:

- A consultation feedback survey
- Email feedback options for more detailed comments
- Presentations and discussions at meetings and events
- Workshops and focus groups

The main stakeholder groups targeted within the consultation period and invited to comment included:

- Local businesses
- Business partnerships and support bodies, including Shropshire Business Board
- Partnerships and providers of learning, skills and employment opportunities
- Rural and environmental partnerships
- Public Sector bodies
- Town and Parish Councils
- Housing providers
- Voluntary and Community Sector organisations (including social enterprise)
- Shropshire Council Elected Members and Officers
- Members of the public

25 face to face meetings and presentations were delivered during the consultation period to ensure key partner organisations and stakeholders were aware of the opportunity to comment. 21 more formal invitations to participate within the consultation were issued in order to ensure key local networks and organisations were engaged in the process. Some of the networks such as the Council's database of business contacts, Local Nature Partnership, Shropshire Association of Local Councils, Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly and Federation of Small Businesses have a good reach across the county. Communications were sent out to in excess of 4,000 individual contacts.

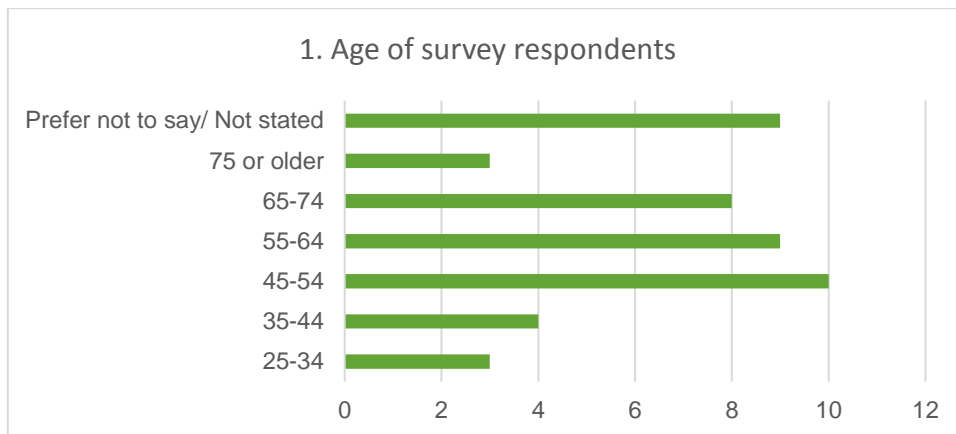
2. Consultation respondents

46 surveys and 26 detailed written responses were provided as part of the consultation on the Draft Economic Growth Strategy (there were 68 individual respondents (4 wrote to us and completed the survey). Although relatively small in number, the quality of the responses was high and suggests that a great deal of thought was put into the comments provided. Comments were lengthy and well considered.

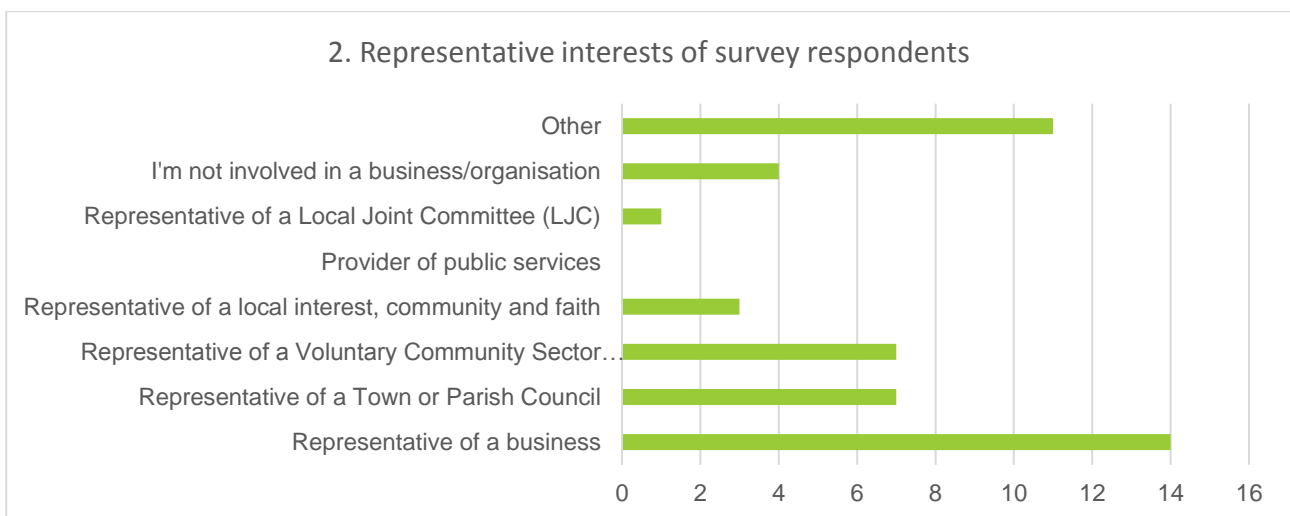
The profile of the 46 survey respondents is described below:

- 22 (48%) of the respondents were male and 15 female (32%). The remainder did not provide a gender.
- 76% (35) of the respondents were White British and the remaining respondents did not state an ethnic background.
- 63% of the survey respondents are employed (29) and 20% retired (9).

- 39 of the 46 survey respondents are local residents in Shropshire and of the 46, 21 are also employed in the area.
- The chart below highlights that there were a mix of age groups within the survey sample.

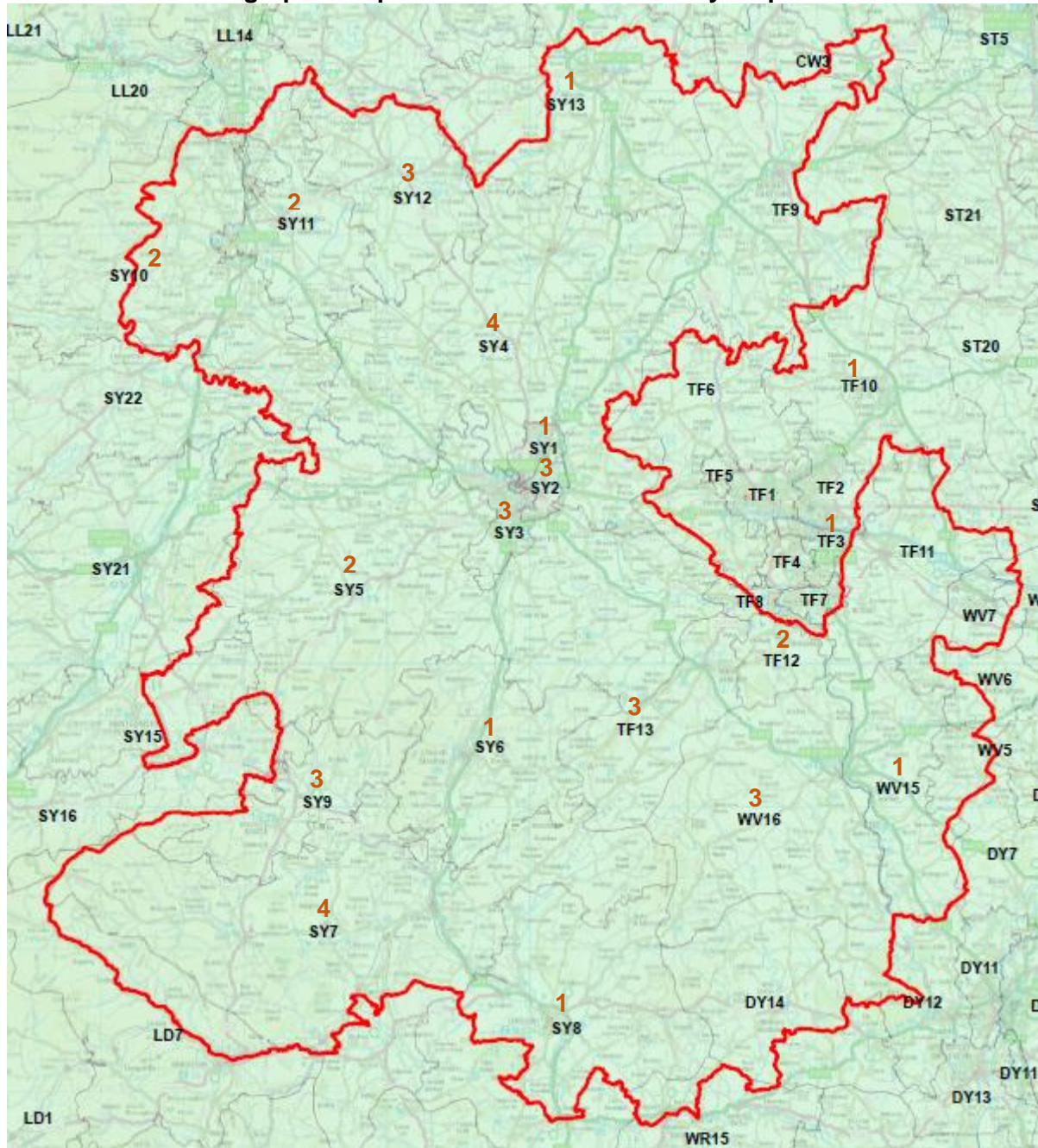


- The survey respondents have mixed backgrounds with some business representatives, some voluntary and community sector respondents and some town and parish councils (see chart 2 for all categories). 14 of the 46 respondents were representing a business.
- Of the respondents, 4 are from large businesses, 1 from medium, 6 from small and 26 from micro businesses (this includes the voluntary, community sector bodies and town and parish councils). The survey response was too small to analyse responses by business sector.



- The map highlights the areas survey respondents are from. Numbers relate to the high level post code areas e.g. SY1, SY7 (just visible on the map below). The number in orange just above the postcode label is the number of respondents from that area.

Geographical spread of consultation survey responses



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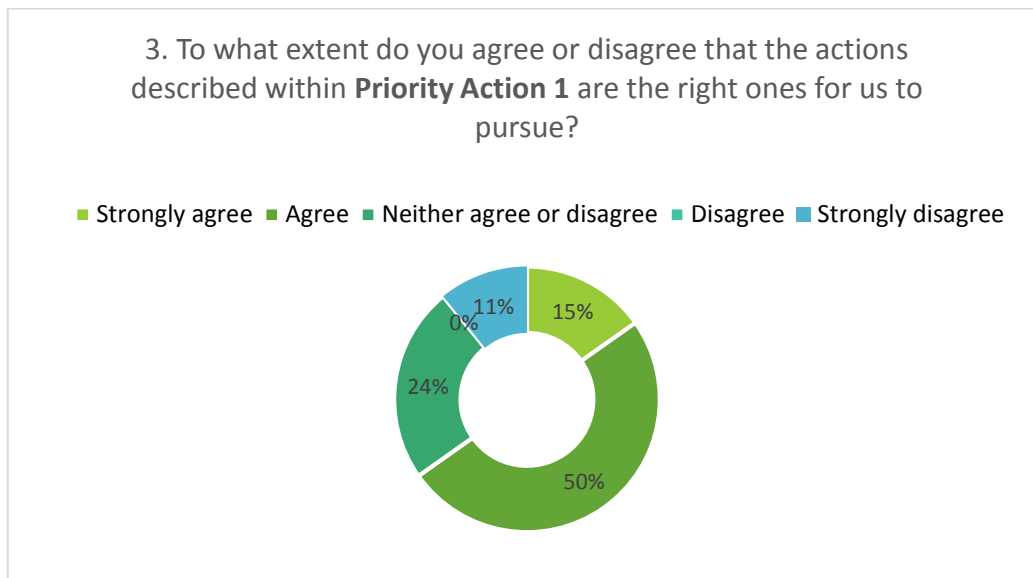
Please note that the pie charts below and charts above only relate to the 46 survey respondents. The 26 detailed written comments have been incorporated into the summary of the main themes and into the example comments.

Priority 1: Target actions and resources on Economic Opportunities

Priority Feedback

Overall 59% of the survey respondents (30 people) agreed with priority 1, 28% had no opinion and 13% (5 respondents) strongly disagreed. It is not clear from the feedback why the 5 respondents strongly disagree with the priority but the comments provided suggest that respondents would like

to see other priorities included within the strategy. The main themes mentioned are listed below and examples of the feedback are provided.



Main Themes

Common themes within the survey comments were:

- The importance of building strategic partnerships.
- The need to balance partnership working with a recognition that the economic needs and aspirations of Shropshire may differ from our partners in more urban areas.
- The importance of investing in community and quality of life/wellbeing to promote economic growth.
- A request for more emphasis on tourism.
- Requests for more emphasis on creative industries as a sector for development.
- Requests for more focus on protecting and enhancing the natural environment.
- Calls for a much stronger emphasis on the agricultural sector.
- Comments highlighting the importance of employment and skills
- The need for business support for both small businesses and those working over a larger geographical area. (Types of support requested included exporting and building links beyond Shropshire at regional, national and international scales).

Example Comments

Strategic location and economic relationships

“..it is surprising that there is no reference in the Strategy to the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In this regard, the farming industry receives little attention in the Report but, like many other industries, it may need significant support to cope with the Brexit outcome.”

“With the significance that the agricultural sector has it is a serious omission not to include recognition and required measures that will be necessary to support an industry that covers 80% of the County and inter-relates with so many other business sectors.”

Major employment sites and growth corridors

“If Shropshire is to benefit from developments such as HS2 it needs to create its own particular offer, especially as there may be an excess of high quality sites coming on stream closer to HS2, rather than replicating what is available at better locations near the HS2 Northern Gateway station”.

“The housing element focuses quite heavily on land developmentincreased supply has, historically, failed to lower the cost..... The role that housing associations play must not be omitted and ignored: if Shropshire attracts employment opportunities through careful usage of employment land, then it makes sense to recognise that Shropshire average wages are going to force people into high-rent "buy to let" accommodation owned by investors outside the county who contribute little to council resources. This will not make Shropshire attractive, and will not attract long-term employment.”

Target growing and under-represented sectors

“The income generated from tourism supports the economic viability of often rural communities through additional spend in local services and amenities such as shops, pubs, restaurants and local transport.”

“There should be more attention given to the importance of tourism to the county - it is worth some £500 million.”

“The last survey commissioned by Shropshire Council in 2011 showed that some 14,700 jobs were supported by the visitor economy and the sector was worth over £1/2 billion p.a. This sector has grown not shrunk since then. Shropshire has a distinct visitor offer more should be made of it.”

“The most deeply rural location in Shropshire could become a haven for certain relatively high tech, IT supported jobs, alongside employment for artisans, artists, horticulturists and other more "traditional" rural jobs. The growth strategy should recognise the potential of remote rural areas.”

“This rural town also attracts art & artisans, skilled crafts people and horticulturalists who want to live in beautiful, rural areas and do not need big workforces and good transport links.”

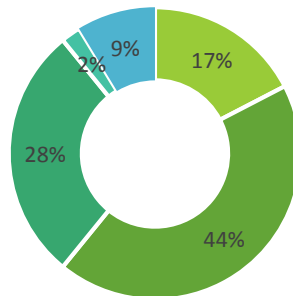
Priority 2: Enable businesses to grow and succeed

Priority Feedback

61% (28) of the consultation survey respondents agreed, or strongly agreed, with priority 2 (a very similar proportion to the support shown for priority 1). 11% (5 people) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the priority. The summary and example comments help to demonstrate the issues the survey respondents would like to see as a priority.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the actions described within **Priority Action 2** are the right ones for us to pursue?

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree or disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree



Main Themes

Common topics and issues covered within the feedback included:

- A suggestion that the needs of 'start-ups' need to be considered within this priority area.
- The importance of considering community focused businesses and social enterprises.
- The need to grow partnerships and understanding of economic influence beyond the Business Board and existing partnerships.
- Provision of support for very small businesses including workspaces, business parks (examples provided included creative industries, food producers etc.)
- Suggestions that the Strategy should focus to a greater extent on the rural nature of the county and promoting growth in rural communities in addition to towns and along main routes.
- The importance of tourism for Shropshire and use of local assets.

Example Comments

Start-ups

"[The Strategy] perhaps fails to recognise the importance of start-up businesses and the support that these need e.g. access to start up units."

"Include start-up under enabling businesses to grow and succeed."

"Start-ups: why is there a focus on supporting existing businesses, and no mention whatsoever of start-ups? My own analysis, in the recent past, has shown that Shropshire lags significantly on start-up activity.The emphasis of the Council and the LEP on 'job creation' does not always help, as often it is capital investment that is required rather than the creation of jobs. Rather than always focusing on existing firms bidding for funding to create jobs, there should be some emphasis on investing in machinery, technology, R&D, and start-up firms that can displace unproductive old firms, 'zombie firms', etc. LEPs and funding pots: It is an eternal source of frustration that most of the funding pots available via the LEPs and the Council are structured in favour of larger, existing firms, universities, etc. I have ideas for projects, including some that would fit brilliantly in the LEP profile, improving productivity, etc. but because these funding pots require bids to be of a minimum amount - in the hundreds of thousands, and matched - I cannot access them. All I'd want is a few grand!.."

Community and Small Businesses

“As the majority of businesses in Shropshire are small, it is essential that the Council maintains a strong working relationship with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB). The impact of Brexit and potential loss of EU funding is of great concern to many small businesses. The action plan needs to address how this support and funding will continue to be provided. Also, most of the funds and grants are for B2B which often excluded very small businesses so a scheme to support B2C is needed.”

“Support and nurture community businesses too. They are becoming an increasingly important deliverer of services. They are being required by necessity to become more commercial in their approach and support for them would be beneficial to all.”

Competitiveness and Growth

“...support for the rural economies should not be confined to encouraging diversification and must include a focus on improving the competitiveness and quality of rural businesses.”

“Surprised not to see any reference to micro businesses i.e. sole traders - a significant and growing contribution to the local economy. The strategy needs to address the need to enable these people - many of whom will increasingly be home based - to be in the same physical place at the same time, complementing the need for virtual connection. The strategy also needs to recognise the need to encourage, grow, retain and develop entrepreneurial talent within a knowledge-based economy.”

“Connectivity is key to economic competitiveness and can provide a resilient platform for economic growth.”

“Important to realise that high tech industries don't necessarily need to be within easy reach of fast road & rail lines, HS2 or the motorway corridors. Super-fast broadband, good mobile phone coverage and skilled people can develop businesses in deeply rural places.”

Influence of Shropshire Council

“...ill-considered planning applications which purport to help economic growth are being approved without understanding -or caring about-their long term impact. The number of jobs they appear to generate are few and the environmental damage significant. This will be counter-productive if the council wishes to develop tourism...”

“Enable” is the operative word, remembering that businesses, largely, want public sector stakeholders to act as enablers and not be too interventionist.”

“There are many B&B's, hotels, self-catering and visitor attractions across the county that play a critical role in ensuring Shropshire is an attractive place to visit for pleasure, VFR and business. Have these been included?”

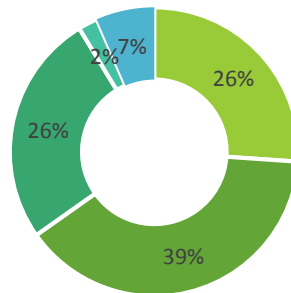
Priority 3: Deliver Infrastructure to support growth

Priority Feedback

65% (30 people) strongly agree or agree that delivering infrastructure to support growth should be a priority. 9% disagree or strongly disagree (4 consultation respondents).

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the actions described within **Priority Action 3** are the right ones for us to pursue?

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree or disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree



Main Themes

Under this priority there were many similar comments and suggestions. Most comments covered one or more of the following key issues:

- Agreement over the importance of broadband.
- Highlighting the need of strong mobile phone signals across the county.
- The importance of public transport and good rail links.
- The need for investment in road infrastructure beyond the main routes.
- The suggestion of a greater focus on all kinds of green infrastructure (including waterways, cycle routes, footpaths etc.)

Example Comments

Transport Infrastructure

“Reductions in public transport routes act as a barrier to movement and growth. Community transport across the County is currently being seen as a 'safety net' to transport those who are being marginalised by the cuts. It is important that we take a more 'total transport' approach including ALL forms of transport to best meet the needs of people accessing services and also travelling to work.”

“Pant and Llanymynech by-pass should be included in road planning, as part of the major north-south border link.”

“HGV transport is essential for agriculture and many rural businesses. Farmers use a variety of routes across the county from the M54 down to minor lanes. Investing in major routes will have many benefits for the county as a whole, however the needs of the minor road network must also be recognised and investment and upkeep must continue.”

“While effective rail links to other parts of the UK and Europe are essential, the strategy makes no mention of how public transport will enable customers to move freely within the county - unless there are plans to re-establish the pre-Beeching rail network? - With an aging population is this an opportunity to revitalise the bus network?”

Digital Connectivity

“In a large rural county like Shropshire we need access to modern smart digital technologies, particularly to proper fibre broadband coverage, and to mobile phone coverage, throughout the

County. There is also a greater need for decent public transport coverage if we are to move towards a low carbon economy.”

“Broadband/Digital connectivity is rightly highlighted as 'a must have' for all businesses and communities. Why is improving public transport not included in this section? Why is maintaining the public realm not covered i.e. car parks, roads, toilets etc.”

“Access to high quality, high speed and affordable broadband and mobile connectivity is essential for businesses and local communities. There is an urgent need to offer immediate alternative solutions for not-spot areas that offer an equivalent service and that are affordable.”

“Shropshire Council could look into the provision of Broadband via satellite for those who live in ‘not spots’ throughout the county. Digital connectivity is not a ‘nice to have’ it is now a necessity.”

“Existing SMEs and new developments can take advantage of their proximity to green/blue infrastructure to become more resilient and successful. Over the past decade, the Trust [Canal & River Trust] has been actively involved in the roll out of super-fast broadband along its canal network and in partnership with Sky Network Services has installed 577km’s of fibre optic cable within its towpaths. We believe that the Trust’s network of towpaths should be used to support the rollout of broadband network services to provide connectivity to urban and rural SMEs and communities.”

Utilities Capacity

“The supply of energy also needs to be considered in a framework of cheaper energy bills that can assist the competitiveness of industry as well as helping to reduce fuel poverty. The waterways of the wider region contain enough thermal energy to provide 200MW of energy, equivalent to heating 100,000 homes. By planning for the use of thermal energy in new developments (using heat pumps) and upgrading existing networks as and when appropriate, energy supplies can be more resilient, local and sustainable.....The Trust [Canal & River Trust] welcomes the action to update the infrastructure plan”.

Housing

“The generation who are embarking on adult life are more likely to be in debt and their ambitions to get on the housing ladder are less likely to succeed. There is no evidence that an insatiable quest for growth will remedy their prospects.”

Local Place Infrastructure

“It needs to be infrastructure to the right sites. Location with everything is key.”

“Rural communities and businesses have been and continue to be adversely affected by bank branch closures. Online banking is also dependent upon access to good connectivity. There is evidence that where areas lose a bank, lending to small business also falls, on average by 63%.”

“Improved visitor signage is something that could be considered an important element of Shropshire's infrastructure.”

“Place plans potentially have an important role to play in identifying local infrastructure requirements and what is intended to be done about them. These seem to have gone off radar and getting this process back on track should be a high priority.”

“In terms of local place shaping ... environmental solutions should be developed and owned by the communities benefiting from and impacted by them. Instead of top down process, we support innovation and the co-creation of ideas, encouraging local ownership and governance.”

“...a working town centre reduces car journeys for shopping and entertainment. There is little point in developing ‘business parks’ on the periphery of the historic market towns of Shropshire, if the core of the town is failing.”

“...there needs to be greater recognition that Town Councils will have to play an increasing role in economic development. In order to take up this responsibility, they will need support from Shropshire Council in the training of staff and councillors and in the provision of information, such as directories of local businesses, so that they can work in partnership with those businesses, facilitate networking and/or supportive resource centres and incubator units, possibly linked to incentive schemes.”

Green Infrastructure

“.....infrastructure development should be as green as possible, with priority given to increasing alternatives to the car, especially the bicycle - public transport that enables greater numbers of cyclists to take their bikes further afield, and space on public roads for those that want to cycle longer distances. Cycling in towns should also be more positively supported - towns are more pleasant places to live and work the fewer cars there are.”

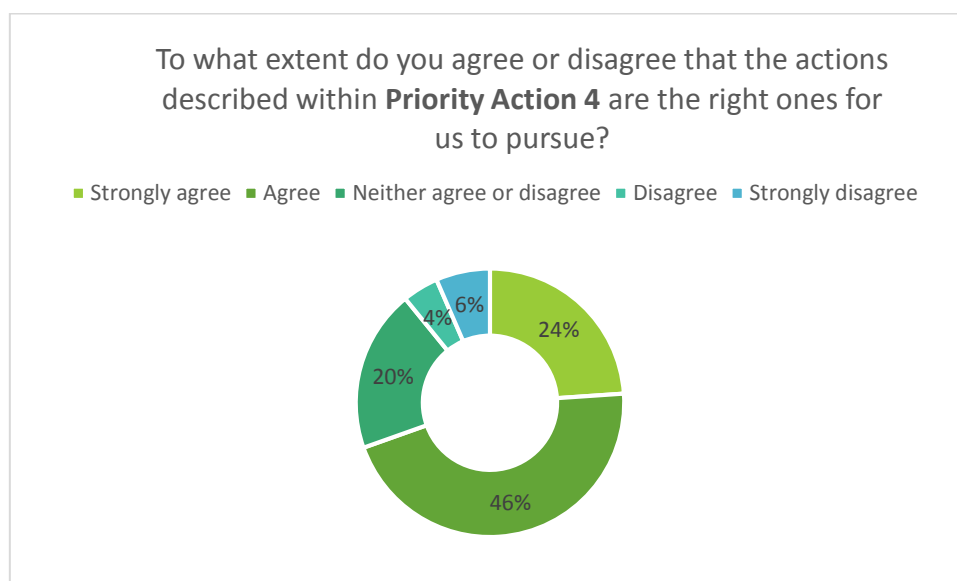
“We note the strategy’s three objectives and draw the council’s attention to the role of multi-functional green infrastructure (GI) and natural capital in contributing to the achievement of each.”

“Enhancing natural capital makes good practical economic sense and [we] would welcome the incorporation of how we use and improve our stock of natural capital into the approach for upgrading the County’s infrastructure.”

Priority 4: Meet skills needs and people’s aspirations for work

Priority Feedback

The survey feedback for priority 4 is very similar to the feedback against the other priorities but a very slightly larger proportion agree with the priority. 70% (32) of the consultation survey respondents agree or strongly agree with the priority: meet skills needs and people’s aspirations for work.



Main Themes

The comments against this priority highlighted a lot of support for this element of the strategy and suggested strong feelings that this area is an important one to succeed in. There were not many consistent themes highlighted under priority 4 (Meet the skills needs and people's aspirations for work) but those commonly mentioned included:

- Comments on the development of the 'right kind' of skills development for Shropshire.
- Ensuring that transport infrastructure and public transport are in place to enable access to employment opportunities.
- Suggestions that volunteering and skills sharing are going to be important for Shropshire (including eagerness to support development of the Skills Plan).
- Concerns that solutions need to be found to encourage the more active economic participation of older people. Including a common suggestion that the aging population needs to be considered in more detail in relation to economic growth and that there could be opportunities beyond volunteering.
- A focus on ensuring that younger people do not feel the need to leave the area for employment.
- The important role the Council has in influencing the direction of travel and partnership involvement in implementation.
- The importance of quality of life and the environment.

Example Comments

Skills Needs

"...the availability of a skilled workforce in a location can also be a key factor driving growth and investment and I would like to see more specific actions around identifying locally available skill sets and labour market strengths."

"It is all very well moving forward in the digital age, but there are a number of skills shortages in the heritage area too e.g. thatching, lime mortar mixing and building etc. Business growth can be achieved by enabling people to develop these traditional and much needed skills too."

"More attractive places to live and work are likely to attract mobile, highly skilled, entrepreneurial professionals in an internationally competitive market for the best skills."

Aging Population

"Yes. Skilled people will leave the rural areas of Shropshire unless action is taken to secure high quality jobs - or help them to deliver high tech businesses. This will lead to enclaves of elderly and socially dependant people in the small towns such as Bishop's Castle."

"Shropshire Council should be trying to make sure that its rural towns and areas – and it is a very rural county – do not stagnate and become middle class, middle age enclaves where anyone below the age of 50 has to leave to make a living".

"This area is achievable and the aims are respectable. But it seems obvious that the other priority actions run a high-risk of being counter-productive to this one. For example – the difficulty with the ageing demographic of Shropshire and the problem of (marginally) over-skilled and (significantly) under-employed skills base and how this is a serious threat to [the] outflow of people and young people, yet actions in other areas such as housing and the focus on major business, will run counter to these aims. It's important to recognise such risks from lack of coherence in Shropshire's plans, and to make this priority action 4 much clearer about how it will achieve its aims and how it will mitigate the risks."

“Long term, we could follow in the footsteps of much of the rest of rural England and become a retirement/holiday centre. This future is not at all attractive to those who live and work here and is avoidable.”

Partnerships for Skills

“Many of the visitor attractions in Shropshire are reliant on volunteers to help deliver their business and charitable aims. They need more volunteers to help them deliver all the great work we do, Shropshire Council should be working with charities and not for profit organisations to promote the wider volunteer opportunities across Shropshire to rate payers. Shropshire Council is the one who has the biggest reach to promote these opportunities.”

“I think an acknowledgment of cross-border collaboration potential is needed here. There are significant resources available in the FE, HE and adult training sectors in Telford and Wrekin and Wolverhampton which have the potential to assist in building the skills base of Shropshire.”

“We believe there needs to be a truly meaningful liaison between businesses and schools/colleges.The Council can play a key role in facilitating this initiative.”

Accessibility

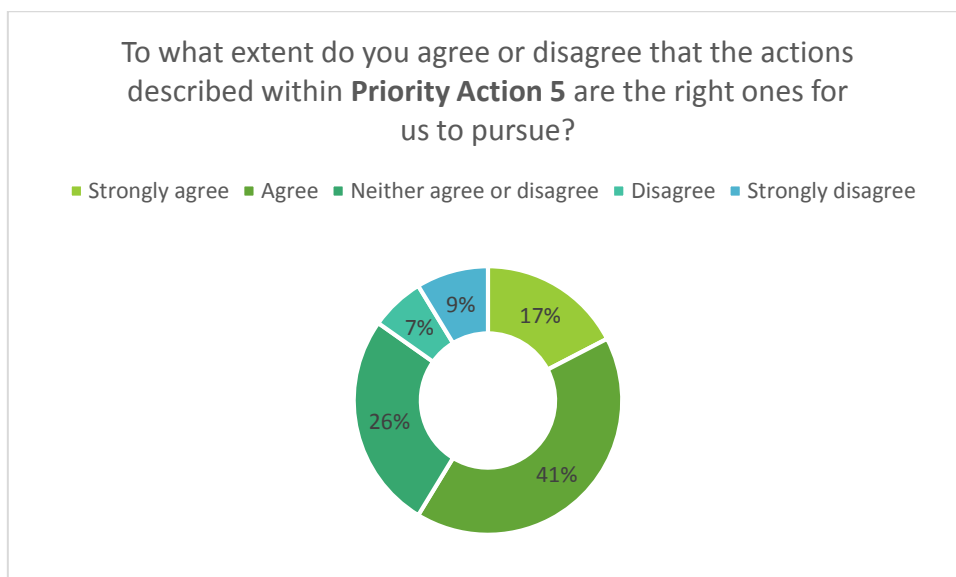
“The contradiction in this priority is lack of transport skills; create new jobs by all means but how are low income/young people supposed to get there-e.g. new Tesco in Tenbury Wells with no means of people in Ludlow who would like to work getting there. Other actions-public transport links between market towns.”

“Transport is seen as a barrier to work for many people. Reductions in public transport routes act as a barrier to movement and growth.”

Priority 5: Promote Shropshire to investors

Priority Feedback

The proportion of the consultation survey respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with priority 5 was 58% (27 people). 16% or 7 people disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Main Themes

Many of the main themes highlighted under this priority reflect the themes highlighted under previous priorities and included:

- Balancing the need for investment/development with the importance of protecting the natural environment.
- Recognising the needs of the rural communities within Shropshire and considering suitable investments in less accessible locations.
- Considering investments that will maximise on Shropshire's unique assets.
- Requests to recognise the contribution rural businesses (and particularly farmers) make in maintaining the environment.

Example Comments

Environment and Visitor Economy

"Shropshire has long been short-changed by central government, which has particular needs as a sparsely-populated rural area. It has failed to establish a distinctive identity, either nationally or internationally, which may partly explain this lack of national investment. It has the landscape to match the Lake District and Peak District but it has lacked county-co-ordinated marketing and key infra-structure...."

"The development of the visitor economy needs to have a higher priority, promoting Shropshire to a wider audience both in the UK and abroad."

"Much more should be done to promote Shropshire as a tourism destination for history, food and drink industries."

"If you are attracting businesses by using the countryside as an attractive backdrop it would be ironic to ruin it for everybody by over development and inappropriate development. We need the kind of investors that are right for the county - not just right for the investor. Businesses investing in Shropshire should respect all that makes the county unique, not just ride roughshod over our countryside and towns."

Local Investment and Partnerships

"Encourage local stakeholders to be part of the promotional push to attract investors ...the dynamic business owners, the first rate colleges, the active community action groups etc. This on top of our natural environmental benefits as a beautiful place to live and work. Our Buy-From business is already playing an active role, along with others, in promoting a stronger, joint approach to Tourism AND Hospitality which is also relevant here."

"Many farming businesses make considerable and long term investments in maintaining environmental and landscape features. These combine to create a landscape that has a wide economic benefit for communities and other businesses alike. The strategy should acknowledge this investment and recognise that it can only be made by profitable farming businesses."

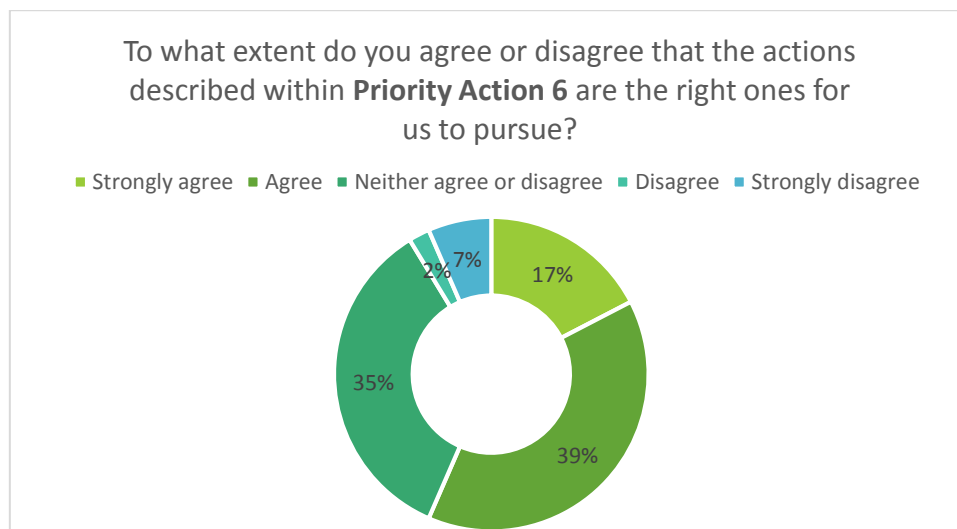
"Don't ignore the domestic investment opportunities - they are easier to exploit than many overseas. Adopt a professional marketing approach to promoting the County to inward investors."

"Investment in locally owned businesses to serve the local community should be prioritised. Small businesses can't compete with national and multinational businesses."

Priority 6: Build our reputation as a Council that is 'good to do business with'

Priority Feedback

27 people (56%) responding to the consultation survey expressed their support for priority 6 by agreeing or strongly agreeing that Shropshire Council should "build our reputation as a Council that is 'good to do business with'".



Main Themes

Overall there were fewer comments against priority 6 than there were for other priorities but there were three common messages throughout:

- Respondents feel that the Council has a lot to do to improve its reputation.
- There were suggestions that the Council needs to communicate more effectively.
- People feel that the Council has a very important role to play and recognise the ability of the Council to influence others and support the development of partnerships.

Example Comments

"Shropshire's role as a county "good to do business with" must not just be about development land. That's short-term thinking which won't last long and won't tilt the playing field in Shropshire's favour. The ambitions for agri-tech are good, but the strategy needs to be clear that this focus must be more than just 'tech + agri' with a focus on buying products from existing agri-tech conglomerates. With vision and leadership Shropshire's action plan could be truly science-based, future-looking, eco-sustainable, leading-edge, agri-tech through Harper Adams and University Shrewsbury and linked with Cheshire's universities. Shropshire should also be "good for business" with start-ups, microbusinesses, arts and youth organisations and Shropshire has assets here that must not be overlooked in this plan."

"Sadly, I think the Council does not currently have a good enough reputation within the wider community. This is misplaced to some degree but partly resulting from a PR issue. We feel the community will respond to a greater public show of dynamism, innovative ideas, accessibility, positive PR. In fact, the very qualities that best businesses display. Business, as well communities, MUST respect the skills, experience and achievements of the Council in order to want to engage with the Council. A business to business interaction in many ways."

"I have lived in Shropshire for 20+ years. I do not think the Council's reputation has ever been so bad. Big, non-local businesses with no concern for local people or our precious environment may

have a different opinion. Action-build a reputation that puts environment and local people before profit.”

“Shropshire Council's role in promoting and supporting business is currently virtually invisible to the broader public. I think it should shout louder about what it is doing!”

“Haven't seen evidence that Shropshire Council is "good to do business with." This needs greater publicity.”

“The Council will certainly need to raise its game if it is going to compete with more dynamic and focused authorities for business the same applies to the LEP. There is a real danger than Shropshire will be simply subsumed into the WMCA and ignored.”

Other comments

The following comments are examples of the comments made within the open section of the consultation survey:

“Investing in quality of life and wellbeing of communities and place, considering it fully when policy decisions are taken, will help to attract and retain the best talent and keep people healthy which in turn will support long-term sustainable increases in productivity and growth.”

“Shropshire is still primarily an agricultural county. Should this be given more emphasis?”

“How much growth is appropriate? This is an important question that needs to be addressed in such a rural county. Support local small businesses first. I read little about sustainability here.”

“Local services are appalling. Economic growth should not be a priority. What is the point of increased economic growth if you can't get to work because there is no bus service (for example)?”

“Full attention must be paid to Brexit to mitigate against potential downsides for the county. We all know that many local businesses are already struggling in the face of rising costs from abroad as sterling falls. Support for local manufacturing, and exporting is vital. Buy-from would welcome this. We are already helping some of our Buy-from Shropshire producers to export to USA and Ireland via our own business links. We are an approved partner of the DIT and hope that this partnership will soon prove fruitful and further extend our ability to help local small producers to export. We note that the Council already has strong links with the DIT and Buy-From would like to work with the Council to help to promote Shropshire overseas.”

“The strategy is beautifully written but unfortunately peppered with jargon. While the section entitled 'Vision' provides useful context it does not contain a Vision i.e. a single sentence of a 'future world' that people will aspire to, be inspired by, and perspire to achieve! For example, NASA vision in the early 60's was to put a man on the moon.”

“Overall it is a very good document. It can go even one more level to be verbalized into a vision but [with] a clear step change.”

Contact Us

For more information please contact Shropshire Council's Commissioning Support Unit.

📄 **Website:** <http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/information-intelligence-and-insight>

✉ **Email:** commissioning.support@shropshire.gov.uk 📞 **Telephone:** 01743 258524

To contact Shropshire Council's Economic Growth Service use the following details:

📄 **Website:** <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/> and <http://www.investinshropshire.co.uk/>

✉ **Email:** business@shropshire.gov.uk 📞 **Telephone:** 01743 257777

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Draft Economic Growth Strategy

You Said Report May 2017

The Draft Economic Growth Strategy Consultation Full Report and Summary Report both draw attention to the common comments and dominant themes within the feedback received. However, there were also some points made by just one or two individuals that need to be highlighted and responded to. The You Said report will help us to answer some questions, respond to some statements and, where there are actions required, we can return to this document and review our progress over time.

	You said...	We have...	We will...
1	You want to see how the results of the consultation will be used and the changes that will be made to the Economic Growth Strategy before final publication.	We have analysed the consultation feedback and produced a detailed summary report of the findings which will be shared and published.	We will publish the results of the feedback. We have used the feedback to make amendments to the final strategy (which will be subject to final approval from Shropshire Council's Cabinet). This You Said report highlights many of the changes that have been made. The final strategy will be formally launched and published.
2	You want to understand how the Economic Strategy fits with other Council and LEP strategies (including the Local Plan Partial Review). You would like greater integration across strategies and policies.	<p>We acknowledge that there are a number of other documents and strategies referenced in the Economic Growth Strategy. The Marches Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) is the overarching strategy for the LEP area as a whole. The current strategic objectives in the SEP are supporting businesses, physical infrastructure, skills investment, low carbon economy and social inclusion. There are strong synergies between these and Shropshire's Economic Growth Strategy objectives.</p> <p>Shropshire Council's Corporate Plan has three objectives including Prosperous Economy. The Economic Growth Strategy sets out how this objective will be met by the Council and its partners.</p>	Publish a list of all of those strategies with which the Economic Growth strategy links to. Emphasise how the Local Plan provides the framework for housing and employment delivery to ensure sustainable economic growth in Shropshire.

	You said...	We have...	We will...
		The Local Plan is currently being reviewed and this will set out a plan led approach to housing and employment growth to 2036 once adopted. The Local Plan is the key delivery tool for the economic opportunities that are set out in the Economic Growth Strategy.	
3	You want to see the next level of detail – an action plan to accompany the strategy with clear timeframes and priority actions/projects.	The strategy was always intended to be supported by a detailed action plan. This will include immediate, short, medium and long term actions and will be reviewed annually by Cabinet to assess progress.	Prepare the detailed action plans once the strategy is finalised. These will be available on the Council's website.
4	You would like the Strategy's vision to stand out and be more visible. You also suggest a vision for each sector.	The vision overarches the six priorities. We have acknowledged that the vision needs to be more visible within the document and set apart from the priorities.	We will look at the design of the final document and ensure that the vision is more prominent with a clear and defined layout.
5	You want to know how the Strategy's impact will be measured or see some headline measures of economic prosperity.	We have fed this issue back to the Council's Commissioning Support Unit. The Commissioning Support Unit reports headline economic measures within Shropshire Council's performance portal see: https://shropshireperformance.inphase.com/Plan/236	We will act on your feedback and work to further develop our measures. We will consider the 6 priorities within the Economic Growth Strategy and work to develop additional measures that will reflect those priorities and the key strategic actions for economic growth.
6	You would like to see some infographics or 'killer facts'.	We have produced an infographic with headline statistics which will be incorporated into the final strategy. We have assigned each fact to a priority.	We will incorporate these facts and statistics into the final strategy, alongside the relevant priority.
7	The Council needs a communications plan to support the Strategy – communicating the work of the Council in relation to economic growth and building a more positive reputation.	We have recognised the need for a communications plan to accompany the action plan. The strategy acknowledges the importance of effective engagement in order to communicate our growth ambitions and how they will be achieved through the growth strategy.	We will produce a communications plan to sit alongside the strategy and action plan. The Council is fully committed to working collaboratively across the public and private sectors and with communities in order to achieve its economic ambitions.

	You said...	We have...	We will...
8	You would like to see start-ups featuring under Priority 2.	<p>We have acknowledged that a reference to start up's needs to be included under priority 2.</p> <p>In addition to the support provided through the Growth Hub, we identified that more start up support was needed for Shropshire and we now have free start up support workshops currently being provided through an ERDF funded Growth Hub Project: Building Business Confidence. This also incorporates pre start businesses.</p> <p>https://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/finance-and-funding/building-business-confidence-across-the-marches/</p> <p>If you would like any more information on this programme then please contact the Shropshire Growth Hub on 01743 250525 or email: marchesgrowthhub@shropshire.gov.uk</p>	We will add start up's into the final strategy under priority 2 and will continue to provide support to pre starts, start ups and existing businesses through the Marches Growth Hub and our Shropshire Hub. We will also be open to any future external opportunities for increased support/funding.
9	You would like to see green infrastructure added to the strategy.	<p>We have acknowledged that a reference to green and blue Infrastructure needs to be included within the strategy.</p> <p>Through the development and delivery of our key employment sites we have worked closely with partners and contractors to ensure developments have integrated the main components of this approach. This has included anthropocentric functions such as increased quality of life through the provision of cycle ways and footpaths.</p>	We will continue to integrate the key principles of green and blue infrastructure in the delivery of our key employment sites.
10	You would like the Council to work more closely to examine opportunities for investing in blue infrastructure – waterways and canals.	We have supported the Canal and River Trust to secure £2.53m Heritage Lottery Fund to restore a further stretch of the Montgomery Canal, create new nature reserves and improve towpaths. We have also been a partner on the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct	We will continue to support the Canal and River Trust with the plans they have to fully restore the Montgomery Canal, making it accessible so that it can be used,

	You said...	We have...	We will...
	You would also like Shropshire Council's support in finding investment for Shropshire's canals, including the Montgomery Canal.	and Canal World Heritage Site (WHS) Executive Board. We have recognised the importance of our rivers and canals in the county, particularly in terms of the economic, social and environmental impacts.	appreciated and protected for the benefit of local people and visitors alike. We will also continue to work with the World Heritage Site (WHS) partnership to implement the new governance arrangements to secure the site's WHS status.
11	You would like to see more on the visitor economy, inclusion of tourism statistics and the publication of a visitor economy strategy.	We are working closely with the sector to develop a coherent visitor economy strategy and define the function of the local authority in assisting the facilitation of tourism throughout the county.	We will, in conjunction with the sector, publish a visitor economy strategy and detailed information relating to the current position within Shropshire.
12	You are interested in the Skills Strategy and hope to see opportunities to be more engaged in the work under priority 4.	A skills strategy is currently under development which will seek to address how Shropshire can meet the skills needs of businesses and people's aspiration for work. It will be evidenced based and pull out key areas that need to be worked on and start to explore where the opportunities are.	Action plans will then need to be formulated, led and driven by those with the most appropriate remit and knowledge to do so, enabling full participation and ownership. This connected approach is necessary to achieve the strategy and therefore engagement will be a key element as the work progresses.
13	You would like greater clarity concerning the ageing population and how opportunities can be maximised and risks minimised.	Evidence on demographics tells us that population is ageing at a greater rate in Shropshire than it is nationally. Growth in the number of people aged 65 and over in Shropshire has risen more than four times as rapidly as the population as a whole (+41.6%) since 2001. We have begun to identify the opportunities of an older population from an economic perspective within the strategy and through the evidence that IPPR North supported us with. These include; volunteering hubs, education opportunities with UCS and other Higher Education partners, mentoring and coaching for new generation	We will expand on the opportunities and what actions the Council may take to maximise these in the detailed action plan. We will also highlight these in the emerging skills action plan. The draft Housing Strategy action plan will highlight a number of policy and practical initiatives that utilise Council resources to help deliver a range of housing in our communities that reflect our ageing demographics.

	You said...	We have...	We will...
		<p>of skills, spending in the local economy and supporting key and new markets (for example digital health, social care, leisure).</p> <p>The draft Housing Strategy 2016 – 18 vision recognises the diverse housing and support needs of local communities. As such, Priority 1 is to plan and support the provision of a range of housing that helps meet the current and future need of our residents and communities. The Council has proactively utilised resources to help fund a number of recent and current older person accommodation schemes within Shropshire.</p>	
14	You would like to understand opportunities for developing BIDs in the county.	We have been supporting the development of a BID in Oswestry and it is anticipated that a ballot will be held in early 2018. However, the BID process is dependent upon a critical mass of businesses in a particular area to contribute to a levy payment and this requires further analysis in a market town context. We are fully supportive of the Shrewsbury BID and have a Director position on the Board.	We will continue to support and work closely with our Business Improvement Districts and be open to future opportunities for more BIDs in our county.
15	You would like to better understand what could be done to encourage competitiveness among rural businesses and hope the Council can communicate the likely impact of Brexit (particularly for the farming community).	<p>As a predominantly rural county we work closely with rural businesses through our outreach programme being delivered through the Growth Hub.</p> <p>There are also various grants available to rural businesses through the RDPE Growth Programme administered through DEFRA – Food Processing and Rural Tourism Infrastructure. If you would like any more information on these grants then please contact the Shropshire Growth Hub on 01743 250525 or email: marchesgrowthhub@shropshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>We will continue to address the issue of Brexit. As part of our commitment to keeping our businesses informed we will be holding events covering the likely implications of Brexit through the Growth Hub. The first one is planned for August 2017 and will be rural in focus.</p> <p>We will also continue to ensure that we continue to look at opportunities for rural funding and provision of support that meet</p>

	You said...	We have...	We will...
		<p>We have acknowledged the concerns raised around the issues of Brexit, whether this has been directly from businesses and also the responses submitted as part of the consultation.</p>	<p>the requirements of our rural business to ensure a buoyant rural economy.</p> <p>Work with colleagues in the Marches to develop a summary position on key considerations arising from Brexit for our businesses and economy.</p>
16	<p>You would like the Council to carefully consider the economic needs of more remote rural communities.</p>	<p>We have recognised the economic needs of our more rural communities and have addressed this through the provision of an outreach programme of business support delivered through our Shropshire Growth Hub. Rather than confined to one geographic location we have a small Shrewsbury base with regular visits and events being held across the county. We are also in the process of developing a satellite Growth Hub office at the Marches Centre for Manufacturing and Technology in Bridgnorth.</p> <p>If you would like any more information on the support available to Shropshire businesses then please contact the Shropshire Growth Hub on 01743 250525 or email: marchesgrowthhub@shropshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Both the Core Strategy and the draft Housing Strategy articulates the Council's understanding and ambition that quality housing that is affordable should be delivered where it is needed and has developed a number of specific policies to help address housing delivery, whilst also actively utilising resources to help deliver rural housing schemes.</p>	<p>We will continue to look at the provision of business support across the county and we would welcome more feedback on this from rural communities.</p> <p>Feedback can be made via Shropshire Council's community officers, Shropshire Council's Customer Service Centre, Feedback Web forms or by emailing: BigConversation@shropshire.gov.uk</p> <p>We will continue to help our communities and in particular rural communities to address their housing needs through housing need surveys, community led housing schemes and other housing initiatives.</p>

	You said...	We have...	We will...
17	You would like to better understand how the Council will use its influence to support town centres and the role they play in economic prosperity.	We have actively engaged with the Shrewsbury Business Improvement District (BID) since its inception and with the shadow Oswestry BID group as it prepares for a ballot with town centre businesses next year. We have also played a lead role in preparing a plan for Shrewsbury town centre to set an ambition and framework for the future activities and development of the town centre as a place to live, work, visit and invest in.	We will continue to reflect on national policy and market demands in town centres, particularly the wider role that town centres are increasingly playing as places to live, visit and socialise. We will work with Shrewsbury Town Council and the BID to complete and support delivery of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan and engage with the public and wider community on the key recommendations from this plan in the late summer of 2017. We will work with the other five key market towns on their economic priorities.
18	You would like Shropshire Council's support in considering opportunities for Bishop's Castle.	We work in close partnership with Enterprise South West to provide IT and business/office support to the rural South West of the County. We have identified opportunities for further promotion of the funding opportunities available to businesses and this will be addressed through our outreach programme and ongoing partnership working.	We will continue to work in partnership with Enterprise house to deliver business clinics through the Marches Growth Hub outreach programme. The first of these clinics will be held on 10 th July 2017 and will focus on funding programmes available to businesses. The outreach programme will also include face to face appointments with the opportunity to discuss individual business needs with a business advisor. We are also actively promoting Bishops Castle as an area for inward investment via our Invest in Shropshire website.
19	You would like to see engagement and partnership working concerning proposals for the Ironbridge Power Station.	We have facilitated a stakeholder meeting this year with the owners of the former Ironbridge Power Station and local stakeholders including Councillors, local trusts and interest groups. The site represents the largest single development opportunity currently	We will continue to work closely with the owners of the site as they work towards a disposal. We will provide further briefings at key milestones and will support the current

	You said...	We have...	We will...
		in the County. We have been working with the owners and their planning team to develop an informal framework and guide for future development.	and new owners in time with their local engagement plans.
20	You would like to see more on retail and hospitality within the Strategy.	We welcome your comments on retail being included. The strategy highlights specific growth sectors and also those which are currently under represented. The evidence and consultation supports that these are six significant sectors for Shropshire. Hospitality is part of the visitor economy. Retail is a large sector for many economies, including Shropshire, and the strategy intention is to focus on those that are particularly unique and could give Shropshire an economic edge.	We will be undertaking significant sector based work and more information will follow on the implementation of this within the accompanying action plan.
21	You would like more emphasis on financial and professional services within the Strategy.	We welcome your comments on including more emphasis on financial and professional services. It is acknowledged within the strategy that financial and professional services are a particular sector which we can target. The six significant sectors outlined are, based on evidence and work with businesses and departments, those where Shropshire has, and could develop, a greater economic edge.	We will be undertaking significant sector based work and more information will follow on the implementation of this within the accompanying action plan.
22	You would like to see more references to the historic environment and heritage tourism within the Strategy.	We recognise the significance of heritage within both the natural and built environment as critical to the Shropshire identity and a driver for the visitor economy	We will continue to support the sector in the production of a coherent visitor economy strategy that accentuates and promotes our heritage assets to visitors
23	You have concerns over the high cost of rents for business premises and are worried that business rates will increase.	We are aware of the concerns over the high cost of rents. We provide support to businesses through the Growth Hub through conducting commercial property searches and working closely with local agents to assist them in finding suitable property. We also advertise our own Shropshire Council property for sale and rent on our Estates webpage. Whilst these	We will continue to offer flexible solutions and look for opportunities for provision of business space, whether this is grow on space or start up. We will continue to work in close partnership with the Valuation Office and

	You said...	We have...	We will...
		<p>will be listed at market rates there is some degree of flexibility on terms and potential for negotiation. https://new.shropshire.gov.uk/assets-and-estates/property-for-sale-and-rent/</p> <p>Our Invest in Shropshire website also provides more information on our key employment sites. http://www.investinshropshire.co.uk/</p> <p>We are also aware of the concerns raised around business rates. As a council we have no influence over rates set as the VOA set the rateable values. The agency revalue every five years (the current revaluation this year had been postponed from 2015). Revaluations do not raise extra revenue but redistribute the rate burden. This year the threshold for small business rate relief was increased meaning that an increased number of smaller businesses in Shropshire could benefit from rate relief. Nationally 7 businesses out of 10 should see a reduction.</p>	<p>provide support to businesses through the Growth Hub. The Economic Growth team will also continue to be reactive to the demands of the local economy and explore opportunities to meet the needs and requirements of businesses in the County.</p>
24	<p>You would like the Council to explore opportunities for HS2 in the south of the county too.</p>	<p>We have engaged with HS2 as regards the dissemination of the HS2 Phase 2a - Deposit of hybrid Bill. Shropshire Council will be hosting these documents in due course within its own web portal for the information of local residents and businesses.</p>	<p>We will continue to explore optimising local existing road and rail links to the emerging new HS2 infrastructure, in order to maximise wherever possible the benefits that may accrue to the whole of Shropshire of the increased national connectivity and improved journey times.</p>
25	<p>You would like to understand how housing can be driven forward in a way that is good for Shropshire as a whole, with less emphasis on developers' ambitions.</p>	<p>We have re-introduced the design awards in 2017 to recognise good quality design solutions. The policies of the current Local Plan provides the starting point for decisions concerning new housing development, as well as signposting relevant community planning</p>	<p>We will continue to work with developers at the earliest opportunity on new schemes to articulate the ambitions of the county for housing. We will continue to explore opportunities for the Council to directly be</p>

	You said...	We have...	We will...
		<p>and design guidance to help ensure appropriate outcomes in the local context.</p> <p>Both the Core Strategy and the draft Housing Strategy articulate the Council's understanding and ambition that quality housing, that is affordable, should be delivered where it is needed and we have a number of specific policies to help address housing delivery. The Council also actively utilises resources to help deliver rural housing schemes.</p>	<p>involved in delivery of housing solutions as part of our investment programme. We will continue to help our communities and in particular rural communities to address their housing needs through housing need surveys, community led housing schemes and other housing initiatives.</p>
26	Reference to community businesses and social enterprises within the final strategy document.	<p>We have acknowledged that this needs to be referenced within the final strategy. We have recently supported the application to make Shropshire a 'Social Enterprise Place' celebrating the breadth of Social Enterprises in the County and the work of Partners for Social Enterprise network. Various events have also been delivered specifically for social enterprises and community Interest companies through the Shropshire Growth Hub.</p>	<p>We will support the programme of events through the 'Social Enterprise Place,' celebrating the community businesses in the County and encouraging businesses to consider this operating model to ensure the sustainability and prosperity of Shropshire's social economy.</p> <p>We will also continue to support social enterprises and community businesses through our Growth Hub.</p>
27	You are concerned that people will not be able to take advantage of skills and employment opportunities because they can't access them (transport was a dominant issue in the comments made).	<p><i>(Please refer to the approach section of Shropshire LTP 2011-2026)</i> We have addressed the issues of transport in our Local Transport Plan. Our aim is to enhance transport provision so that all people, particularly those without access to a car, will find it easier to reach the places they need to go. However, our approach is based on the acceptance that in a rural county as sparsely populated as Shropshire, with high levels of car ownership, it will not be affordable to provide a comprehensive public transport service that would ensure excellent accessibility for all residents. Our approach</p>	<p>We will aim to provide a good level of public transport service in areas and on routes where there is sufficient demand to sustain the service at reasonable cost. Such services are likely to be within larger towns and on interurban routes. We will aim to enhance the quality of such services sufficiently that they can provide an attractive alternative to the car. We will also aim to improve accessibility for people with disabilities by removing barriers to walking, car use and the use of</p>

	You said...	We have...	We will...
		therefore, is to ensure that in rural areas there is at least a basic level of transport provision to enable all residents to access work and to reach essential services such as shops.	<p>mainstream public transport services; as well as supporting cost effective specialist services for those with additional needs. We will make the improvements that will enable more people to choose to travel by foot or cycle for local trips; this will enhance accessibility at a local level and also make a significant contribution to improved public health.</p> <p>We will also seek innovative ways of providing transport, harbouring the support of local communities, to improve cost effectiveness and to tailor services to local needs.</p>
28	You want to see a greater role for town councils in economic growth – and more support from Shropshire Council in working with town councils to enable that to develop.	We welcome the responses we have received from some of the town councils to the draft Strategy and the opportunities to discuss economic growth as part of the consultation and beyond. We have identified the opportunities to develop a growth strategy for each of the key market towns.	We will engage with the key market town councils on economic priorities to develop the growth strategy. We will be engaging with town and parish councils on the review of the Place Plans later this year.
29	You would like to see some aspirational projects.	We were pleased to receive your comments on the inclusion of aspirational projects. We currently have a robust decision making process in place in the form of a pipeline group and Capital Investment Board which meets regularly to assess and make decisions on potential projects. Whilst we are strongly aspirational in terms of the projects we would like to deliver there is a balance that needs to be achieved between being aspirational and the practicalities and risk of implementation.	We will continue to progress new and existing projects through this process and those that can be included will be contained within the action plan which will accompany the final strategy.

	You said...	We have...	We will...
30	You would like opportunities to work with the Council through the lifetime of the strategy and beyond.	We were pleased to receive your comments on more opportunities to work with the Council. More detailed engagement activity will be included in our communications and action plan.	In order to achieve effective delivery of our strategy we will continue to work closely with all our partners and stakeholders. The consultation period really opened up the dialogue on economic issues with a number of groups such as the Local Nature Partnership, NFU and Town Councils. We are committed to ongoing communication with our partners and will always welcome your feedback and suggestions. We will also seek to reach out to wider stakeholders as and when we need too.

Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

Name of service change: Shropshire Council Draft Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021

Contextual Notes 2016

The What and the Why:

The Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people we may describe as vulnerable, for example due to low income or to safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, eg Age. We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging or delivering services.

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. Carrying out ESIIAs helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes. These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

The How:

The guidance and the evidence template are combined into one document for ease of access and usage, including questions that set out to act as useful prompts to service areas at each stage. The assessment comprises two parts: a screening part, and a full report part.

Screening (Part One) enables energies to be focussed on the service changes for which there are potentially important equalities and human rights implications. If screening indicates that the impact is likely to be positive overall, or is likely to have a medium or low negative or positive impact on certain groups of people, a full report is not required. Energies should instead focus on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection, enabling incremental improvements and adjustments that will lead to overall positive impacts for all groups in Shropshire.

A ***full report (Part Two)*** needs to be carried out where screening indicates that there are considered to be or likely to be significant negative impacts for certain groups of people, and/or where there are human rights implications. Where there is some uncertainty as to what decision to reach based on the evidence available, a full report is recommended, as it enables more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion.

Shropshire Council Part 1 ESIIA: initial screening and assessment

Please note: prompt questions and guidance within boxes are in italics. You are welcome to type over them when completing this form. Please extend the boxes if you need more space for your commentary.

Name of service change

Shropshire Council Draft Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021

Aims of the service change and description

The draft Economic Growth Strategy sets out Shropshire Council's commitment and ambition to grow the local economy of the County. Preparing a clear vision and strategy is an important milestone in defining the key objectives and identifying the series of actions that the Council will take to achieve economic growth over the coming years.

The development of a new Economic Growth Strategy has been necessary in order to update the current Economic Growth Strategy approved in 2012. The development of this strategy is also one of the key objectives of the council's Corporate Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19, in which the three high level outcomes are Healthy People, Resilient Communities, and a Prosperous Economy.

Updating the strategy is a key priority for the Council as this document also links into and informs the Marches LEP Strategic Economic Plan, the West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan and the national economic picture, in particular the developing UK Industrial Strategy.

The aim of the strategy is to provide a clear vision and ambition that will direct the actions that the Council will take in order to achieve increased economic productivity, resilience and prosperity for the County. The draft strategy outlines the ways that this will be achieved through detailing a number of priority actions and targets, and acknowledges that whilst the Council does not have control over all the activities and actions which will generate economic growth the council is fully committed to working collaboratively across the public and private sectors and with communities in order to achieve its economic ambitions. The draft strategy also acknowledges the importance of effective engagement and building relationships in order to communicate growth ambitions and how they will be achieved through the growth strategy.

The draft strategy sets out six priorities in order to deliver the vision for Shropshire.

- Target actions and resources on economic opportunities
- Enable businesses to grow and succeed
- Deliver infrastructure to support growth
- Meet skills needs and people's aspirations for work
- Promote Shropshire to investors
- Build the Council's reputation as a council that is 'good to do business with'

The draft strategy also sets out the role the Council has to play in growing Shropshire's economy and the ability of the Council to invest into the economic growth agenda. The delivery of this new strategy will also underpin the ethos within the Council of developing a

more commercial, innovative and enterprising culture.

The draft Strategy was presented to Cabinet on the 1st March 2017 [Agenda, Decision and Minutes](#), at which time it was proposed that public consultation would help to inform the development of a final strategy. The policy intention was for this to also include an action plan which will support the strategy and inform the level of investment that will be required and over what timeframe. It was agreed that the consultation would take place, and that an ESIA would be produced following that consultation, in order to make use of any feedback from the wider community as well as the business community and make any adjustments considered warranted that could enhance positive impacts for the community.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

The intended audience for the Economic Growth Strategy in draft and final form is everyone who lives in, works in or visits Shropshire and therefore all groupings within the community, as well as those who serve them. By this we mean the Council, town and parish councils, the wider business sector, the voluntary and community sector, the health and social care sector, and organisations and bodies involved in enabling and facilitating economic growth, including Government agencies and Departments, and strategic bodies such as the West Midlands Combined Authority.

The main stakeholder groups were identified as follows:

- Local businesses
- Business partnerships and support bodies, including the Shropshire Business Board.
- Partnerships and providers of learning, skills and employment opportunities
- Rural and environmental partnerships
- Public sector bodies
- Town and Parish councils
- Housing providers
- Voluntary and Community Sector organisations (including social enterprise)
- Shropshire Council Elected Members and Officers
- Members of the public

This list was not intended to be exhaustive or in order of priority and will be added to and amended as and when appropriate, including through feedback from consultation.

Evidence used for screening of the service change

Full details about the evidence collected to inform the initial draft Strategy was presented to Cabinet at its meeting on the 1st March 2017. Cabinet agreed that the public consultation exercise be undertaken to further inform the process and to gather the views of the community as a whole, prior to a further report being presented back to Cabinet.

There have been significant changes in the field of economic development over the last few years. A number of different research and engagement exercises have developed a robust evidence base upon which a new strategy can be based. The different sources of research, alongside feedback from our partners and communities highlight that there are many new

ways of working, challenges and opportunities that can be considered and responded to.

Many sources have informed the development of this draft which include the commissioned report from IPPR North, 'Building an Economic vision for Shropshire' earlier this year as well a number of other sources which have informed its development, these include Shropshire Council Socio Economic Context report and Oxford Economics forecasts. The IPPR North report which was jointly commissioned with the University Centre Shrewsbury made thirteen recommendations which were centred on four themes; people, place, private businesses and public services. Whilst these recommendations are not replicated in the strategy they have informed the actions set out in it.

Formal analysis of the data collated through the public consultation process has now been undertaken to provide additional evidence and feed into the development of the Economic Growth Strategy.

The analysis of the data showed broad support for the six priorities and vision with common themes emerging which included the role tourism should play in Shropshire's economy, maximising the natural environment and green infrastructure, the contribution public transport makes to economic growth, the importance of digital connectivity, maximising opportunities and balancing needs between urban and rural and also local business growth and investment.

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

The consultation on the draft Economic Growth Strategy ran from the 13th March to the 28th April 2017 during which time a number of methods were used to seek to reach the intended audience. Engagement opportunities included an online consultation feedback survey with the option of submitting feedback via email for more detailed written responses. In total there were 68 responses (46 survey responses were received with 26 more detailed written responses – 4 responded to both). Although relatively low in number the analysis showed that the quality of responses was high and that the comments were lengthy and well considered.

In terms of promoting the consultation Shropshire Council officers attended over 20 meetings and workshops with key stakeholders and partner organisation where presentations on the draft strategy were delivered during the consultation period. 21 more formal invitations to participate within the consultation were issued to ensure that key local networks and organisations such as the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) and National Farmers Union (NFU) were engaged in the process. Individual invitations were also issued to those who had participated in the workshops which informed the IPPR North report. The Economic Growth team also had a key role in disseminating out the consultation information to their key contacts which included businesses registered on the Council's database for business alerts, business support networks such as the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and also the Shropshire Business Board. In total communications were sent out to in excess of 4,000 individual contacts.

A schedule was produced to map the reach of the consultation to ensure that coverage was

as wide as possible. A summary handout was produced which contained links to the strategy, webpage and details on how to get involved. This summary document, along with paper copies of the strategy were also provided for meetings and events which couldn't be attended due to time constraints or limited resource.

There was a good geographical spread from around the county in terms of the survey responses received which highlighted both rural and urban views. Analysis of the survey responses showed that the majority of the protected characteristic groupings who should see a medium positive impact were represented. There was a good mix of age ranges, although the age bracket mostly represented was the 45-64 group. 3 respondents identified themselves as having a disability and whilst most respondents to the survey were employed (29), there was also representation from those who were unemployed or retired. Of those who stated their ethnicity, 76% stated they were White British (the remainder did not state an ethnic background). In terms of gender 48% were male and 32% female (the remainder did not provide a gender). There will be ongoing efforts to engage with people in the protected characteristic groupings, particularly where the level of response has been low during this consultation, for example younger age groups and those at risk of social exclusion.

Potential impact on Protected Characteristic groups and on social inclusion

Using the results of evidence gathering and specific consultation and engagement, please consider how the service change as proposed may affect people within the nine Protected Characteristic groups and people at risk of social exclusion.

1. Have the intended audiences and target groups been consulted about:
 - their current needs and aspirations and what is important to them;
 - the potential impact of this service change on them, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended;
 - the potential barriers they may face.
2. If the intended audience and target groups have not been consulted directly, have their representatives or people with specialist knowledge been consulted, or has research been explored?
3. Have other stakeholder groups and secondary groups, for example carers of service users, been explored in terms of potential unintended impacts?
4. Are there systems set up to:
 - monitor the impact, positive or negative, intended or intended, for different groups;
 - enable open feedback and suggestions from a variety of audiences through a variety of methods.
5. Are there any Human Rights implications? For example, is there a breach of one or more of the human rights of an individual or group?
6. Will the service change as proposed have a positive or negative impact on:
 - fostering good relations?
 - social inclusion?

Initial assessment for each group

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through inserting a tick in the relevant column. Please add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)			✓	
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)			✓	
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			✓	
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)				✓
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				✓
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			✓	
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom			✓	

there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)				
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Guidance on what a negative impact might look like

High Negative	Significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place or no evidence available: urgent need for consultation with customers, general public, workforce
Medium Negative	Some potential impact, some mitigating measures in place but no evidence available how effective they are: would be beneficial to consult with customers, general public, workforce
Low Negative	Almost bordering on non-relevance to the ESIIA process (heavily legislation led, very little discretion can be exercised, limited public facing aspect, national policy affecting degree of local impact possible)

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	✓	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		✓

If Part One, please now use the boxes below and sign off at the foot of the page. If Part Two, please move on to the full report stage.

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change

The development of an Economic Growth Strategy is likely to have a positive impact on Shropshire as a whole. The benefits of growing the local economy through the six priorities are anticipated to positively impact on many societal layers within the county. Although this strategy is economically focused there will be many benefits associated with a resilient economy and increased economic productivity such as increased employment opportunity, provision of housing, infrastructure benefits, facilities and utilities.

In particular, a medium positive impact would be intended for the groupings of Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex, and also Social Inclusion. This would be due to an emphasis on skills and learning, flexible working to accommodate caring responsibilities and action to address access challenges for those living in low income households and/or those living in rural areas, such as young people, eg fuel poverty and digital / broadband connectivity.

As stated, there will be ongoing efforts to engage with people in the Protected Characteristic groupings, particularly where low levels of responses to public consultation have been received to date.

There will also be efforts made to engage with groupings and their advocates where links may usefully be made with specific target groups such as people with mental health problems, through projects and partnership initiatives already under way, eg WMCA Mental Health Commission and Productivity and Skills Commission. Actions may then be more readily identified from evidence gathered to enhance the positive impact of the Strategy for these groupings, leading to better outcomes overall for communities in Shropshire.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change


The responses to the draft consultation are being used to inform the final Economic Growth Strategy 2017-21 and associated action plan. Those who submitted a response and who have requested feedback will be sent a report detailing the main findings. This report will also be published on the Shropshire Council website.

It is anticipated that there will be a full launch of the final strategy in September 2017 after the strategy has been approved by Cabinet. This will be an opportunity for all those who were involved in and contributed to the draft strategy to see the final version before it is fully implemented as a working strategy document.

As part of the delivery of the vision it will be necessary to develop a clear communications and relationship plan to underpin the priorities and objectives for economic growth in Shropshire. This will involve regular communications with residents and businesses and engage a number of the established groups and networks.

The strategy is fully intended to be a working document therefore there will be ongoing review and monitoring of the objectives especially against an ever changing economic and political landscape. As highlighted in the strategy Shropshire Council will continue to build on their relationships with businesses, organisations and networks to achieve shared objectives, and maximise their use of communication channels for effective and positive outcomes. Alongside this the Council will also continue to look at best practice, encourage comments and ideas from local residents and actively encourage the participation of local community groups in the development and delivery of the Economic Growth Strategy. This will include ongoing efforts to strengthen engagement with people in Protected Characteristic groupings and people at risk of social exclusion, and to define and deliver actions accordingly to mitigate any negative impact and enhance positive impact of the Strategy in its draft and final versions.

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i> Lisa Ashby Economic Growth Coordinator		6 th June 2017

<i>Any internal support*</i>		
<i>Any external support**</i> Mrs Lois Dale Rurality and Equalities Specialist	<i>Lois Dale</i>	2 nd June 2017
Sarah Dodds Feedback and Insight Team Leader	<i>S Dodds</i>	21 st June 2017
<i>Head of service</i> Gemma Davies Head of Economic Growth	<i>GED Davies</i>	22 nd June

**This refers to other officers within the service area*

***This refers either to support external to the service but within the Council, eg from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, or support external to the Council, eg from a peer authority*

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer's name</i> Lisa Ashby Economic Growth Coordinator	<i>L Ashby</i>	6 th June
<i>Head of service's name</i> Gemma Davies Head of Economic Growth	<i>GED Davies</i>	26 th June

Shropshire Council Part 2 ESIIA: full report

Guidance notes on how to carry out the full report

The decision that you are seeking to make, as a result of carrying out this full report, will take one of four routes:

1. To make changes to satisfy any concerns raised through the specific consultation and engagement process and through your further analysis of the evidence to hand;
2. To make changes that will remove or reduce the potential of the service change to adversely affect any of the Protected Characteristic groups and those who may be at risk of social exclusion;
3. To adopt the service change as it stands, with evidence to justify your decision even though it could adversely affect some groups;
4. To find alternative means to achieve the aims of the service change.

The Part Two Full Report therefore starts with a forensic scrutiny of the evidence and consultation results considered during Part One Screening, and identification of gaps in data for people in any of the nine Protected Characteristic groups and people who may be at risk of social exclusion, e.g. rural communities. There may also be gaps identified to you independently of this process, from sources including the intended audiences and target groups themselves.

The forensic scrutiny stage enables you to assess:

- **Which gaps need to be filled right now, to help you to make a decision about the likely impact of the proposed service change?**

This could involve methods such as: one off service area focus groups; use of customer records; examination of data held elsewhere in the organisation, such as corporate customer complaints; and reference to data held by similar authorities or at national level from which reliable comparisons might be drawn, including via the Rural Services Network. Quantitative evidence could include data from NHS Foundation Trusts, community and voluntary sector bodies, and partnerships including the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Health and Well Being Board. Qualitative evidence could include commentary from stakeholders.

- **Which gaps could be filled within a timeframe that will enable you to monitor potential barriers and any positive or negative impacts on groups and individuals further along into the process?**

This could potentially be as part of wider corporate and partnership efforts to strengthen the evidence base on equalities. Examples would be: joint information sharing protocols about victims of hate crime incidents; the collection of data that will fill gaps across a number of service areas, eg needs of young people with learning disabilities as they progress through into independent living; and publicity awareness campaigns that encourage open feedback and suggestions from a variety of audiences.

Once you have identified your evidence gaps, and decided on the actions you will take right now and further into the process, please record your activity in the following boxes. Please extend the boxes as needed.

Evidence used for assessment of the service change: activity record

How did you carry out further research into the nine Protected Characteristic groups and those who may be at risk of social exclusion, about their current needs and aspirations and about the likely impacts and barriers that they face in day to day living?

And what did it tell you?

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change: activity record

How did you carry out further specific consultation and engagement activity with the intended audiences and with other stakeholders who may be affected by the service change?

And what did it tell you?

Further and ongoing research and consultation with intended audiences and target groups for the service change: activity record

What further research, consultation and engagement activity do you think is required to help fill gaps in our understanding about the potential or known affect that this proposed service change may have on any of the ten groupings and on the intended audiences and target groups? This could be by your service area and/or at corporate and partnership level.

Full report assessment for each group

Please rate the impact as you now perceive it, by inserting a tick. Please give brief comments for each group, to give context to your decision, including what barriers these groups or individuals may face.

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact	High positive impact	Medium positive or negative impact	Low positive or negative impact
Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)				
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)				
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)				
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)				

ESIIA Full Report decision, review and monitoring

Summary of findings and analysis - ESIIA decision

You should now be in a position to record your decision. Please highlight in bold the route that you have decided to take.

1. To make changes to satisfy any concerns raised through the specific consultation and engagement process and through your further analysis of the evidence to hand;
2. To make changes that will remove or reduce the potential of the service change to adversely affect any of the Protected Characteristic groups and those who may be at risk of social exclusion;
3. To adopt the service change as it stands, with evidence to justify your decision even though it could adversely affect some groups;
4. To find alternative means to achieve the aims of the service change.

Please add any brief overall comments to explain your choice.

You will then need to create an action plan and attach it to this report, to set out what further activity is taking place or is programmed that will:

- *mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change,*
- AND*
- *review and monitor the impact of the service change*

Please try to ensure that:

- *Your decision is based on the aims of the service change, the evidence collected, consultation and engagement results, relative merits of alternative approaches and compliance with legislation, and that records are kept;*
- *The action plan shows clear links to corporate actions the Council is taking to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, to have due regard to the three equality aims in our decision making processes.*

Scrutiny at Part Two full report stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer</i>		
<i>Any internal support</i>		
<i>Any external support</i>		
<i>Head of service</i>		

Sign off at Part Two full report stage

Signature (Lead Officer)	Signature (Head of Service)
Date:	Date:

Appendix: ESIIA Part Two Full Report: Guidance Notes on Action Plan

Please base your action plan on the evidence you find to support your decisions, and the challenges and opportunities you have identified. It could include arrangements for:

- continuing engagement and involvement with intended audiences, target groups and stakeholders;
- monitoring and evaluating the service change for its impact on different groups throughout the process and as the service change is carried out;
- ensuring that any pilot projects are evaluated and take account of issues described in the assessment, and that they are assessed to make sure they are having intended impact;
- ensuring that relevant colleagues are made aware of the assessment;
- disseminating information about the assessment to all relevant stakeholders who will be implementing the service change;
- strengthening the evidence base on equalities.

Please also consider:

- resource implications for in-house and external delivery of the service;
- arrangements for ensuring that external providers of the service are monitored for compliance with the Council's commitments to equality, diversity and social inclusion, and legal requirements including duties under the Equality Act 2010.

And finally, please also ensure that the action plan shows clear links to corporate actions the Council is taking to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, to have due regard to the three equality aims in our decision making processes.

These are:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations

Note: Shropshire Council has referred to good practice elsewhere in refreshing previous equality impact assessment material in 2014 and replacing it with this ESIIA material. The Council is grateful in particular to Leicestershire County Council, for graciously allowing use to be made of their Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIs) material and associated documentation.

For further information on the use of ESIIAs: please contact your head of service or contact Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist and Council policy support on equality, via telephone 01743 255684, or email lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk.

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