



Date: Wednesday, 27 March 2019

Time: 10.00 am

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

Contact: Tim Ward, Committee Officer
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PEOPLE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

TO FOLLOW REPORT (S)

- 8 Warmer Homes (Pages 1 - 18)**
To receive a presentation on Warmer Homes from Paul Kelly, Housing Operations Manager
- 10 School Transport (Pages 19 - 64)**
To receive an update from the Director of Children's Services, report to follow.

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People Overview Committee	
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Warmer homes

Responsible officer

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1.0 Summary

1.1 This paper provides an overview of the work that the council undertakes to ensure that people in Shropshire live in homes that they can afford to keep warm. It also provides information about potential schemes that Shropshire could adopt to support this work.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Committee members to:

- scrutinise the work the council undertakes
- evaluate potential schemes and
- recommend trials of any schemes that it feels merit further investigation.

3.0 Fuel poverty in Shropshire

3.1 There are over 135,000 properties in Shropshire.

- 106,701 are privately owned
- 31,000 solid wall properties, which cannot employ cavity wall insulation
- 65,577 lack a gas connection 46% compared to 13.7% nationally
- 17,607 or 13.1% in fuel poverty
- over 21,000 employ electrically heated storage heaters and room heaters
- 5,000 are heated using solid fuel, mostly coal

3.2 Shropshire has a low wage economy with high levels on in-work poverty. The average wage of jobs advertised across the county is £24,000.

Shropshire also has a higher than average percentage of older people.

4.0 The cost of fuel poverty

4.1 According to AGE UK 2012 “Cold homes cost the NHS between £850m - £1.36b each year ... overall poor housing represents a similar risk to the NHS as physical inactivity, smoking and alcohol”.

The Marmot Review on health inequalities noted that:

- Countries which have more energy efficient housing have fewer excess winter deaths.
- There is a relationship between excess winter deaths, low thermal efficiency of housing and low indoor temperature.
- Excess winter deaths are almost three times higher in the coldest quarter of houses in England than in the warmest quarter
- Around 40% of excess winter deaths are attributable to cardiovascular diseases.
- Around 33% of excess winter deaths are attributable to respiratory diseases.
- There is a strong relationship between cold temperatures and cardio-vascular and respiratory diseases.
- Children living in cold homes are more than twice as likely to suffer from a variety of respiratory problems than children living in warm homes.
- Mental health is negatively affected by fuel poverty and cold housing for any age group.
- More than 1 in 4 adolescents living in cold housing are at risk of multiple mental health problems compared to 1 in 20 adolescents who have always lived in warm housing.
- Cold housing increases the level of minor illnesses such as colds and flu and exacerbates existing conditions such as arthritis and rheumatism.
- Cold housing negatively affects children’s educational attainment, emotional well-being and resilience.
- Fuel poverty negatively affects dietary opportunities and choices.
- Cold housing negatively affects dexterity and increases the risk of accidents and injuries in the home.

5.0 Present schemes in Shropshire

5.1 Keep Shropshire Warm

This provides advice on all things relating to home energy including access to government and private grants and charity awards such as the Energy Company Obligation, the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive, Feed-in Tariffs, tariff switching and energy debts.

It works in partnership with national and local groups such as AGE UK, Citizens Advice Shropshire, Stretton Climate Care, Ludlow 21 and Shropshire Rural Communities Charity.

In conjunction with the charity Marches Energy Agency, it undertakes briefing and training sessions for hospital discharges and Integrated Community Services.

5.2 HeatSavers

HeatSavers provides emergency heating repairs and replacements, for owner-occupiers on low incomes with limited savings. Please see Appendix B for more information.

5.3 Warm Homes Fund

This is a £150 million fund administered by National Grid and the Community Interest Company, Affordable Warmth Solutions, to address some of these issues of fuel poverty. It incentivises the installation of affordable heating solutions in fuel poor households who do not use mains gas as their primary heating fuel. The fund will be used to supplement local strategic plans and other funding.

The fund is being administered over a number of rounds. Awards made to date amount to in excess of £60m and will deliver over 16,000 improvements to fuel poor households.

Warm Homes Fund - Round 2a

£1.8m split between Herefordshire Council and Shropshire Council to provide first-time central heating. The fund is aimed at owner occupiers and private tenants.

- Cat 1 = urban = 150 properties within 23 metres of the gas main receive a gas connection and free wet central heating system
- Cat 2 = Rural = 150 properties further than 2km from gas main get a liquid petroleum gas wet central heating system.

Warm Homes Fund - Round 3

£8.5m split again between Shropshire Council and Herefordshire Council to provide first-time central heating.

- Cat 1 = urban = 450 properties
- Cat 2 = rural = 460 properties. 90% Oil, 10% liquid petroleum gas as much renewable energy generation as we can lever in, plus solid wall insulation.

5.4 Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent (SOI) for Energy Company Obligation

Our statement of intent reflects the unique situation in Shropshire. This includes taking into account the low-income economy, use of high cost fuels as well the large geographical area which leads to the need to travel increased distances to work. The fact that we have large areas off the gas network and a large proportion of “hard to treat” properties. Without this option it is likely that many fewer residents would benefit from the Energy Company Obligation scheme.

6. Future work

6.1 The HeatSavers and Keep Shropshire Warm schemes are set to continue for the foreseeable future but we have ambitious plans to be a driver in future schemes and push them to deliver far more than previous schemes have attempted. Over the past few years there has been a growing feeling in the industry that the aspirations of national schemes have been severely reduced, especially since the end of Warm Front.

Recent changes in government schemes such as Energy Company Obligation and the introduction of industry schemes such as the Warm Homes Fund have highlighted the fact that though they have some aspirations to provide a wide range of options the focus on cost of measures based on lifetime financial and carbon emissions savings, has meant in reality their scope is exceedingly limited.

The volatility in the price of fossil fuels and the knock-on effects to household energy prices has made it almost impossible to make inroads in to the numbers of households suffering from fuel poverty. With government now starting to focus on the need to de-carbonise domestic heating as well as reducing fuel poverty it is time to rethink the strategy.

6.2 The situation in Shropshire is an extreme example of that faced nationally. If schemes can be made to work here they can work anywhere in the country. Our attempts to get the Warm Homes Fund to cover the cost of solid wall insulation is a recognition of the problems with the Energy Company Obligation scheme and an attempt to rectify its shortcomings.

The only way to address both aims of reducing fuel poverty and decarbonising domestic heating is to adopt a whole house approach. This means

- making sure the building walls and roof have the highest level of insulation possible
- fitting triple glazed windows and energy efficient doors and
- ensuring proper ventilation, including heat recovery.

Only at this point does it then make sense to attempt to sort the heating system. If

you do not do things in this order, the heating system will end up oversized and inefficient, costing far more to run. After that, you can look to heat the property via renewable technologies, some of which like ground source heat pumps can also offer the authority a source of income and help pay for themselves.

Appendix A has more information about retrofitting an existing property.

Installing heat loops and sinks or stores are believed to be one of the most effective ways to enable decarbonisation of domestic heating. This approach also has the benefit of reducing demand on the energy grid. This is especially viable in the case of new build properties.

- 6.3 When looking at both new build and retrofit schemes a sustainable energy plan needs to be adopted right from the planning stage. The combining of solar panels and batteries on domestic properties along with larger-scale battery storage at a development level should be the norm. This alleviates the problems of connection to the ever more fragile national grid and **offers the possibility of bringing significant income to the authority**. Ofgem and BEIS are encouraging the development of battery storage systems to enable a balancing service for the National Grid..
- 6.4 Tackling properties in this way will remove the chance of any future resident finding themselves struggling to decide whether to heat their home or eat. Fuel poverty can be wiped out by improving the housing stock even in a low-income economy like Shropshire. Any future improvements to income will then lead to improved lifestyles rather than being swallowed up by ever-increasing fuel costs.

7.0 Working with Cadent

- 7.1 We are member of a small group advising Cadent (the Gas network operator for most of Shropshire) on their future obligations toward reducing fuel poverty. Following our advice, Cadent now propose changes to their fuel poverty work. Rather than merely supplying gas connections to those in fuel poverty that meet certain eligibility criteria, it proposes a scheme that would have all operators and distributors pooling their funding to be used for a whole house retrofit scheme starting with all properties with an energy rating of E,F or G.

This is definitely the shape of schemes to come and if we in Shropshire can find a way to deliver this type of approach now,we could be a leading authority in the country.

8.0 New builds

8.1 The focus of our work going forward will be on whole house retrofit projects and high efficiency new build schemes. Our input into the “One Scheme” has mainly focused on the need for the properties to meet the highest possible efficiency standards and to encourage the sustainable energy planning mentioned above. To that end we have been promoting the building of dwellings to the Passivhaus standard. To meet this standard a property must have a maximum energy demand equal to or less than 15kWh per m² per year. As the average property is 75 -125m² this means the maximum yearly energy bill for a typical property would range between £160 and £280 per year.

9.0 Potential income generation

9.1 *Selling battery-stored energy*

Off-gas retrofits also allows for some new and novel methods of generating income for the council. If the council owns the equipment that it installs, it can use it to ‘build’ a virtual power station. The technology now exists to aggregate the energy in these batteries and trade it to help balance the grid. You can enhance this technology by having large-scale battery storage facilities that can be deemed to be charged by these systems even though they may be geographically far apart, effectively creating a ‘micro-grid’.

9.2 *Peer-to-peer trading*

This is a very new area and a lot of development is happening as we speak. It is a major line of research within Ofgem along with the future of local energy and its implications for the National Grid. This is a fast moving area that the authority needs to be part of to be able to make the most out of emerging options for income generation.

9.3 *Sheep wool insulation*

Sheep’s wool is one of the most effective insulation materials available. The council is therefore exploring the opportunity to build a sheep’s wool insulation manufacturing plant in Shropshire. At present we are in the early phase of feasibility talks with the local NFU and British Wool Marketing Board but it seems to be a highly popular proposal.

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

None

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Lee Chapman, Adult Services, Health, Social Housing

Local Member

All

Appendices

- Introduction to Heat Savers
- Retrofitting an existing property

Appendix A retrofitting existing properties

Off gas retrofit

The council's focus is necessarily on the off-gas households in the county. It is very keen to develop a whole house approach that can be used across all tenures. This is obviously a very difficult space to work in as is shown by the mixed results of recent government schemes such as Eco and Green Deal.

The aim is to be able to treat every property with a full range of measures that will leave the property fit for the future with the lowest energy bills and carbon emissions possible. The measures would include:

- Solid wall insulation both internal and external
- Cavity and loft insulation.
- Triple glazed windows and energy efficient doors
- Ventilation with heat recovery
- Renewable heating, preferably Ground Source Heat Pumps but dependent on the situation
- PV and battery system
- Rain water and grey water harvesting

Addressing the envelope of the building first is the most effective way to improve the efficiency of a property. Once this is as air tight and insulated as possible the heating and other services can be properly sized to further maximise efficiency. Like single wall insulation, replacing glazing has been a problem under previous government schemes as the financial and carbon savings are not huge given the costs.

Unfortunately, if you do not tackle glazing then the maximum gains from energy efficiency and CO² reduction will never be realised.

This is the approach taken when building to *Passivhaus* design standards. These houses are 70% more efficient than houses built to traditional standards, using technology to achieve the required standard. This also addresses a major problem within the building industry known as the 'performance Gap'. The house looks good on paper but the resident still ends up with energy bills of hundreds of pounds every year. Draughts and cold bridging around the frame and off the glass will mean the resident feels cold and consequently uses more heating than should be necessary.

Once you have made the building envelope secure the next step is ventilation. Over many years of running government backed insulation schemes it has become very apparent that ignoring ventilation is a mistake. Registered social landlords have experienced an explosion in cases of black mould and condensation problems due to installing insulation and not looking to improve ventilation. Ventilation systems can be either passive or active. The main difference is that active systems have an electric element to heat the air. Passive systems use a heat exchanger rather than an element to heat the incoming air. There are other obvious advantages of ventilation systems in removing airborne particulates and helping residents with

asthma as well as protecting from damp and mould. The heat recovery element of the ventilation system is critical. As humans we constantly generate heat from carrying out our day to day activities if you then add in the heat generated by the appliances and technology we use. This essentially free/waste heat can provide the vast majority of the heat demand for a properly insulated and ventilated house.

Next, we have the renewable heat source. Our preferred method is for a Ground Source Heat Pump attached to a heat loop. This gives the council the chance to recoup its costs for installation and to sell and excess energy generated. It also allows for another stream of income by charging for access to the system.

The PV and battery systems are there to make sure that the residents get the full benefit of generating their own electricity, since most people are not using the energy when the sun is actually shining.

Climate change is wreaking havoc on or existing systems for providing water and sanitation services. Grey water and rain water harvesting and reuse is going to be essential going forward and so should be looked at now while we are already doing so much to the property. Collecting all surface run off water also offers the chance for the resident to get a reduction on the water bills.

At present we are awaiting the results of the application for Warmer Homes Fund 3. This has a solid wall insulation component and renewable heating option. If this is successful this would seem to be an excellent opportunity to trial this kind of whole house approach. We are working to find ways to fund the interventions. We are also working to find other ways to gain an income from these schemes for the authority.

One of these is to set up a Sheep's wool insulation manufacturing plant in Shropshire. At present we are in the early phases feasibility talks with the local NFU and British Wool Marketing Board but it seems to be a highly popular proposal.

On gas retrofit

This is essentially the same as the off-gas project but the rationale for the project is different. The government via Ofgem has identified decarbonising domestic heating as a priority going forward. There is a growing body of research on the way to achieve this goal. We wish to run our own trial based on the Shropshire situation to see how best we should approach this problem. Therefore, we wish to run a similar whole house approach scheme but based on gas centrally heated properties.

At present Ofgem has been looking at hybrid heat pumps in combination with gas central heating. On examining their results so far and getting a better idea of the parameters they set, it seems that a major driver for the research they carried out so far is to be able to reduce demand on the national grid by designing these systems to be remotely controlled to allow switch over from the heat pump to the gas boiler during peak times. This hardly seems in keeping with the original claims for the research but also leaves a gap for us to research. The research so far does not look to tackle the whole house before installing the heating system. Retrofitting of heat

pumps is a difficult enough proposition already but made worse if you do not tackle the whole house. Heat pumps work better when run constantly rather than in cycles as a gas system does. This is because the heat pump will struggle to meet high demand quickly. It is therefore necessary to reduce the demand to the lowest level possible to allow the heat pump to work at its most efficient. It is likely that given a whole house approach the gas system would end up only being used in exceptional circumstances such as at times of extremely cold weather. This work is unlikely to be carried out by energy companies under their obligations as it will have a negative impact on their business models.

The funding for this work is subject to the same considerations as that of the above project.

WARM HOMES HEALTHY PEOPLE



HeatSavers
SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

L

creating a better future

Les Poultney – Private sector housing - 01743 251812

Page 11

Richard James



HeatSavers



Pg. 2 Heat Savers **INTRODUCTION**



Pg. 3

How HeatSavers brings **VALUE** to our Health and Social Care Services as well as individuals, families and communities. Illustrating that we have become more sustainable by working in multi agency partnerships



Pg. 4

How HeatSavers has become more **FLEXIBLE** and sustainable over the years, to not only survive but expand and grow, to deliver more services and work in partnerships with other agencies to enhance our service in a challenging economic climate.



Pg. 5

How HeatSavers brings **IMPACT** through improvement to a persons health and wellbeing and property which has a knock on effect on Health, Social Care and even Education services. The impact on society as a whole can be felt by effecting the wider determinates of peoples' health, the primary one being a persons living environment.



Pg. 6

A brief summary of the HeatSavers scheme and what makes it so effective



Pg. 7

The HeatSavers Public Health Conference poster



HeatSavers



Signposting



Works & Handyperson



Radiator Scheme



Winter Warm Packs



Help & Advice



Emergency Heating Grants



Loft & Wall Insulation

HeatSavers was formed in 2011 by Shropshire Council's Housing Team, Public Health Team, Age UK and Marches Energy Agency (MEA) to provide advice and assistance to vulnerable households in respect of heating and energy efficiency issues.

The HeatSavers scheme includes a range of solutions, which include, supplying temporary radiators and Emergency Heating Grants, delivered by the Private Sector Housing team (PSH). Referrals are received from front line workers who have identified concerns for the health of vulnerable people due to poor housing conditions and a lack of heating.

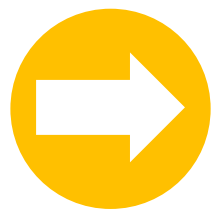
PSH receive referrals and respond directly to the needs of the household, working with the referring professional or agency. Households will also receive a wide range of housing advice and assistance from Housing Services.

So far there are three categories of people that come into contact with HeatSavers:



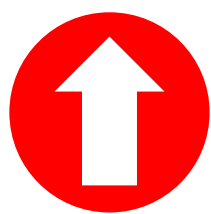
Low level needs

- Low needs and are often able to solve any problems themselves
- Form the majority of cases seen by HeatSavers (**331** out of **448** cases)
- Often signposted to alternative services e.g. Energy Saving Trust or MEA
- People with low level needs do not require investment from HeatSavers
- Tend to present with moderate physical and mental health needs and some property issues



Typical needs

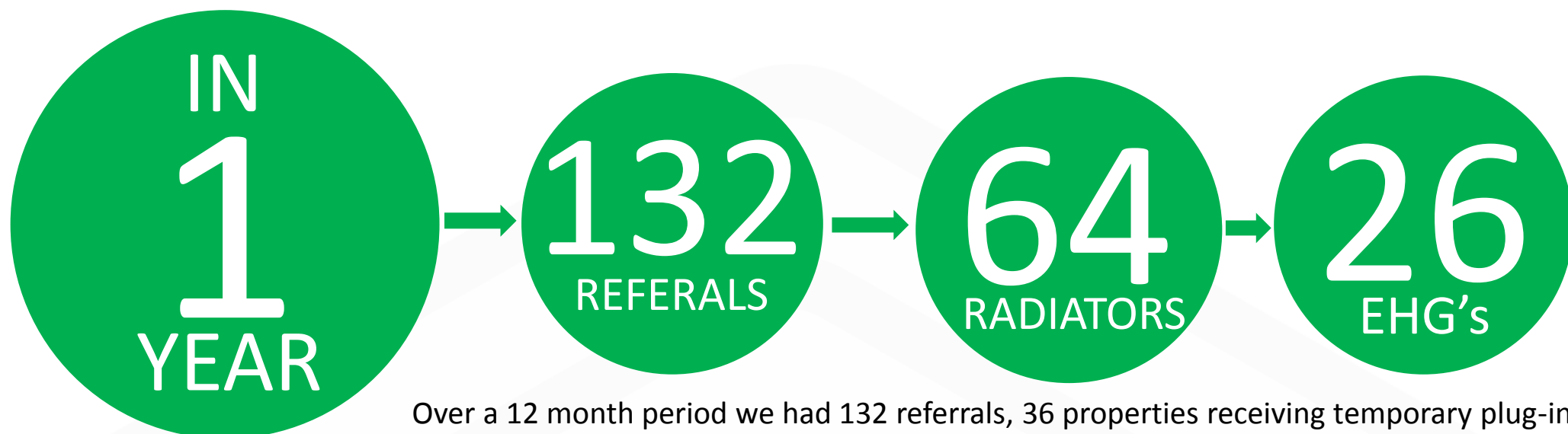
- Form **102** out of **480** cases
- Often require Emergency Heating Grants to help install new boilers and radiators.
- The average case usually requires an investment of **£2380.00**
- Housing Health & Safety Rating System. Hazard reduced from **11,676** to **148**
- Per case this equates to an average saving to the NHS and society of over **£12,000** per year, according to the BRE Health and Housing Cost Calculator



Complex needs

- This class of people have high level/ complex physical and/or mental health needs often with very poor property conditions
- Because the needs of these people are often so great a combined approach is taken to assist, involving public health, HeatSavers and Social Care. **15** out of **480** cases.

VALUE



Over a 12 month period we had 132 referrals, 36 properties receiving temporary plug-in electric radiators providing 64 radiators in total and 26 Emergency Heating Grants (EHG).

There are a substantial number of vulnerable households who currently benefit from our assistance and interventions which saves Health, Social Care and Society as a whole significant amount of time, money and resources.

The scheme has been instrumental in ensuring clients can return home from hospital sooner and remain at home, improving peoples' health and wellbeing and providing savings in the process.

£250,000 has been spent on interventions in people's homes, resulting in over **£1,250,000** in savings since 2012.

For every £1 invested in the scheme over £5 is returned in savings to the NHS, Social Services and wider society. Currently HeatSavers works in partnership with npower and the Benefits team who each contribute one third of the necessary funding to the scheme. Every £1 invested by housing is matched by £3 from external partners such as WarmZones and SSE, increasing the return on investment by a further **300%**.



The HeatSavers scheme is able to **PREVENT**, **REDUCE** and **DELAY** the onset of disease, reducing demands on the NHS and the Social Care system by improving the quality of peoples' living environment. Value is also brought to the individuals. Improving peoples' wider determinates of health it is possible to have an impact on wider society for many years. **SUPPORTS**, **ACCELERATES** and **ENHANCES** recovery.



FLEXIBILITY



2012

Funding for the scheme in 2011/12 and 2012/13 was via successful bids to the Government's Warm Homes Healthy People (WHHP) fund, generating **£127K** per annum.

2013

Start

Early in 2012 HeatSavers started to work with Age UK and other voluntary sector organisations to expand the reach of the HeatSavers scheme to reach as many people as possible.

Funding for the scheme in continued with a further **£114K** per annum.

Funding Ended

April

Public Health Shropshire started to work with us in January to continue the scheme.

2014
Jan

The WHHP fund ended and over 2013/14 the scheme has survived on residual funds remaining from the previous WHHP bids.

Contributions came from the Benefits team through the local support and prevention fund.

By winter 2015, match funding was secured with WarmZones for households in CSCO areas (which covered all of rural Shropshire and some urban areas) and a majority contribution from SSE (based on calculated carbon savings) for households on certain benefits.

Sept

npower started to work with HeatSavers.

Joined with external partners

Now

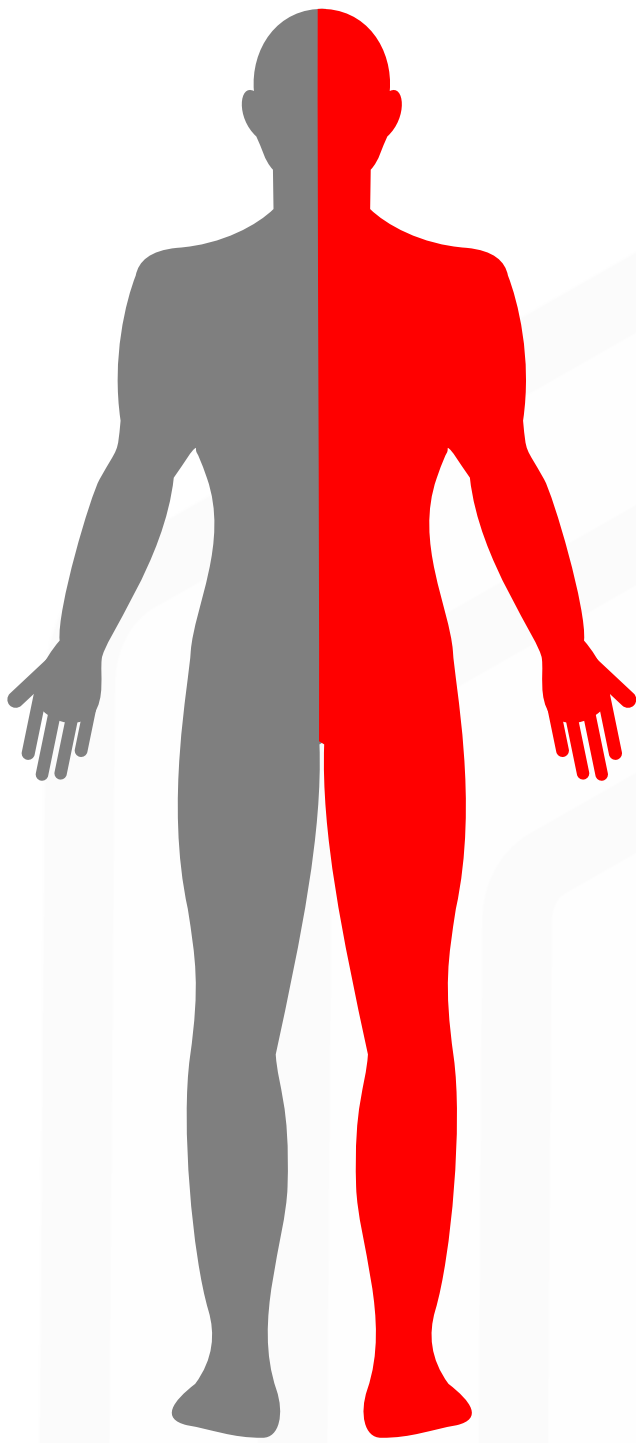
2015
Jun

June the HeatSavers WarmZones bid was successful.

Sept

September, HeatSavers partnered with SSE.

2016



Cold housing negatively effects children's educational attainment, emotional well-being and resilience.



Mental health is negatively effected by fuel poverty and cold housing for any age group. More than **1 in 4** adolescents living in cold housing are at risk of multiple mental health problems compared to **1 in 20** adolescents who have always lived in warm housing.



There is a known link between cold temperatures and cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.



Children living in cold homes are more than twice as likely to suffer from a variety of respiratory problems than children living in warm homes.



Cold housing increases the level of minor illnesses such as colds and flu due to increased levels of damp and mould as well as compromised immune systems.



Fuel poverty negatively effects dietary opportunities and choices with many people having to choose to "**heat or eat**".



Cold housing exacerbates existing conditions such as arthritis and rheumatism and negatively effects dexterity increasing the risk of accidents and injuries in the home.

There are many aspects of health that are negatively impacted on by living in cold and damp environments. Often overlooked is a persons state of wellbeing which we have seen to have the greatest impact on peoples overall health.

Effects on age groups



Children - Significant effects on infants' weight gain, hospital admission rates, developmental status, and the severity and frequency of asthmatic symptoms.

Adolescents - Cold housing and fuel poverty effects the mental health of adolescents.

Adults - Cold housing effects adults' physical health, well-being and self-assessed general health, especially for vulnerable adults and those with existing health conditions.

Older people - Cold housing was evident in terms of higher risk of mortality, physical health and mental health. Cold environments increase the risk of Urinary Tract Infection's which can effect peoples mental health and stability leading to a higher falls risk (accounting for 1 in 10 admissions to A&E) and in extreme cases even death.

Shropshire statistics



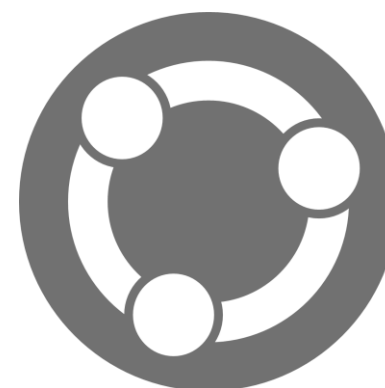
There are **19,572** fuel poor households in Shropshire, making it 13th worst out of the 152 local authorities in England. Data released by Age UK as part of its Warm Homes campaign on fuel poverty, warned 24,000 older people across the UK could die because of the cold across.

Shropshire has had **1,740** excess winter deaths between 2002 and 2012, making it 96th out of 126 local authorities. Elsewhere in the West Midlands, Wolverhampton has 19,057 homes in fuel poverty, Stafford has 4,842, South Staffordshire there are 3,882 fuel poor homes and the Wyre Forest has 5,679 homes in fuel poverty.

SUMMARY



With Councils coming under ever greater financial pressure and services being subject to increasing scrutiny it is vital to cooperate, share resources and expertise and put an end to silo working in order to maximise value for money.



Joint Working

Over the years HeatSavers has grown and developed. Where many similar schemes ended after January 2014 with the end of the Warm Home Healthy People fund, HeatSavers persevered using residual funds. The HeatSavers scheme then linked Housing with Public Health and was able to draw on funds to continue to operate and to capitalise on Public Health's expertise and by working together further improve the service. This positively impacted on the wider determinants of peoples health and by doing so acted as a preventative measure.



Barriers

The greatest challenge to HeatSavers has been a lack of funding, predominantly old housing stock, wide rural areas and the Councils focus on reactive measures rather than preventative measures:

Funding

After the end of the WHHP fund HeatSavers worked with other council services to draw on funding and expertise, in a time where budgets were being cut and resources were being stretched. We made our budget go further by collaborating with other agencies who match funded our work.



Funding

Old Housing Stock

We developed strategies for tackling cold and damp in properties, specifically in old houses such as effective heating, insulation, addressing other hazards e.g. dangerous electrics and risk of falls as well as proving help and advice.



Poor Housing

Wide rural area

By partnering with voluntary agencies working across Shropshire we were able to widen our reach to people we would otherwise have been unable to contact at no extra cost.



Wide Rural area

Focus on reaction

In Shropshire there has been a drive to increase preventative measures in health and social care services through programmes such as Assistive Technology, Everybody Active Everyday and Health Screening. As a result of budget cuts and an increased demand on services the councils focus has been on meeting current demand rather than planning for the future with preventative schemes like HeatSavers. Building support from departments other than public health has been difficult as a result.



Reaction not prevention

HeatSavers has expanded its reach and improved its service with no extra cost by adopting a whole systems approach, working closely with voluntary organisations e.g. Age UK and Shelter. Collaborating with private sector bodies such as npower, SSE and WarmZones who have provided match funding has multiplied the budget. So far HeatSavers has been one of the only services in the whole of the Shropshire Council to do this successfully. By doing this we have improved the service, increased flexibility making HeatSavers sustainable for the future.



Whole system approach

1 Introduction

The HeatSavers project started in early September 2014. It set out to identify and quantify the costs and benefits of helping vulnerable people to heat their houses, whilst potentially forming part of the health and well-being board prevention strategy.

3 Results

The research found a correlation between cold temperatures and cardio-vascular and respiratory diseases. Children living in cold homes are more than twice as likely to suffer from a variety of respiratory problems than children living in warm homes. More than 1 in 4 adolescents living in cold housing are at risk of multiple mental health problems compared to 1 in 20 adolescents who have always lived in warm housing.

In Shropshire there are 19,572 fuel poor households, which makes it the 13th worst of the 152 local authorities in England. Shropshire has had 1,740 excess winter deaths between 2002 to 2012, making it 96th out of 126 local authorities.

Elsewhere in the West Midlands, Wolverhampton has 19,057 homes in fuel poverty and Stafford has 4,842. In South Staffordshire there are 3,882 fuel poor home and the Wyre Forest has 5,679 homes. Fuel poverty, is at 21.2% in Shropshire and is 6% higher than the national average.

The data shows that 27.3% of homes in Shropshire were built before 1919, higher than the national average of 21.7%. Mains gas is available to only 63.4% of properties, compared to 87% nationally and 66% across all rural areas. Of households in Shropshire, 25.6% are vulnerable within the definition of the Decent Homes Standard, 21.8% of whom live in pre-1919 homes and 38% of whom live in properties with a SAP rating of below 55 (category D).

5 Conclusion

Schemes such as HeatSavers address many of the requirements outlined in the recent National Institute for Care and Excellence consultation document and Care Act Guidance. It provides a "one stop shop" and encourages work between health care and housing services. In HeatSavers we have a model scheme which should be supported and developed as it addresses these recommendations effectively, provides currently unquantified savings and helps to manage demand for other services.

It is difficult to quantify the exact savings to the NHS however, the case studies and anecdotal comments received from clients, support workers, medical staff and social care staff are extremely positive. Recommendations and research made by NICE, Age UK, Shelter, Marmot Committee the British Research Establishments and the recent Care Act guidance also strongly supports the value of these schemes and suggests its benefits in savings, as well as quality of life improvements, should be supported and invested in by local authorities.

The HeatSavers scheme in Shropshire has delivered help and advice to over 300 people and awarded £207,000 in grants. As a result, over the past 3 years we estimate the preventative work done by HeatSavers has saved the NHS and Local Authority services over £890,000 (using the HHCC calculator).

According to the 2011 Housing Survey there is estimated to be over 1,100 vulnerable households that do not meet decent homes standards as a result of poor heating. It is estimated that approximately £1,700,000 is needed to bring these properties up to standard.

Even though this last winter was extremely mild compared with previous winters, there was a 25% increase in HeatSavers referrals compared to the previous year, including a 15% increase in Emergency Heating Grants. It is likely that a severe winter would increase demand for these services dramatically.

If there was a dedicated scheme that tackled heating related inequalities effectively, there is strong evidence to suggest that we could improve the Nations health, well-being, education and development ultimately saving the United Kingdom millions.

6 Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge the work done by Shropshire Councils' Public Health department and Private Sector Housing department.

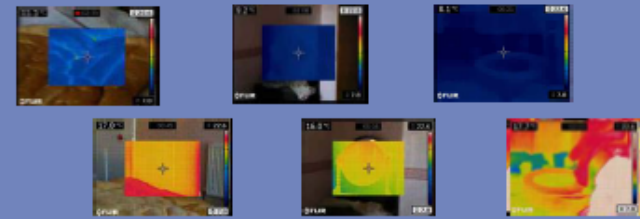
With particular thanks to:

- Margo Laming, Jenoir Caddick, Paul Kelly & Sharron Holl
- Irfan Ghani & Rod Thompson
- Les Poultney for his work on the HeatSavers Project

7 References

The Health impacts of cold homes and fuel poverty 2011; Alleviating Fuel Poverty in London 2011; Excess winter mortality in England 2009; Good practice healthy homes 2009; Cold homes, health, carbon emissions and fuel poverty 2011; Excess winter deaths and morbidity and health risks associated with cold homes 2012; Excess winter mortality in England 2012; LARES 2004; ECO Prospectus - Shropshire - Draft V2- June 19th 2013; Home dampness, current allergic diseases, and respiratory infections among young adults 2001; Contribution that can be made to Health Outcomes by Regional Housing Policy Housing Stratagem For England 2011; INDICATORS OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN RURAL ENGLAND 2009; Good Housing Leads To Good Health 2008; Affordable warmth manifesto 2014; housing standards interventions in Derby local authorities' work to tackle fuel poverty 2013; NHS and Liverpool Alliance 2013; Healthy Housing survey 2012; Shropshire study fuel poverty 2010; Social impact of poor housing 2010; The real cost of poor housing 2010

National (NICE, Marmot review) and local research was done to establish causal links between the temperature of a persons house and their state of health. Thermal imaging technology was used to measure temperature differences before and after HeatSavers intervention. People were also interviewed to discover the impact of the cold upon them.



2 Method

4 Discussion

Cold has a range of effects on people, with some conditions and illnesses being directly linked to cold, whereas others have a longer chain of causation.

Respiratory

People with asthma are two to three times more likely than the general population to live in damp homes. Temperatures below

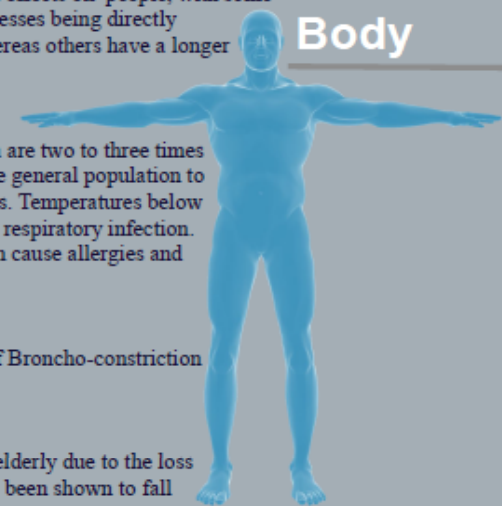
16°C have been shown to lower peoples resistance to respiratory infection. Damp leads to growth of moulds and fungi which can cause allergies and respiratory infections.

COPD

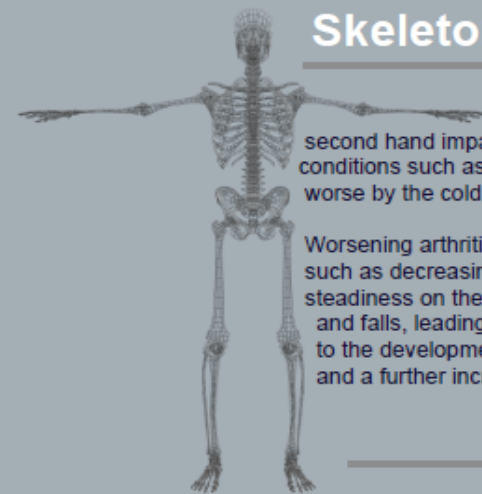
The cold impairs lung function and is a key trigger of Broncho-constriction asthma and COPD.

Home accidents

Having a cold home increases the risk of falls in the elderly due to the loss of strength and dexterity. Strength and dexterity have been shown to fall progressively in temperatures from 19°C to 6°C.



Skeleton



Although the cold does not have a direct affect on the human skeletal structure it does have a second hand impact, for example people who suffer from conditions such as arthritis often have their condition and pain made worse by the cold.

Worsening arthritis symptoms have a number of knock on effects such as decreasing mobility. This reduces peoples strength and steadiness on their feet, often leading to an increased risk of trips and falls, leading to fractures. The lack of movement can also lead to the development of UTI's which leads to psychological symptoms and a further increased risk of falls and hospital visits.

Vascular

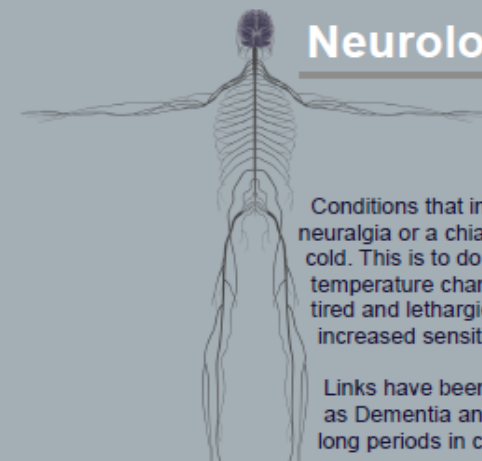
As temperatures drop blood becomes more viscus and blood pressure rises due to the low temperatures causing blood vessels to narrow. This narrowing of the arteries and thickening of the blood over extended periods of time can put excess pressure on the heart leading to increased risk of heart attacks.

A number of other issues are significantly contributed to from chronic cooling of the circulatory system:

- Increased risk of Embolism
- Increased risk of Thrombosis
- Increased risk of stroke

This dramatically shortens the length and quality of peoples lives.

Neurological



People with neurological conditions can suffer additional cold related complications such as heightened nerve pain.

Conditions that involve nerve pain such as back pain, trigeminal neuralgia or a chiari malformation are generally impacted on by the cold. This is to do with the nervous system and how it reacts to temperature changes. With raised temperatures people may feel tired and lethargic but with decreased temperatures people suffer an increased sensitivity to pain.

Links have been made to cold temperatures and conditions such as Dementia and Parkinson's being exacerbated from living for long periods in cold temperatures



Committee and Date

People Overview Committee

27 March 2019

Item

Public

Discretionary School and College Transport – previous Cabinet reports

Responsible Officer

Karen Bradshaw, Director of Children's Services

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01743 253984

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides committee members with copies of past Cabinet reports regarding discretionary school and college transport, in order to support their scrutiny of proposals to changes to the support that the council provides.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members read the reports and prepare any questions that they might have regarding discretionary school and college transport.

3.0 Opportunities and risks

3.1 Officers have identified that proposed changes to discretionary school and college transport could result in a medium negative impact on protected characteristic groupings, in particular those for age, disability, and social inclusion. They could also potentially be seen as running against the corporate aims of the council with regard to children and young people and their life chances.

4.0 Financial assessment

4.1 Proposed changes to discretionary school and college transport could provide a budget saving of £202,000 annually.

5.0 Report

5.1 At the meeting of the People Overview Committee on 20 February 2019, the committee agreed to consider proposals for changes to support for discretionary school and college transport. Cabinet considered this matter at its meeting on 6 March 2019, agreeing to consult on proposals to the following:

- To increase the lower rate contribution to 50% of the cost of the mainstream scheme, which provides a travel pass or transport on a school transport service, for young people aged 16 or over attending school or college greater than three miles from home. This would increase the contribution from £142.50 to £437.50, while maintaining the upper limit of the scheme at its current £875 per year.

- To expand the contributions scheme to include students aged 16 or over with a special educational need or disability (SEND), in line with the above mainstream scheme
- To withdraw the council’s financial support for pupil transport to nursery for children with a special educational need or disability.

5.2 Committee members requested a number of documents to support their scrutiny of proposals for changes to support for discretionary school and college transport.

- The report that Cabinet considered on 6 March 2019 is attached as **Appendix A**.
- A report that Cabinet considered on assisted home to school transport on 15 June 2011 is considered as **Appendix B**.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Cllr Nick Bardsley, Children and Young People
Local Member All members
Appendices



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Cabinet
6 March 2019

<u>Item</u>
<u>Public</u>

Discretionary School & College Transport – Permission to Consult

Responsible Officer Karen Bradshaw

e-mail: karen.bradshaw@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 254201

1. Summary

The Council is committed to providing efficient, integrated transport services whilst ensuring that its statutory duties are met. Financial pressures mean that the Council has identified a £717k savings target attributed to school transport, including those transport functions which are discretionary in nature.

The Council's Passenger Transport Services have introduced a number of innovative transport solutions to reduce the pressure on the home to school transport budget and whilst these have been and continue to be successful, in order to realise a significant budget reduction a policy change is needed.

There are a number of other projects that are being undertaken to achieve this target in addition to the proposals within this report. These include a further development of the personal transport budget programme, network reviews and digital procurement.

This report sets out proposed policy changes and seeks approval from Cabinet to consult on the proposals as detailed below.

Should Cabinet agree to this consultation, the Council would undertake a six-week consultation during March and April with various stakeholders including elected Members, schools and colleges, Parent Advocacy groups, Voluntary & Community Sectors, Town & Parish Councils etc. Following this period, the results of this consultation would be analysed and compiled before returning to Cabinet on 1 May 2019 for a decision on whether to adopt this policy.

Any changes would come into effect from 1 September 2019 and will be applicable to new applicants, as with previous practice the removal of provision will be on a phased approach, protecting all those pupils and students entitled within the existing schemes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve a consultation on the following proposed policy changes:
- To increase the lower rate contribution to 50% of the cost of the mainstream scheme from £142.50 to £437.50, maintaining the upper limit of the scheme at its current £875 pa.
 - To expand the contributions scheme to include SEND post 16 students, in line with the mainstream scheme.
 - To withdraw the Council's financial support for Nursery SEND pupil transport.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agree to receive a further report following the consultation process.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 Proposals to withdraw all financial support for discretionary school and college transport which would have resulted in £512k savings were considered by officers during 2018. An ESIIA was undertaken which identified high negative impact on protected characteristic groupings. This ESIIA is attached at Appendix A.
- 3.2 As a result, proposals were amended in order to mitigate the impact. The ESIIA also recommended a further Stage One screening ESIIA for the proposals (contained in this report) that would need to be undertaken. This has been done and is attached at Appendix B.
- 3.3 The updated ESIIA attached at Appendix B highlights that a consultation is required. The ESIIA has identified that there is potential of Medium Negative Impact on protected characteristic groupings, in particular those for Age, Disability, and Social Inclusion. It would also potentially be seen as running against the corporate aims of the Council with regard to children and young people and their life chances
- 3.4 Further analysis would need to be informed by results of the proposed consultation and will be explained within the subsequent report to Cabinet.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Council currently provides the following support for Mainstream post 16, SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) post 16 students and Nursery SEND pupils.

4.2 **Post 16 – Mainstream Sixth Forms and Colleges**

- The Council currently provides transport assistance for 200 post 16 students to mainstream school 6th forms or other Further Educational establishments.
- Of the 200 post 16 students receiving transport assistance, 59 students are paying the higher rate of the contribution of £875pa and 141 students are paying the lower rate of contribution of £142.50pa.
- These students are provided with either a bus pass on a public service vehicle or a seat on a school transport contract, this is usually dependent upon which type of Further Education establishment they are attending.
- Transport entitlement is defined as “a student living 3 miles or more from their designated FE establishment”.
- We do not normally offer bespoke transport solutions such as minibuses or taxis.

4.3 **Post 16 – SEND Students**

- The Council currently transport 144 post 16 SEND students to a number of specialist FE establishments for which no contribution is applied.
- These students will travel to their FE establishment in either a shared vehicle with other SEND pupils, or a bespoke vehicle as a result of their additional needs or geographical location.
- Before a seat on a vehicle is allocated, if appropriate, the initial offer to parents will be in the form of Independent Travel training, where by the student receives one to one training to give them the confidence and skills to use public transport. This has proven to have much wider benefits to the students and their families than just accessing college transport, through creating independence and establishing life skills.
- The proposal to include SEND post 16 students will ensure a consistent approach across all post 16 Transport and also reflects a practice taken by a number of other councils.

4.4 **Nursery SEND Pupils**

- The Council currently transports 17 Nursery aged students, who all attend Severndale Nursery for which no contribution is applied.
- Nursery pupils who attend Severndale special school receive free transport if it is deemed appropriate because of their additional needs.
- These pupils are located county wide, which represents a logistical challenge in order to keep costs to a minimum.

- Before a vehicle is allocated for a pupil, parents are offered travelling expenses at a pre-agreed daily mileage.

5. Financial Implications

Table A below shows the discretionary areas of transport currently supported by Council via £679,000 of funding, alongside the estimated net financial impact that would result from the proposals.

(** It should be noted that this figure does not include the proportionate costs of post 16 students travelling on contracted routes to their local school 6th form.)

Entitlement Category	Number of Pupils/Students	Net Spend 2017/18	Estimated Net Financial Impact 2019/21
Post 16 Mainstream	200	£105,000**	+£42,000
Post 16 SEND	144	£502,000	+£100,625
Nursery SEND	17	£72,000	+£60,000
Total	361	£679,000	+£202,625

5.1 Mainstream Post 16 Transport

5.1.1 The Council's annual spend on mainstream post 16 transport has reduced significantly year on year from circa £900k pa to its current level of £105k pa (2017/18), following the introduction of the revised contribution scheme as well as reduced season ticket rates for students negotiated with local operators.

5.2.1 Following negotiations with our transport operator's students can continue to access their respective post 16 establishments, but now with greater flexibility of travel and in many cases a significantly lower rate. At the same time the number of students accessing the Council's scheme has reduced from c900 to 200, as many have opted to purchase tickets directly from the operators to access these benefits.

5.1.3 The Council currently provides a contribution scheme for those entitled mainstream students that qualify for post 16 transport assistance. The contribution levels for this scheme are currently set at £875 for the higher level and £142.50 for those parents of students who are on a low income.

5.1.4 Those students who face hardship in paying for their travel are also able to access support through 6th form and college bursaries and a number of students are currently accessing this support.

5.1.5 To increase the contribution level to 50% of the full cost for those parents of students who are on a low income would result in an estimated £42,000 savings to the Council (2019-21).

5.2 SEND Post 16

5.2.1 The Council's annual spend on SEND post 16 transport stood at £502k for the 2017/18 financial year with entitled student numbers at 144. Student numbers in this category continue to increase year on year by an average of 5%. SEND post 16 pupils are not currently subject to the contribution scheme.

5.2.2 Those students who face hardship in paying for their travel are also able to access support through 6th form and college bursaries and a number of students are currently accessing this support.

5.2.3 Introducing a contribution for students with SEN in line with the mainstream scheme, i.e. £875 for the higher level and £437.50 for those parents of students who are on a low income, would result in an estimated £100,625 savings for the Council (2019-21)

5.3 SEND Nursery Transport

5.3.1 The Council's annual spend on SEND nursery transport stood at £72k for the 2017/18 financial year with entitled pupil numbers at 17. Nursery transport numbers have reduced significantly year on year as local nursery provision has become more widely available.

5.3.2 The removal of SEN nursery transport would result in £60,000 savings for the Council (2019-21).

5.4 Net Financial Impact to the Council of consultation proposals

In respect of the potential savings to the Council, as laid out in 2.1, then should support for Nursery SEND transport cease, SEND post 16 be included within the terms of the contribution scheme and revised contribution levels adopted, it is estimated that this would realise the following:

- Withdrawal of Nursery SEND Transport: £60,000 saving at maturity
- Mainstream: £42,000 of estimated increased revenue at maturity
- SEND post 16 FYE: £100,625 of estimated increased revenue at maturity
- **Total: £202,625**

6. Additional Information

- 6.1 We have engaged with a number of other local authorities and gained direct comparisons on what travel assistance is offered for these discretionary areas, as shown in Table B.
- 6.2 This research has highlighted that some local authorities do not offer Nursery SEND travel assistance and some do not offer mainstream post 16 travel assistance. However, we are unable to identify another local authority that currently does not offer post 16 SEND Travel Assistance. It is important to note that our list of local authorities is not exhaustive, and a number did say that they were considering similar options to ourselves.
- A number of local authorities do not provide nursery transport.
 - Where they do provide nursery transport it is in the form of a seat on an existing vehicle and not bespoke (a separate taxi).
 - Post 16 contribution schemes are applied to those SEN students entitled to assistance (as with our current mainstream post 16 scheme).
 - In some cases, Independent Travel Training and a bus pass are the only post 16 offers available to students and their families.
 - We are unable to find a local authority that has completely withdrawn SEND post 16 (although we have not exhausted every local authority nationally)

Table B

	Post 16 Transport Provided	Contribution	SEND Contribution if different	Nursery SEND Transport Provided	Independent Travel Training Provided
Shropshire	16-19	£875 / £142.50	Free	Y	Y
Herefordshire	16-19	£789	-	N	Y
Worcestershire	16-19	Variable charges based on zones	-	N	Y
Cheshire West	16-19	Only on hardship grounds	-	N	Y
Chester & Cheshire East	16-19	£800 / £440 on hardship grounds	-	Y	Y
North Yorkshire	16-19	£490 / £245	-	Y	Y

Wiltshire	16-19	£710 / £210	£499 / £184	N	Y
Devon	16-19	£600	-	N	Y
Solihull	16-19	£680	£645	N	Y
Warwickshire	16-19	£780 / £390	-	N	Y
Staffordshire	16-19	£494 (low income only)	£625 / £494	N	Y
Lincolnshire	16-19	£570	-	N	Y
Cumbria	16-19	£410	-	N	N
Lancashire	16-19	None, only SEN Post 16 provided	Free	N	Y
Wolverhampton	16-19	Free	Free	Y	Y
Hampshire	16-19	0 to 5 miles = £600 5 to 7.5 miles = £831 7.5 to 10 miles = £1164 10+ miles = £1330	-	N	N
Buckinghamshire	16-19	Free	Free	N	Y

Powys	16-19	Free	Free	N	N
Monmouthshire	16-19	£440	-	N	N

The Council applies both its mandatory and discretionary statutory duties in providing transport to support student attendance at school/colleges and is considering changes to ensure levels of support are sustainable for those students to whom there is a mandatory statutory duty.

There is also the potential that students can be supported for transport costs through college bursaries that are allocated at their discretion, should the Council amend the contribution scheme to include these discretionary areas.

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

Cabinet Report 15 June 2011: School and Post 16 Transport Policy Report.

Application for Post 16 Transport Contribution Scheme & Information for Parents/Students (available on the Shropshire Council web page)

(<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/9976/37034-app-for-post-16-trans.pdf>)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Nick Bardsley

Local Member

All

Appendices

Appendix A – ESIIA part one 201808

Appendix B – ESIIA part one 201902

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Appendix A

Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

Name of service change: Proposal to withdraw the Council's financial support for discretionary school and college transport.

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

Proposal to Withdraw Transport Provision for mainstream Post 16 and SEND Nursery and Post 16 children and young people in Shropshire.

Aims of the service change and description

Shropshire Council is currently reviewing its transport services for children and students and the review of these services is focused on one area: those pupils and students who receive travel assistance and are of non-compulsory school age, by which we mean nursery children and Post 16 students.

The number of children and young people who are currently supported in this way is:

- Post 16 mainstream – 200 approx
- SEND Nursery - 17
- SEND Post 16 - 144

There is a proposal currently being considered to consult on the following:

- Removal of SEND Nursery Transport Eligibility
- Removal of SEND Post 16 Transport provision
- Removal of Post 16 Contribution scheme (mainstream)

Shropshire Council applies both its statutory and discretionary duties in providing transport to support student attendance at school/colleges.

The rationale for this is that Shropshire Council is considering changes to ensure future resources are targeted most appropriately, to ensure support is provided to those students to whom there is a statutory duty and to those students who would be unable to attend education or training without this support.

The Council is committed to providing efficient, integrated services whilst ensuring that its statutory duties are met. Financial pressures mean that Shropshire Council must review the non-statutory functions it provides and consider whether these arrangements are still financially viable whilst protecting its statutory duty.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

The intended audience and target groups/stakeholders are:

- Existing students and their families
- The whole community including children as yet unborn/siblings
- All elected members
- Schools and Colleges
- Transport Operators
- Licensed Taxi providers
- Parent Advocacy Groups

- Marches LEP
- West Midlands Combined Authority
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Town and Parish Councils
- Neighbouring Authorities
- Youth Parliament
- Local Members of Parliament

This list is not intended to be exhaustive and may be updated during the course of and subsequent to any consultation and engagement activity.

Evidence used for screening of the service change

Savings Profile

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23		Total
SEN Nursery	£18k	£42k				£60k
SEN Post 16	£67k	£116k	£116k	£48k		£347k
Mainstream Post 16	£36k	£40k	£20k	£9k		£105k
Cumulative net reduction	£121k	£198k	£136k	£57k		£512k

*7/12 of full year effect savings will be achieved in the first year, with the new proposals commencing part way through the financial year on 1 September 2018.

SEND (Nursery & Post 16)

Although there is no statutory requirement to provide transport for Nursery and Post 16 students, Councils can provide discretionary travel assistance over and above the statutory requirements (aged 5-16), as we do in Shropshire for SEND Nursery and Post 16 travel.

- In Shropshire, we currently transport 17 Nursery pupils (circa 45 two years ago) and 144 Post 16 SEND students.

We have and continue to liaise with many other local authorities and organisations, to identify what travel assistance is currently provided in these areas.

These latest findings show that:

- A number of Local Authorities do not provide nursery transport
- Where they do provide Nursery Transport it is in the form of a seat on an existing vehicle and not bespoke (a separate taxi).
- Post 16 contribution schemes are applied to those SEN students entitled to assistance (as with our current mainstream post 16 scheme).
- In some cases Independent Travel Training and a bus pass are the only Post 16 offers available to students and their families.
- We are unable to find a local authority that has completely withdrawn SEND Post 16 (although we have not exhausted every LA nationally)

Challenges to consider

- Any changes to our current offer will only apply to new applications, with current Nursery and Post 16 students protected for the duration of their course (as per Ombudsman guidance issued in 2017) and therefore the associated savings will take a minimum of 2 years to mature.
- There is currently one assessment Nursery located at Severndale and this proved to be an issue in the last consultation, as parents highlighted they didn't have a local alternative that could meet the needs of their child. However, we understand that this may be due to change with needs being met at local Nursery provision.
- The withdrawal of Post 16 support would also see the withdrawal of the Council's Independent Travel Training programme which has been welcomed by both students and parents.
- We have not been able to identify any local authorities who have fully withdrawn SEND travel assistance for Post 16, although we understand a number are looking at the possibility.
- Parents may have no other transport options to facilitate their child's attendance at College except to transport their children themselves.
- Students who have formerly travelled on a school bus (when in years 8-11) will no longer be able to travel on this bus under the proposed scheme when they become a student.
- This could potentially lead to students being directed to colleges who have better transport links which may have an impact on the future of school sixth forms?

SEND nursery students currently travel from all over Shropshire to the one available assessment centre at Severndale Specialist Academy in Shrewsbury. This may mean that families and passengers have no other means to get their child to pre-school provision, and parents may solely be reliant on parent/carers to undertake this. For many, this may not be an option due to: personal circumstances; often significant distance to travel; financial implications; and public transport being either an unlikely option for many SEND passengers or simply not available.

Post 16 SEND students currently access Colleges and Sixth forms across Shropshire dependent on their needs and courses they are wanting to undertake, many attend 'Futures' at Shrewsbury College which is a specialist provision for Post 16.

Many students travel some distance to attend College and removing provision could leave families with no way of getting their child to College, many students are unable to access Public Services due to their individual needs as well considering if Public Services are available. This is therefore a constraint on their social mobility, already identified as an issue in a Council response to a current All Party Parliamentary Group inquiry into social mobility in rural counties.

The proposals indicated could impact on vulnerable young people and their families financially or on their employment. These proposals may also further isolate rural communities and affect their future viability.

SEND numbers are continuing to rise and families are choosing to move into Shropshire to access the specialist provisions available for their SEND child.

Legal services have indicated that judicial review is likely to be forthcoming if we went out to consultation on these areas.

We have engaged with a number of other Local Authorities and gained direct comparisons to what and how they offer travel assistance for discretionary areas. From our findings, some Local Authorities do not offer Nursery SEND travel assistance, some do not offer mainstream Post 16

travel assistance. We are unable to source another Local Authority that does not offer Post 16 SEND Travel Assistance. It is worthwhile noting that we did not contact every Local Authority so this is a sample of information gathered at a point in time.

	Post 16 Transport Provided	Contribution	SEN Contribution if different	Nursery Transport Provided	Independent Travel Training Available
Herefordshire	16-18	£789.00		N	Y
Worcestershire	16-18	Variable charges based on zones		N	Y
Cheshire West	16-18	Only provided on hardship grounds		N	Y
North Yorkshire	16-18	£490/£245		Y	Y
Wiltshire	16-18	£710/£210	£499/£184	N	Pushed as 1st option
Devon	16-18	£600.00		N	Y
Solihull	16-18	£680	£645	N	Y
Warwickshire	16-18				
Staffordshire	16-18	£494 – only provided for low income household	£625/£494	N	Y

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

These policy changes could come into effect from 1 September 2019 and in that scenario would be applicable to new applicants, as with previous practice the removal of provision will be on a phased approach, protecting all those pupils and students entitled within the existing schemes. This will mean that the full effect of these savings will not be realised until the 2022/23 financial year, as detailed in the table below

A consultation has not been carried out to date, with the focus more on comparator research into other local authority approaches and a detailed analysis of the situation in Shropshire. It would be vital that any consultation carried out be comprehensive and far reaching.

The indicative schedule is as follows

Key Dates

August 2018

Draft consultation documents prepared for approval by Director & Portfolio Holder

October 2018

Proposals to informal cabinet

November 2018

Cabinet Approval

November 2018

Consultation Launches

18 January 2019

consultation closes

18 February 2019

Recommendations from consultation sent to Portfolio holder & Director for consideration

March 2019

Recommendations and final report to cabinet

April 2019

Publish findings of consultation and new policy

Letters would be sent to all schools & colleges within Shropshire and the surrounding areas (out of county), published on the Councils website and a copy provided to all stakeholder groups:

- Existing students and their families
- All elected members
- Schools and Colleges
- Transport Operators
- Licensed Taxi providers
- Parent Advocacy Groups
- Marches LEP
- West Midlands Combined Authority
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Town and Parish Councils
- Neighbouring Authorities
- Youth Parliament
- Local Members of Parliament

An example of a consultation letter is set out below.

Dear Parent/Carer,

Specialist Travel Assistance for SEN Nursery and Post 16 students - Consultation on proposed changes from September 2019

Shropshire Council is currently reviewing its specialist transport services for children and students with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) who are of non-statutory age (Nursery and Post 16).

Shropshire council applies both its statutory and discretionary duties in providing transport to support student attendance at school/colleges. Shropshire Council is considering changes to ensure future resources are targeted most appropriately, to ensure support is provided to those students to whom there is a statutory duty and those students who would be unable to attend education or training without this support.

The Council is committed to providing efficient, integrated services whilst ensuring that its statutory duties are met. Financial pressures mean that Shropshire Council must review the non-statutory functions it provides and consider whether these arrangements are still financially viable

whilst protecting its statutory duty.

The review of these services is focused on one area; those pupils and students who receive travel assistance and are of non-compulsory school age (Nursery and Post 16).

As part of this review Shropshire Council is commencing a period of consultation on its recommendations for those pupils and students of non-compulsory school age (Nursery & Post 16). We would be grateful for any thoughts and comments you may have on these proposals, as described in [Section 1](#), which if adopted would commence from [September 2019](#)

Discretionary Transport (Nursery & Post 16)

There is no statutory requirement to provide transport for Nursery and Post 16 students.

In preparation for drafting these proposals, we have liaised with a number of other local authorities and organisations; to identify what travel assistance is currently provided in these areas.

These findings showed that:

- *A number of Local Authorities do not provide nursery transport*
- *Post 16 contribution schemes are applied to those students entitled to assistance.*
- *In some cases the Post 16 Schemes have been withdrawn completely*

Proposals

Nursery Age (Under 5's)

To cease providing transport for nursery/pre-school aged students.

Post 16 (16-19 years old)

To cease providing transport for Post 16 students

Consultation

If you have any comments on the proposed arrangements from September 2019, please use one of the following methods of communication to put forward your views. We would also request that schools/colleges pass this information on to any potential new Nursery children or Post 16 students that are due to start in September 2019 as the proposals may affect these students.

✉ *Specialist Transport Consultation,
Passenger Transport Commissioning Group
Shropshire Council,
Shirehall,
Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury,
SY2 6ND*

📧 special.transport.team@shropshire.gov.uk

The consultation will close on xxxxxx. For full details of what the Council currently provides and the proposals from xxxxxxxx please go to www.shropshire.gov.uk/education-travel-assistance-sen-pupils/

Following this consultation, a decision will then be made and the Council's policy will be published no later than xxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Yours sincerely

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)	High			
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)	High			
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)	Low			
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)	Low			
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)	High			
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)	Low			
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)	Low			
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)	High			
Sexual Orientation				

(please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)	Low			
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)	High			

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
Should the Council propose to withdraw its financial support for discretionary school and college transport it would have a High Negative impact on Protected Characteristic groupings, in particular those for Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex, and Social Inclusion. It would also potentially be seen as running against the corporate aims of the Council with regard to children and young people and their life chances.

It is for this reason that Legal Services have indicated the possibility of judicial review if the Council went out to consultation with inclusion of the 'nuclear option'.

It has also been recommended by the Rurality and Equalities Specialist that, based upon what is known to date and the predicted negative impacts for vulnerable groupings, the service area should proceed to carry out a Stage Two ESIIA, with all the forensic scrutiny that such an exercise would involve.

Further decisions, as set out in the Part Two ESIIA, would need to be informed by results of the proposed consultation and engagement and would take one of four routes:

1. To make changes to satisfy any concerns raised through the specific consultation and engagement process and through 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 the decision even though it could adversely affect some groups;
4. To find alternative means to achieve the aims of the service change.

The forensic scrutiny stage enables a service area 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?
- 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?

A further possible course of action would be to consider including a rural element in the criteria for charging, utilising learning points from the Youth Activity Commissioning approach.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change

There are twinned strategic and pragmatic courses of action to review and monitor the impact of the service change, whichever route the Council may decide to go down following consultation and engagement, and decisions then made by Cabinet.

The first would be to commit to a further Stage One screening ESIIA, for whichever preferred scenario or scenarios that may be laid before Cabinet, at a timely opportunity to further assess impacts.

The second would be to continue to liaise with and share approaches towards school and college transport with other local authorities, particularly those with whom the Council shares commonalities in terms of geographical size and sparsity of the population.

The service area also proposes to undertake to develop a communications plan at this stage, for the Council and the service area, involving timely press releases fronted by the portfolio holder, and shared with all Shropshire Council councillors.

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i>		
<i>Any internal support*</i>		
<i>Any external support**</i> Rurality and Equalities Specialist	<i>Lois Dale</i>	16 th August 2018
<i>Head of service</i>	<i>James J. Williams</i>	19 th August 2018

**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>		
<i>Head of service's name</i>		

Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

Name of service change:

Proposal to withdraw Transport Provision for SEND Nursery pupils, to include SEN Post 16 students within the council's contribution scheme for mainstream students and to increase the lower level of the contribution scheme to 50% of the higher level.

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

Proposal to withdraw Transport Provision for SEND Nursery pupils, to include SEN Post 16 students within the council's contribution scheme for mainstream students and to increase the lower level of the contribution scheme to 50% of the higher level.

Aims of the service change and description

The Council is committed to providing efficient, integrated transport services whilst ensuring that its statutory duties are met. Financial pressures mean that the Council has identified a £717k savings target attributed to school transport, including those transport functions which are discretionary in nature.

The Council's Passenger Transport Services have introduced a number of innovative transport solutions to reduce the pressure on the home to school transport budget and whilst these have been and continue to be successful, in order to realise a significant budget reduction a policy change is needed.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

The intended audience and target groups/stakeholders are:

- Existing students and their families
- The whole community including children as yet unborn/siblings
- All elected members
- Schools and Colleges
- Transport Operators
- Licensed Taxi providers
- Parent Advocacy Groups
- Marches LEP
- West Midlands Combined Authority
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Town and Parish Councils
- Neighbouring Authorities
- Youth Parliament
- Local Members of Parliament

This list is not intended to be exhaustive and may be updated during the course of and subsequent to any consultation and engagement activity.

Evidence used for screening of the service change

SEND (Nursery & Post 16)

Although there is no mandatory requirement to provide transport for Nursery and Post 16 students, Councils can provide discretionary travel assistance over and above the statutory requirements (aged 5-16), as we do in Shropshire for SEND Nursery and Post 16 travel.

- In Shropshire, we currently transport 17 Nursery pupils (circa 45 two years ago) and 144 Post 16 SEND students.

We have and continue to liaise with many other local authorities and organisations, to identify what travel assistance is currently provided in these areas.

These latest findings show that:

- A number of Local Authorities do not provide nursery transport
- Where they do provide Nursery Transport it is in the form of a seat on an existing vehicle and not bespoke (a separate taxi).
- Post 16 contribution schemes are applied to those SEN students entitled to assistance (as with our current mainstream post 16 scheme).
- In some cases Independent Travel Training and a bus pass are the only Post 16 offers available to students and their families.
- We are unable to find a local authority that has completely withdrawn SEND Post 16 (although we have not exhausted every LA nationally)

Challenges to consider

- Any changes to our current offer will only apply to new applications, with current Nursery and Post 16 students protected for the duration of their course (as per Ombudsman guidance issued in 2017) and therefore the associated savings will take a minimum of 2 years to mature.
- There is currently one assessment Nursery located at Severndale and this proved to be an issue in the last consultation, as parents highlighted they didn't have a local alternative that could meet the needs of their child. However, we understand that this may be due to change with needs being met at local Nursery provision.
- We have not been able to identify any local authorities who have fully withdrawn SEND travel assistance for Post 16, although we understand a number are looking at the possibility.
- Parents and carers will still be able to access the same transport network as is currently provided to get their child to school.

Post 16 SEND students currently access Colleges and Sixth forms across Shropshire dependent on their needs and courses they are wanting to undertake, many attend 'Futures' at Shrewsbury College which is a specialist provision for Post 16.

SEND numbers are continuing to rise and families are choosing to move into Shropshire to access the specialist provisions available for their SEND child.

We have engaged with a number of other Local Authorities and gained direct comparisons to what and how they offer travel assistance for discretionary areas. From our findings, some Local Authorities do not offer Nursery SEND travel assistance, some do not offer mainstream Post 16 travel assistance. We are unable to source another Local Authority that does not offer Post 16 SEND Travel Assistance. It is worthwhile noting that we did not contact every Local Authority so this is a sample of information gathered at a point in time.

	Post 16 Transport Provided	Contribution	SEN Contribution if different	Nursery Transport Provided	Independent Travel Training Available
Herefordshire	16-18	£789.00		N	Y
Worcestershire	16-18	Variable charges based on zones		N	Y
Cheshire West	16-18	Only provided on hardship grounds		N	Y
North Yorkshire	16-18	£490/£245		Y	Y

Wiltshire	16-18	£710/£210	£499/£184	N	Pushed as 1st option	
Devon	16-18	£600.00		N	Y	
Solihull	16-18	£680	£645	N	Y	
Warwickshire	16-18					
Staffordshire	16-18	£494 – only provided for low income household	£625/£494	N	Y	

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

These policy changes could come into effect from 1 September 2019

A consultation has not been carried out to date, with the focus more on comparator research into other local authority approaches and a detailed analysis of the situation in Shropshire. It would be vital that any consultation carried out be comprehensive and far reaching and includes evidence gathering from healthcare and social care professionals.

The indicative schedule is as follows

Key Dates

March 2019

Consultation Launches

April 2019

consultation closes

April/May 2019

Recommendations and final report to cabinet

May 2019

Publish findings of consultation and new policy

Letters would be sent to all schools & colleges within Shropshire and the surrounding areas (out of county), published on the Councils website and a copy provided to all stakeholder groups:

- Existing students and their families
- All elected members
- Schools and Colleges
- Transport Operators
- Licensed Taxi providers
- Parent Advocacy Groups
- Marches LEP
- West Midlands Combined Authority
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Town and Parish Councils
- Neighbouring Authorities
- Youth Parliament
- Local Members of Parliament
- Joint Adoption Service
- Educational Psychology: experience in identifying attachment issues etc
- Community paediatricians: as above

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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 unintended, 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)			Medium Negative (at this stage: could be high negative)	
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)			Medium Negative (at this stage; could be high negative)	
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential				Low Negative

for bullying and harassment)				
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Low Negative
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Low Negative
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)				Low Negative
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				Low Negative
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Low Negative
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				Low Negative
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)			Medium Negative (at this stage; could be high negative)	

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?	Yes	

Proceed to Part Two Full Report?	N/A	N/A

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.

<p>Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change</p> <p>At present, and in advance of feedback from the proposed consultation, the impact in equality terms is identified as medium negative for the groups Age, Disability, and Social Inclusion. It is possible that the impact may be deemed as high negative. The consultation will need to include efforts to gain as many views as possible from as wide ranging an audience as possible, not only from those who are likely to be affected but also from healthcare and social care and education professionals, who are well placed to provide informed assessments of anticipated future needs in terms of numbers and suitable modes of transport. Links will also need to be drawn with other Council policy, on young people and on Early Help approaches. This will help to mitigate against the risk that any decisions are seen to be made on financial grounds alone.</p> <p>For SEND Post 16 and Mainstream Post 16 the existing networks and transport provision will remain the same in that students will be able to travel on the same routes. For those families who are identified as being on low income they will be able to access the lower level of the contribution scheme.</p> <p>There is also the potential that students can be supported for transport costs through college bursaries that are allocated at their discretion, should the Council amend the contribution scheme to include these discretionary areas.</p> <p>Nursery numbers that we transport have reduced significantly over the last few years as local provision has become more widely available and will continue to develop meaning that pupils may no longer need transport to Severndale Specialist Academy.</p>

<p>Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change</p> <p>There are twinned strategic and pragmatic courses of action to review and monitor the impact of the service change, whichever route the Council may decide to go down following consultation and engagement, and decisions then made by Cabinet.</p> <p>The first would be to commit to a further Stage One screening ESIIA, for whichever preferred scenario or scenarios that may be laid before Cabinet, at a timely opportunity to further assess impacts.</p> <p>The second would be to continue to liaise with and share approaches towards school and college transport with other local authorities, particularly those with whom the Council shares commonalities in terms of geographical size and sparsity of the population.</p> <p>The service area also proposes to undertake to develop a communications plan at this stage, for the Council and the service area, involving timely press releases fronted by the portfolio holder, and shared with all Shropshire Council councillors.</p>

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i>		
<i>Any internal support*</i>		
<i>Any external support**</i> Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist	<i>Lois Dale</i>	26 th February 2019
<i>Head of service</i> James Willocks – Transport Commissioning Group Manager	<i>James Willocks</i>	26 th February 2019

**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>		
<i>Head of service's name</i>		

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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SCHOOL & POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY REPORT

Responsible Officer Tim Smith

Email: tim.smith@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: (01743) 252411 Fax: (01743) 254310

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Shropshire Council provides assisted home to school transport for over 8,000 entitled pupils to Shropshire's primary, secondary and special schools as a statutory mandatory requirement. Furthermore, whilst the Council does not have to provide discretionary Post 16 (P16) college and sixth form transport assistance, it remains committed to support college and sixth form students via this scheme. The Council recognises the need to raise the participation age for further education and training and wishes to do all it can within its powers to continue to support student travel assistance to colleges and sixth forms. Currently the Council's discretionary transport charges are amongst the lowest in the country. Comparison of home to school transport expenditure for financial year 2009/10, totalling £10.3m, ranks Shropshire Council as the 2nd highest spending unitary authority (of 55 unitary authorities). This again reflects the support that the Council provides to pupils' and students' travel, as well as the rural and sparse profile of the county, and the need to procure school transport over large rural areas where commercial bus routes do not operate.
- 1.2 Elected Members, including those involved with the Scrutiny function, have identified the schools transport budget as one which needs to be better balanced. Savings have been achieved as an outcome of service reviews, rationalisations, better procurement and re-tendering which have achieved savings of over £420k in financial year 2010/11. The school transport budget, however, continues to overspend. Changes to current discretionary transport arrangements are therefore required. The global rising cost of fuel is a major factor in pushing transport costs higher, and there does not seem to be any reversal of this process likely in the longer term. The rising cost of crude oil and hence motor vehicle fuel requires users of the discretionary travel schemes to pay more. This report proposes an increase in post 16 student contributions from September 2012 and considers alternative travel options that, in consultation with students and education and training providers, may prove to be more beneficial to users and the Council.

- 1.3 The Council also operates a discretionary Temporary Seats Payment Scheme (TSPS) which provides concessionary transport for pupils not entitled to free travel (aged 5-16). Where parents take a decision to place their children at a non catchment (or non nearest) school, they will be required to pay the full costs of all their transport arrangements. Non entitled pupils who benefit from spare seats being available on contracted school buses mainly travel to such non catchment schools. This report proposes an increase in TSPS pupil contributions from September 2012 for those pupils who attend a non catchment area school through parental preference.

2.0 Recommendations

- (a) To consult in Autumn 2011 on increasing parent/student contributions for post 16 transport assistance, by 25p per journey to £1.17 (or £420 pa) wef September 2012, and by 28p per journey to £1.44 (or £520 pa) with effect from September 2013, for all student year groups.
- (b) To consult in Autumn 2011 on continuing to waive the post 16 transport charge for students whose families are in receipt of defined benefits.
- (c) To consult in Autumn 2011 on applying an annual administrative fee of £30 per post 16 student, including those on defined benefits who currently aren't charged, to cover the costs of issuing student travel passes.
- (d) To increase parental contributions for the concessionary Temporary Seats Payment Scheme (TSPS) by 50p per journey to £1.23 (or £468 per annum) from September 2012 just for pupils attending out of catchment schools. Also, not to offer any discounts for families with two or more children.
- (e) To apply an annual administrative fee of £30 per TSPS pupil, including those on defined benefits who currently aren't charged, to cover the costs of issuing pupil travel passes.
- (f) To continue to waive the TSPS contribution for transport for pupils on defined benefits.
- (g) To maintain the current TSPS transport charge levels of £279 pa (but price inflated from September 2012 and annually thereafter) for pupils attending their nearest/catchment area school.
- (h) For authority to be delegated to the Corporate Director - People, at the end of the Post 16 consultation period, and in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder, to determine and apply the Post 16 policies and contribution rates.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 This Report seeks to progress the school transport item set out in the Cabinet Report on the Medium Term Financial Plan (Appendix III) of 9 November 2010 and sets out eventual potential savings for the Council. The proposals in this Report constitute an increase in student contribution rates as per the recommendations rather than a removal of the discretionary elements of school and college transport assistance.

Post 16 (P16) Transport

1. Currently there are 900 entitled students in the P16 scheme who make a financial contribution towards their bus ticket. Not all require a bus ticket for the whole of the academic year.
2. There are also 550 entitled students who don't pay as their families are in receipt of certain defined benefits and for this purpose the Council's definition is Child Tax Credit, where the annual income does not exceed £16,190, or Income Support or where the student's family is in receipt of Income Based Job Seekers Allowance or the student is in receipt of free meals.
3. Shropshire Council's gross expenditure on P16 transport was £960,000 in 2009/10. Income from student contributions is £200,000. If the previous Government P16 transport grant of £89,000 is accounted for, this spend comes down to a net figure of £671,000. However, the Grant is to disappear and this places even more pressure in this funding area. Council provided P16 Special Education needs (SEN) transport is not considered in this report and this will be maintained at no cost to students.
4. The student contribution rate is currently 73p per journey (or £262 pa) and will be 92p per journey (or £330 pa) from September 2011. One council in the region already plans a £1.83 per journey (or £660 pa) charge from September 2011, demonstrating just how low Shropshire's charges are by comparison. Increasing the rate from to £1.17 per journey (or £420 pa) from September 2012 would generate an estimated £140,000 full year saving. Increasing the charge further to £1.44 per journey (or £520 pa) from September 2013 would make additional annual estimated savings of £110,000. With this a new administrative student charge is proposed of £30, as an annual fee towards the costs of administering the scheme and providing travel tickets, payable by all students, including those entitled students on defined benefits who currently don't pay anything. The Council wants to make any changes as easy as possible for students and parents, and it will seek to make available whatever easier payment terms it can, including monthly payments. It is proposed that colleges, school sixth forms, students, student representatives and other stakeholders are consulted on these matters in Autumn 2011 and that all their views are considered as part of the decision making process.

5. A report on Council (Public) Bus Strategy for Shropshire has been considered by the Council. There is a small chance that there could be an impact on the viability of certain elements of the public bus network in Shropshire should fewer post 16 students elect to travel by bus as an outcome of the proposed rise in their contribution rate.
6. The breakdown of post 16 students in receipt of travel assistance in October 2010 was as follows:

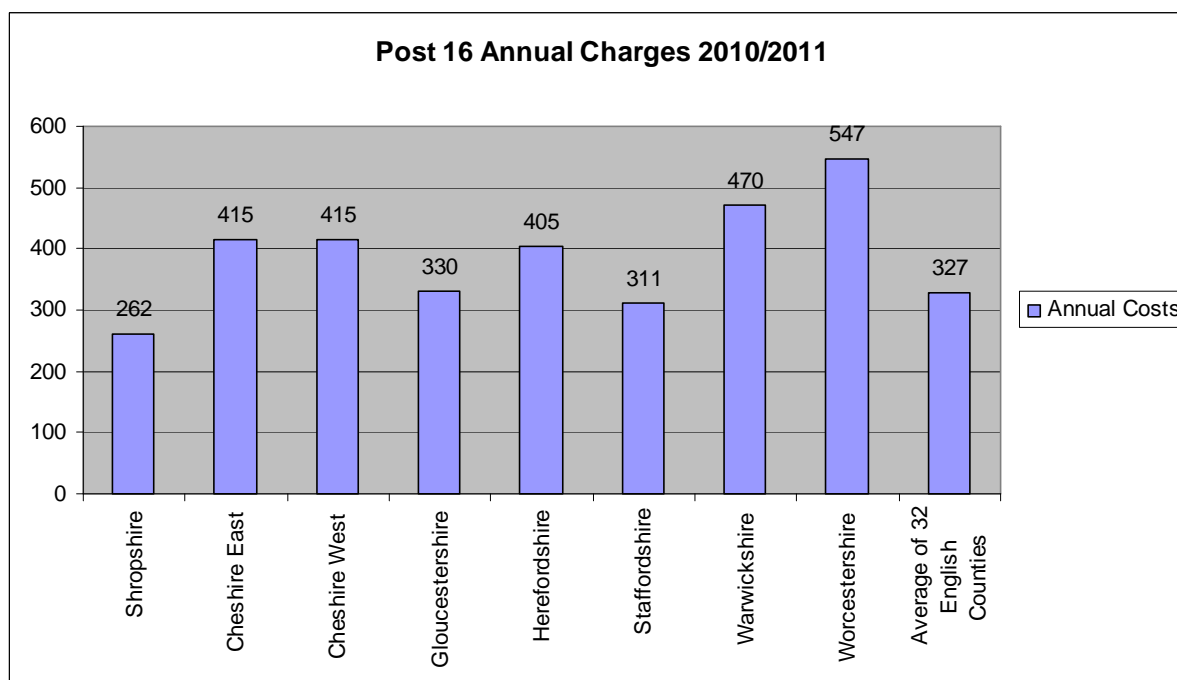
Post 16 Provider	No. of Paying Students at Oct 2010	No. of Defined Benefits Students at Oct 2010
Shrewsbury College	192	188
Shrewsbury Sixth Form College	237	50
Walford and NS College	147	126
Ludlow College	134	44
Shropshire Schools Sixth Forms	50	41
Out county colleges	140	101
Total	900	550

7. The Council's current policy is to annually increase Shropshire's student contribution level over and above inflation. Shropshire's level is lower than most councils that responded to a recent survey. Also, transport inflation runs higher than RPI. In September 2010 the P16 student contribution level was increased by 14% and in September 2011 by 26%.
8. The average cost of a bus ticket to the Council for P16 students is £662 per annum. Prices vary dependent upon the route and the operator. The lowest ticket cost to the Council is £300 per annum and highest ticket cost is £1,200 per annum.
9. It is hoped that the proposed increases in parent / student contribution rates will be partially mitigated following discussions that the Council is having with bus operators about providing more advantageous travel terms. One bus operator in particular is likely to be in a position to offer student ticket holders more travel benefits. Also, discussions have taken place with Shropshire further education colleges and the eight maintained secondary schools that operate sixth forms about this. Whilst the post 16 sector expects, on average, a 3% cut in Government funding in the forthcoming financial year, equalising the funding rate

that presently favours schools with sixth forms provides an added financial pressure, the Government have announced an £180m 16-19 Bursary Fund to help the most vulnerable young people continue in full time education. This will to an extent offset the loss of student education maintenance allowances that are currently used by some students to cover their travel costs. Some bursaries for the most vulnerable are guaranteed at £1,200 and schools and colleges will also be able to award bursaries to any student who faces genuine financial barriers to staying on in education and training, to help with costs such as transport, food or equipment.

10. Council officers have been exploring with bus operators the potential for changing commercial student travel fare schemes to improve the value, benefits and terms of payment. In particular, a major bus operator may offer a commercial annual bus pass that allows travel at any time of the day or week (24/7) for something in the order of £400 per annum for individual students and officers are discussing with them and whether they would be prepared to offer this to a large number of Shropshire students and also to the Council for its season tickets where appropriate. This is likely to leave some students in a better position than others, depending on which bus company they use. The Council want to help students as much as they can and their travel arrangements, and these are of concern to the Council.
11. There are several public bus providers in Shropshire and whilst most of these have not yet responded positively to officers' discussions about what extra travel benefits they may be able to offer entitled students, this matter is still being explored, as the council want to do all it can to help students and their travel arrangements. It is may be that some students will have better options than others, depending on where they live and which bus company is available to them, but we are seeking extra benefits for as many students as we can.
12. It may be that students are signposted away from the Council's scheme to more attractive commercial travel fare/ scheme alternatives. Most students attending 11-18 school sixth forms are unlikely to gain from any wider bus pass travel benefits, as they mainly travel on contracted buses (i.e. not public buses) operating at school times only, and there may well be few alternative transport options open to them.
13. Informal discussions have taken place with colleges in Shropshire regarding the potential for shared transport arrangements and any financial or other support they may be able to offer to help mitigate any charge increases for students. In these meetings with college principals the potential impact on colleges and their students of charge increases were discussed, including any mitigation that could be applied. However, particularly as college funding is also being impacted by Government spending cuts it is unlikely that they will be able to provide any funding to help the Council reduce any student charge increases.

14. Colleges are however interested in any commercial alternatives that could offer better value to their students. This is particularly so for Shrewsbury colleges where there is more likelihood of the major bus operator here providing a better value bus pass commercially, as described above. Should colleges wish to make their own arrangements to help students, Council officers will assist them in any way they can.
15. To explain the likely impact of any increased charges, a student travelling to college in Shrewsbury from its northern outskirts currently pays £262 per annum under the terms of the Council's existing post 16 travel policy. The full commercial bus fare is approximately £400 per annum. The student therefore is unlikely to apply for a P16 scheme ticket from the Council at any cost greater than £400. Under the new proposals the student is likely to leave the Council assisted scheme if the Council charge was over £400. Conversely, a student travelling from Whitchurch to Shrewsbury where public fares are £800 per annum is more likely to continue using the Council scheme, although paying a higher contribution, whilst it remains financially attractive to them.
16. P16 transport legislation requires a consultation period for any changes and publication of the Council's post 16 transport policy by 31 May for the start of the new academic year on the following September. Principals of colleges and Headteachers of 11-18 secondary schools have already been informally made aware that the Council has to explore future options for P16 transport assistance in light of the current budgetary difficulties, namely charge increases.
17. Shropshire's P16 current charge of 73p per journey (or £262 pa) is the lowest by comparison with other local authorities shown in the chart below. Even the new charge for September 2011 of 92p a journey (or £330 pa) is relatively low, given all the Councils shown in the chart will be significantly increasing their charges over those shown wef September 2011. The national average is 91p per journey (or £327 pa) per student. Shropshire therefore has the 2nd highest post 16 transport spend yet the lowest student contribution rate by comparison with others. One local council is already looking to increase their student charges to £1.83 per journey (or £660 pa) from September 2011.



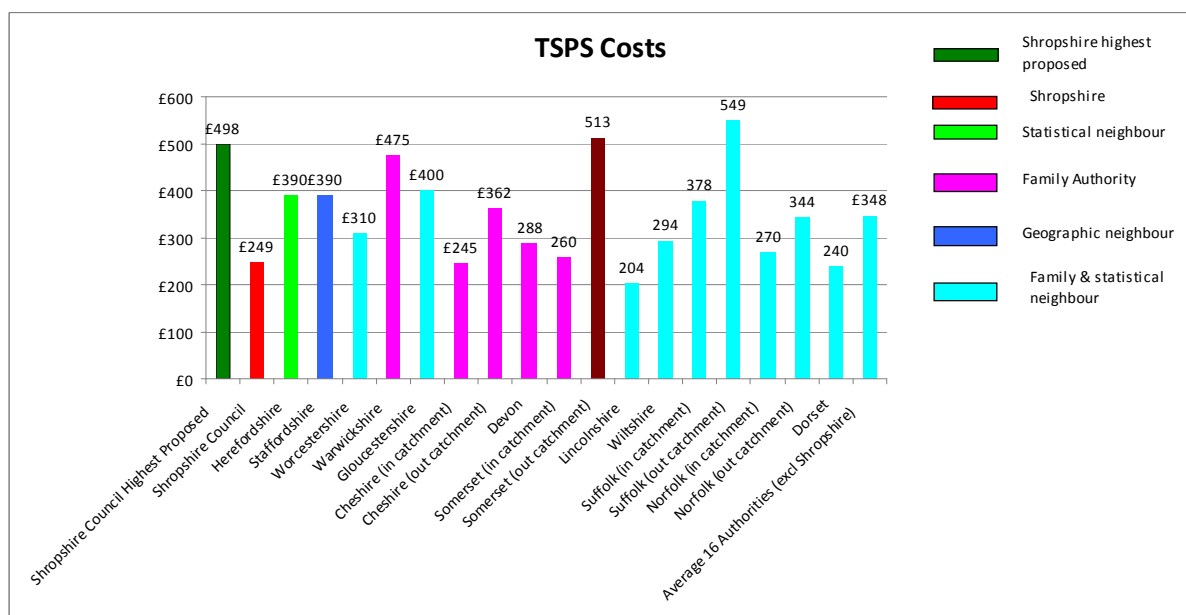
18. It should be noted that where post 16 students travel on Council school buses or Council subsidised public buses any constriction of demand caused by higher charges may not provide any immediate financial benefit to the Council, even in the long term on some routes i.e. if a school bus has to continue for other entitled pupils, two or three seats becoming spare will not generate any immediate savings to the Council. The likely impact of this has been included in the financial estimates in this report.

Temporary Seats Payment Scheme (TSPS) for Pupils Aged 5 to 16 Years

19. The Council operates a TSPS scheme on contracted school buses (not public services) provided for a few pupils (just 144) not eligible for free home to school transport, and mainly where parents themselves have expressed a preference for a school place at other than their catchment or nearest school. These few pupils use spare seats where they are available for a current parental charge of 66p per journey (or £249 pa), which is being inflated for September 2011 to 73p per journey (or £279 pa). Discounts are available for families with two or more children using the scheme. Whilst this scheme generates income of £30,000 per annum for the Council, it is no where near the full notional cost of the transport provided under the terms of the scheme, which is over £170,000 per annum.
20. Where parents have expressed a preference for other than their nearest/catchment school for their child, they have to make arrangements to fund and transport their children to school. If there is a suitable Council contracted school bus serving the school attended, parents may apply for a TSPS seat. Also, there are a very small number of pupils who use TSPS where they live within the 2 or 3 mile

walking distance of their nearest/catchment school. The parents may also apply to the Council for a TSPS bus seat in the same way, rather than organise their own arrangements to get pupils to school.

- 21 Other councils also operate similar schemes and their charges are shown in the chart below for 2010/11. Interestingly, some councils already differentiate between ‘in’ and ‘out of’ catchment applications. Also, many councils are likely to be addressing their budgetary issues and their costs shown here may well increase in 2011/12 and beyond.



22. The average notional cost of a TSPS seat on a school bus to the Council is £1,188 per annum. 144 pupils use the scheme. 48 attend primary schools and 96 secondary schools. Of the 144 TSPS pupils, 128 (89%) travel to an out of catchment school.

23. A breakdown of the 144 TSPS pupil numbers as at October 2010 is below:

TSPS Pupil Type	No.s Primary pupils 'in catchment'	No.s Primary Pupils 'out catchment'	No.s. Secondary Pupils 'in catchment'	No.s Secondary Pupils 'out catchment'	Total
Paying	9	38	4	87	138
Defined Benefits	0	1	3	2	6
Total	9	39	7	89	144

24. For these few pupils using the scheme and attending other than their nearest/catchment school, the Council may change the provisions of the scheme to increase the pupil contribution and charge a more economical rate for those pupils from September 2012. A charge of £1.23 per journey (or £468 pa) from September 2012 will closer match the notional cost of the seat of £3.13 per journey (or £1,188 pa), but still provide for a large Council subsidy to parents who have exercised

their preference for an out of catchment school. This would be a more equitable reflection of actual transport costs where parents elect that their children travel to a school which is not their nearest or catchment, and also be fairer to the many other parents who have to pay the full cost of transport to the such out of catchment schools, with no Council subsidy or help.

25. The Council could also apply an annual administrative fee of £30 for all TSPS pupils, including those on defined benefits who currently aren't charged, and those attending their catchment school, to cover the costs of issuing pupil travel passes and this would be consistent with the other discretionary travel scheme terms suggested in this Report, namely the post 16 scheme.
26. Moreover, the terms of the TSPS scheme determine that any seat allocated is of a temporary nature only and can be withdrawn at any time. All these pupils could alternatively attend their nearest/catchment school, subject to places being available. Most would receive free school transport to their nearest/catchment school should any parental preference determine this. The remaining few would live within the statutory walking distance of their nearest/catchment school. For pupils attending their nearest/catchment area school on TSPS, the existing scheme and transport charges could remain, at 73p per journey (or £279 pa), subject to seat availability, and be waived for pupils whose families were in receipt of defined benefits. The charge could be inflated annually by transport inflation + 4%.
27. Any charge increase and changes to the scheme could start in September 2012 and potential extra revenue in the 2012/13 academic year could be an estimated £25,000. It is likely that if there were any significant constriction of demand this estimate would not be achieved.

Financial Summary

28. The financial implications for the Post 16 and TSPS scheme proposals based on September 2011 charges of £330 and £279 pa respectively are:

Discretionary area	Increase charge per journey over previous year	New Charges per journey wef September 2012 & 2013 pa £	New Charges per year wef September 2012 & 2013 pa £	Estimated Net Effect pa on Council transport budget £
P16 student charge wef September 2012	25p	£1.17	£420	+£140,000
P16 student charge September 2013	28p	£1.44	£520	+£110,000
TSPS 'out catchment' charge wef Sept 2012	50p	£1.23	£468	+£25,000
P16 & TSPS Annual administrative fee for paying and benefits students wef Sept 2012	-	-	£30	(included in above savings)
Total estimated savings pa	-	-		£275,000

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

Current policies are outlined on Shropshire Council's post 16 transport form (TRAN/16) and its TSPS form (TRAN/5). An EINA has been completed for the Report and will be updated after consultation.

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal

These proposals move part of the balance of costs for the provision of elements of discretionary school and college transport from the Council towards transport users, but there is nothing inherent in the Report that leads to any specific environmental impact, although it is always in the gift of transport users to opt for less carbon friendly transport options, for instance.

Risk Management Appraisal

The risks in respect of increasing Post 16 college transport charges to student transport users will be considered during and following the consultation period.

In respect of the concessionary TSPS scheme for 11-16 aged school children, the risks of increasing the charges are that parents will seek alternative arrangements to transport their children to 'out of catchment' schools, thereby reducing not increasing Council revenue. Alternatively, this may reduce parents' scope to state preferences for 'out of catchment' schools, if transport away from their 'catchment' school becomes too costly.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

This Report recommends a consultation process with the Post 16 sector and students, prior to any decisions being taken to change existing arrangements.

Cabinet Member: Aggie Caesar-Hamden

Local Member

N/A (i.e. Shropshire wide services)

Appendix N/A

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