



Shropshire Council
 Legal and Democratic Services
 Shirehall
 Abbey Foregate
 Shrewsbury
 SY2 6ND
 Date: Wednesday, 11 May 2016

Committee: Council

Date: Thursday, 19 May 2016

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

You are requested to attend the above meeting.
 The Agenda is attached

Claire Porter
 Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Ann Hartley (Chairman)
 David Lloyd (Speaker)
 Malcolm Pate (Leader)
 Steve Charmley (Deputy
 Leader)
 Peter Adams
 Andrew Bannerman
 Nicholas Bardsley
 Tim Barker
 Charlotte Barnes
 Joyce Barrow
 Tudor Bebb
 Thomas Biggins
 Andy Boddington
 Vernon Bushell
 Gwilym Butler
 John Cadwallader
 Karen Calder
 Dean Carroll
 Lee Chapman
 Anne Chebsey
 Peter Cherrington
 Ted Clarke
 Gerald Dakin
 Steve Davenport
 Andrew Davies

Pauline Dee
 David Evans
 Roger Evans
 John Everall
 Hannah Fraser
 Nigel Hartin
 Richard Huffer
 Tracey Huffer
 Roger Hughes
 Vince Hunt
 John Hurst-Knight
 Jean Jones
 Simon Jones
 Miles Kenny
 Duncan Kerr
 Heather Kidd
 Nic Laurens
 Christian Lea
 Amy Liebich
 Robert Macey
 Jane MacKenzie
 Chris Mellings
 David Minnery
 Pamela Moseley
 Alan Mosley
 Cecilia Motley

Peggy Mullock
 Peter Nutting
 Kevin Pardy
 William Parr
 Vivienne Parry
 John Price
 Malcolm Price
 David Roberts
 Keith Roberts
 Madge Shingleton
 Jon Tandy
 Robert Tindall
 Dave Tremellen
 Kevin Turley
 David Turner
 Arthur Walpole
 Stuart West
 Claire Wild
 Brian Williams
 Leslie Winwood
 Michael Wood
 Tina Woodward
 Paul Wynn

Your Committee Officer is:

Karen Nixon Committee Officer

Tel: 01743 257720 or Email: karen.nixon@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 ELECTION OF SPEAKER

To elect a Speaker and Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY SPEAKER

To elect a Chairman and Deputy Speaker for the ensuing year.

4 DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members are reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

5 MINUTES (Pages 1 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 February 2016, attached marked 5.

Contact: Karen Nixon Tel 01743 257720.

6 ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive such communications as the Chairman, Speaker, Leader and Head of Paid Service may desire to lay before the Council.

7 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To receive any questions from the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14.

8 CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS (Pages 15 - 20)

To agree the constitution of Committees and the allocation of seats between political groups.

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services is attached, marked 8.

Contact: Claire Porter Tel 01743 252763.

9 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

To RESOLVE that the Responsibility for functions, set out in Part 3 of the Constitution and the Scheme of Delegations, set out in Part 8 of the Constitution be agreed.

Contact: Claire Porter, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Tel 01743 252763.

10 DATES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

To agree that in 2016/17 the meetings of the Council will be held on the following Thursdays, commencing at 10.00 am;

- 21 July 2016
- 22 September 2016
- 15 December 2016
- 23 February 2017
- 18 May 2017

Contact: Jane Palmer Tel 01743 257712.

11 MOTIONS

The following motion has been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 16 from Councillor A Bannerman:

“This Council regards the Government's pressure on schools to become academies as misconceived and a waste of precious funds. Despite the recent U-Turn on "blanket" academisation, the Education Secretary is clearly committed to the original policy, which is based on ideology rather than evidence, and shows no understanding of the situation of small rural schools. This Council therefore asks the Chief Executive to write to the Government, asking them to abandon this policy and instead divert some of the cost of implementing it into supporting small rural schools. A copy should be sent to all Shropshire MPs, asking them to support this request.”

12 REPORT OF THE SHROPSHIRE AND WREKIN FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY (Pages 21 - 28)

To receive the report of the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority arising from its meetings held on 24 February and 3 May 2016.

Reports attached marked 12 and 12a respectively.

13 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS (Pages 29 - 34)

To receive any questions from Members, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 15.2.

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 5



Committee and Date

Council

19 May 2016

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2016

In the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

10.00 am - 12.40 pm

Responsible Officer: Karen Nixon

Email: karen.nixon@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257720

Present

Councillors Ann Hartley and Malcolm Pate (Leader)

Councillors David Lloyd (Speaker), Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader), Peter Adams, Andrew Bannerman, Nicholas Bardsley, Tim Barker, Charlotte Barnes, Joyce Barrow, Thomas Biggins, Andy Boddington, Gwilym Butler, John Cadwallader, Dean Carroll, Lee Chapman, Anne Chebsey, Peter Cherrington, Ted Clarke, Gerald Dakin, Andrew Davies, Pauline Dee, David Evans, Roger Evans, John Everall, Hannah Fraser, Nigel Hartin, Richard Huffer, Tracey Huffer, Roger Hughes, Vince Hunt, Jean Jones, Simon Jones, Miles Kenny, Duncan Kerr, Heather Kidd, Nic Laurens, Christian Lea, Robert Macey, Chris Mellings, Pamela Moseley, Alan Mosley, Cecilia Motley, Peggy Mullock, Peter Nutting, Kevin Pardy, William Parr, Vivienne Parry, John Price, Keith Roberts, Madge Shingleton, Jon Tandy, Robert Tindall, Dave Tremellen, Kevin Turley, David Turner, Arthur Walpole, Stuart West, Claire Wild, Brian Williams, Leslie Winwood, Michael Wood, Tina Woodward and Paul Wynn

84 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chief Executive reported that apologies for absence had been received from Mr T Bebb, Mr V Bushell, Mrs K Calder, Mr S Davenport, Mr J Hurst-Knight, Mrs J Mackenzie, Mr D Minnery, Mr M Price and Mr D Roberts.

A warm welcome was also extended to Mr D Kerr, new member for the Oswestry South ward, on attending his first Council meeting since being elected.

85 DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members were reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

Mrs A Chebsey declared an interest in report 9, Financial Strategy, and left the room whilst it was being debated – she had employment connections to the item – Reduction in Chlamydia Screening Budget.

86 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th December 2016, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

87 ANNOUNCEMENTS

87.1 Chairman's Engagements

The Chairman referred Members to the list of official engagements carried out by himself and the Speaker since the last meeting of the Council on 17th December 2016, which had been circulated at the meeting.

87.2 New Year's Honours 2016

The Chairman reported that the following Shropshire residents had been awarded honours in the Queen's New Year's Honours List 2016 and advised that she had written to each of the recipients to congratulate them on their achievement:

Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Cathie Sabin

for services to tennis (Much Wenlock)

Jane Tomkinson

for services to NHS financial management (Whitchurch)

Medallist of the Order of the British Empire (BEM)

Mrs Freda Ridgway

for services to the community (Whitchurch)

Helen Francis

for charitable services in Trefonen (Oswestry)

88 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Public Questions

The Speaker advised that four public questions had been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 15 (a copy of the report containing the detail of the questions and the relevant formal responses is attached to the signed minutes).

Public Question 1

Received from Mrs J Brand and answered by Mr M Pate, the Leader, regarding the total cost of building the Guildhall, Shrewsbury, including costs of internal furnishings.

By way of a supplementary question Mrs Brand asked what it cost the Council to build the Guildhall and why was the Shirehall no longer re-locating there?

The Leader replied that the Guildhall had been given to the University of Chester for a nominal rent, which would be deferred until the University was in credit. He also confirmed that they were paying full business rates. The Guildhall had been built originally by Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council and was inherited by Shropshire Council at the time of unitary status (in 2009). He undertook to look at this again and let Mrs Brand have a more detailed answer as far as possible after the meeting.

Public Question 2

Received from Ms M Gaunt and answered by Mr M Pate, Leader regarding the reputation of the County and the behaviour of the the ex-Leader in connection with ip&e.

By way of a supplementary question Ms Gaunt asked if the Leader could assure her that stringent measures would be put in place to prevent a similar breach of Shropshire Council's Members Code of Conduct in the future.

The Leader assured Ms Gaunt that this would be taken seriously.

Public Question 3

Received from Mr N Richardson, on behalf of Churches' Ludlow Under Pressure Group, and answered by Mr D Minnery, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People about possibly funding a local community-wide initiative, managed by a church backed group.

By way of a supplementary question Mr Richardson asked if the Council could give the group any hope for possible funding for youth work in Ludlow in the medium- or long-term future, when the need for austerity cuts was judged to be over? Or was this funding now ruled out on principle or a priori?

Unfortunately the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People was not present at the meeting to answer the supplementary question in person, but the Speaker undertook to ensure that Mr Richardson would receive a written response from Mr Minnery following the meeting.

Public Question 4

Received from Mr D Kilby, Secretary to the Shropshire Playing Fields Association and answered by Mr M Price, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and Environment about why it had no up to date Open Space Needs Assessment.

By way of a supplementary question Mr D Kilby stated that Mr Price had conceded in his response that Shropshire Council did not have a robust open space needs assessment in place as required by National Planning Policy.

It was likely that communities across Shropshire were being denied vital community infrastructure levy funding towards the provision of open spaces, for multifunctional uses including Sport, Play and Recreation facilities, despite many local parish and town councils putting it as a priority in their place plans.

The question `we' (SPFA) intend asking `your' (addressing elected members) communities is;

- Are they one of those communities we believe are missing out as a result of this local planning authorities failure to provide appropriate vital evidence of need as required in the National Planning policy framework.
- We would appreciate the assistance of yourselves (elected members) towards accessing this information from your local communities.

Unfortunately the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and Environment was not present at the meeting to answer the supplementary question in person, but the Speaker undertook to ensure that Mr Kilby would receive a written response from Mr Price following the meeting.

89 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

The Speaker advised that the following four questions had been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 15 (a copy of the report containing the detailed questions and their formal responses is attached to the signed minutes).

- (i) Received from Mr D Tremellen and answered by Mr M Price, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and Environment regarding the maintenance of private rental properties in England.

There was no supplementary question.

- (ii) Received from Mr R Evans and answered by Mr P Adams, Deputy Portfolio Holder for Travel, Transportation and Parking regarding revenue collected from on-street parking in Shrewsbury.

By way of a supplementary question Mr Evans asked for the detail of the actual revenue collected from on-street parking and the numbers of actual users of Park and Ride for 2015/16 when known. He also asked for the Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 figures.

In response Mr Adams agreed to provide this information to Mr Evans as far as possible.

- (iii) Received from Mr M Kenny and answered by Mr S Charmley, Portfolio Holder for Business and Economy regarding Fairtrade Fortnight in Shropshire.

There was no supplementary question.

- (iv) Received from Mr M Kenny and answered by Mr M Pate, Leader, regarding a Cabinet Member for Climate Change and what the Council was doing to tackle this.

By way of a supplementary question Mr Kenny asked if the Council would consider a Portfolio Holder specifically for Climate Change.

In response the Leader declined this request, but assured that the important issue of climate change was taken seriously and that it flowed across many of the existing portfolios.

90 RETURNING OFFICER'S REPORT

The Leader, Mr M Pate, presented a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, advising that Mr Duncan Kerr had been elected as Councillor to represent the Oswestry South ward on Thursday 4 February 2016.

91 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES

It was proposed by Mr M Pate, Leader and seconded by Mr R Tindall that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

An amendment was proposed by Mr M Kenny that 'the Remuneration Panel should be asked to meet within the forthcoming 12 weeks'. After some debate, this was accepted by the Leader and duly agreed.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the current Members Allowance Scheme, attached at Appendix 1 be approved.
- b) That the Remuneration Panel be asked to meet within the forthcoming 12 weeks.

92 FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016/17 TO 2018/19

It was proposed by the Leader Mr M Pate and seconded by Mr M Wood that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

Mrs A Chebsey declared an interest in this report and left the room whilst it was being debated – she had employment connections to the item – Reduction in Chlamydia Screening Budget.

Mr A Mosley, Mr R Evans and Mrs P Dee exercised their right as Group Leaders to speak to the budget proposition. After debate the Leader exercised his right to reply to the comments made on the Administration's budget proposals as a whole.

On being put to a recorded vote the proposition was carried with 43 Members voting in favour and 17 against as follows:

FOR (43)

Mr P Adams, Mr N Bardsley, Mr T Barker, Mrs J Barrow, Mr T Biggins, Mr G Butler, Mr J Cadwallader, Mr D Carroll, Mr L Chapman, Mr S Charmley, Mr P Cherrington, Mr G Dakin, Mr A Davies, Mrs P Dee, Mr J Everall, Mrs A Hartley, Mr R Hughes, Mr V Hunt, Mr S Jones, Mr N Laurens, Mr C Lea, Mr D Lloyd, Mr R Macey, Mrs C Motley, Mrs P Mullock, Mr P Nutting, Mr W Parr, Mr M Pate, Mr J Price, Mr K Roberts, Mrs M Shineton, Mr R Tindall, Mr D Tremellen, Mr K Turley, Mr D Turner, Mr Walpole, Mr S West, Mrs C Wild, Mr B Williams, Mr L Winwood, Mr M Wood, Mrs T Woodward and Mr P Wynn.

AGAINST (17)

Mr A Bannerman, Mrs C Barnes, Mr A Boddington, Mr R Evans, Mrs H Fraser, Mr N Hartin, Mr R Huffer, Dr J Jones, Mr M Kenny, Mr D Kerr, Mrs H Kidd, Mr C Mellings, Mrs P Moseley, Mr A Mosley, Mr K Pardy, Mrs V Parry and Mr J Tandy.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the 2016/17 budget of £565.377m including the savings proposals detailed in Appendix 3 and excluding internal market adjustments be approved.
- b) That the changes required to the 2016/17 budget as a result of the Final Local Government Settlement, revised business rates and collection fund estimates and revised Adult Services growth projections be noted.
- c) That the changes required to future years budgets as a result of the Final Local Government Settlement and a review of business rates and Adult Services growth projections be noted.
- d) That the revised funding gap for the years 2017/18 and 2018/19 be noted.
- e) That the revised Capital Programme as set out in the report be approved.
- f) That the potential requirement for virement between pay and non-pay (contract payment) budgets resulting from the review of ip&e Limited, which are not reflected in this report be noted.
- g) That the potential for investment and further savings proposals resulting from the review of the Council's ICT requirements which are not reflected in this report be noted.
- h) That the Statement of Chief Financial Officer on the Robustness of the Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves 2015-19 as set out in Appendix 7, noting the Council's general fund balance over this period be approved.
- i) That the Pay and Rewards Policy for all Council staff for 2016/17 as set out in Appendix 8 be approved.

93 **TREASURY STRATEGY 2016/17**

It was proposed by the Leader, Mr M Pate and seconded by Mr B Williams that the report of the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Treasury Strategy for 2016/17 be approved.
- b) That the Prudential Indicators, set out in Appendix 1, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, be approved.
- c) That the Investment Strategy, set out in Appendix 2 in accordance with the CLG Guidance on Local Government Investments be approved.
- d) That the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement, set out in Appendix 3, be approved.
- e) That the Section 151 Officer be authorised to exercise the borrowing powers contained in Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003 and to manage the Council's debt portfolio in accordance with the Treasury Strategy.
- f) That the Section 151 Officer be authorised to use other Foreign Banks which meet Capita's creditworthiness policy and Money Market Funds again as required.
- g) That the proposed Prudential Indicators that would enable the Authority to use the equivalent of up to 3% of Council Tax in 2016/17 or future years, to fund borrowing under the Prudential Code should the Council decide to do so, be noted.

94 **INCOME REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2016/17**

It was proposed by the Leader, Mr M Pate and seconded by Mr P Nutting that the report of the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the breakdown of the total income for 2015/16 and in particular that the charges for discretionary services represent only £16.233m of the £55.560m of income derived from Fees and Charges be noted.
- b. That the charges for 2016/17 as detailed in Appendix 3 to be implemented 1 April 2016, recognising that managers have proposed varying policies for

2016/17 fees and charges ranging from a reduction or freeze in certain areas to above inflation level increases in others, based on the nature of the service, market forces, customer reaction and competition from other providers as well as the state of the economy be approved. Any changes required further to ongoing reviews will be approved in line with the Council's charging policy, officer delegations and the financial rules.

- c. Note that as previously agreed, any changes to fees and charges proposed by Shropshire Community Leisure Trust Ltd. in relation to the outsourced leisure facilities will only be referred to cabinet and council for approval if the proposed increases exceed Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the preceding November.
- d. Note that monitoring reports will identify adjustments required to income budgets in the financial strategy which may or may not be offset by corresponding adjustments to expenditure budgets.
- e. Subject to restrictions or exemptions identified in the Welfare Reform and Work Bill Council approve the following;
 - i. That Social Housing Rents be reduced by 1% from 4th April 2016.
 - ii. That Affordable rents for 2016/17 be reduced by 1% from 4th April 2016.
 - iii. That Shared Ownership rents continue to be set at 2.75% of the outstanding capital value of the home.
 - iv. That Up to 58 Social rents be converted to Affordable rents in accordance with the Homes and Communities Agency grant funding for the Phase 2 new homes building programme.
 - v. That Service charges continue to be set on the basis of actual cost.
- f. That the Personal Budget Contributions Policy for Adult Services which was reviewed annually be approved.

95 COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION 2016/17

It was proposed by the Leader, Mr M Pate, and seconded by Mr S Charmley, that the report of the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

On being put to a recorded vote the proposition was carried with 45 Members voting in favour, 1 against and 12 abstentions as follows:

FOR (45)

Mr P Adams, Mr N Bardsley, Mr T Barker, Mrs J Barrow, Mr T Biggins, Mr G Butler, Mr J Cadwallader, Mr D Carroll, Mr L Chapman, Mr S Charmley, Mr P Cherrington,

Mr G Dakin, Mr A Davies, Mrs P Dee, Mr D Evans, Mrs A Hartley, Mr R Hughes, Mr V Hunt, Dr J Jones, Mr S Jones, Mr D Kerr, Mr N Laurens, Mr C Lea, Mr D Lloyd, Mr R Macey, Mrs C Motley, Mrs P Mullock, Mr P Nutting, Mr W Parr, Mr M Pate, Mr J Price, Mr K Roberts, Mrs M Shingleton, Mr J Tandy, Mr R Tindall, Mr D Tremellen, Mr K Turley, Mr D Turner, Mr A Walpole, Mr S West, Mrs C Wild, Mr B Williams, Mr M Wood, Mrs T Woodward and Mr P Wynn.

AGAINST (1)

Mr A Boddington

ABSTENTIONS (12)

Mrs C Barnes, Mrs A Chebsey, Mr R Evans, Mrs H Fraser, Mr N Hartin, Mr R Huffer, Mr M Kenny, Mrs H Kidd, Mr C Mellings, Mrs P Moseley, Mr K Pardy and Mrs V Parry.

RESOLVED:

a)

hat a 3.99% Council Tax rise be approved, resulting in a basic amount of council tax for a Band D property of £1,211.19 in the billing authority's area, calculated in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (section 44) and the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Further Financial Provisions and Amendment) Regulations 2008.

T

b)

hat in accordance with the provisions of Section 40 (2) of the 1992 Act, the amount of Council Tax calculated for each category of dwelling in the billing authority's area be as follows:

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Property Band	2016/17 Charge £
A	807.46
B	942.03
C	1,076.61
D	1,211.19
E	1,480.35
F	1,749.50
G	2,018.65
H	2,422.38

c) That a total precept of £127,068,947 be levied.

- d) That the formal council tax resolution as set out in Appendix 1 to determine the levels of Council Tax for Shropshire Council for 2016/17 be approved.

96 REPORT OF THE POLITICAL STRUCTURES MONITORING GROUP

It was proposed by the Leader, Mr M Pate, and seconded by Mr N Laurens, that the report of the Head of Legal & Democratic Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the updated draft terms of reference for the Health and Wellbeing Board be approved.
- (b) That the recommendation of the Enterprise & Growth Scrutiny Committee to amend the Constitution in respect of Part 4 – Council Procedure Rules to prevent a local member from joining a Planning Committee and discussing that item where the item concerns that Member's electoral division as follows be endorsed:-

That paragraph 6.1 be amended to read:-

“Except in relation to a Regulatory Planning Committee A Member of the Council may attend a meeting of any Committee of which he/she is not a member and “participate” in the discussion of an item, but not to vote upon an item on the agenda, provided the item concerns that Member's electoral division. Such Members will observe the same confidentiality conventions as apply to members of the Committee in question.”

- c) That the Constitution be amended in respect of Part 5 – Local Protocol for Councillors and Officers dealing with Regulatory Matters, to allow the Local Member to make representations for up to five minutes prior to the debate commencing including an opportunity for questions to be asked as follows:-

15. Members Speaking on Applications within their own Ward
- 15.1 Planning Committee members do not vote or take part in the Committee debate or voting when applications from their own electoral division are considered.
- 15.2 The local Member may address the Committee for up to five minutes, they may ask up to two questions of the Committee and may be asked questions by the Committee.

(The Member will then physically move away from the Committee 'table' but stay in the room). This will allow Members to speak freely on applications from their own area and to provide advice to their local Parish/Town Councils on these matters."

- d) That the updates to the terms of reference of the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee be approved.
- e) That, with regard to public questions at meetings of the Council and its Committees/Sub-Committees, members of the public to be provided with a written response to their submitted question ahead of the meeting in order to allow them sufficient time for consideration of a supplementary question [if required], up to three minutes to be allowed for the supplementary question to be asked and the current reference to 'statement' to be deleted.
- f) That questions from Members be moved to the end of the Council Agenda.
- g) That the Scheme of Delegation within Part 8 of the Council's Constitution be amended to clarify Committee and Officer delegations resulting from the Council's adoption of the Gambling Act 2005 Policy Statement 2016 to 2019.

97 **GAMBLING ACT 2005 - POLICY STATEMENT**

It was proposed by Mr K Roberts, and seconded by Mr A Davies, that the report of the Director of Commissioning, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the proposed Gambling Policy Statement as set out in Appendix 1 and delegating authority to the Head of Public Protection to publish the policy statement and to advertise it in accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005, be approved.
- b) That the Gambling Policy Statement will take effect from 1 April 2016.

98 **APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**

It was proposed by the Speaker, seconded by the Chairman and

RESOLVED: That the following appointments to committees be confirmed:

Audit Committee

The appointment of Mr D Turner as a full Member to replace Mr M Wood.
The appointment of Mr N Laurens and Mr A Davies as Substitute Members.

North Planning Committee

The appointment of Mr R Hughes as a full Member to replace Mr D Minnery.

South Planning Committee

The appointment of Mr W Parr as a full Member to replace Mr S West.

Standards Committee

The appointment of Mr D Carroll and Mr J Everall as full Members to replace Mr S West and Mr M Wood respectively.

Strategic Licensing Committee

The appointment of Mr N Laurens as a full Member to replace Mr M Wood
The appointment of Mr D Kerr as a full Member to replace Mr S Davenport
The appointment of Mr J Cadwallader, Mr D Turner and Mr P Wynn as
Substitute Members.

Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee

The appointment of Mr P Wynn as a full Member to replace, former councillor, Mr M Bennett.

The appointment of Mr G Butler as Substitute Member.

Young People's Scrutiny Committee

The appointment of Mr A Walpole as Substitute Member.

Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee

The appointment of Mr D Carroll as a full Member to replace Mr P Adams

The appointment of Mr T Barker as Substitute Member.

The appointment of Mr J Price as a Substitute Member

Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee

The appointment of Mr P Adams and Mr D Evans as full Members to replace Mrs C Motley and Mr D Minnery respectively.

Performance Management Scrutiny Committee

The appointment of Mrs C Wild as a full Member to replace Mr D Minnery

99 MOTION

The following motion was originally proposed by Mr A Boddington;

“Ministers are reported to be lobbying to bring planning applications for fracking within the Planning Act 2008 regime for nationally significant infrastructure projects. This would mean any application for exploration or extraction within Shropshire would be determined by a Secretary of State in Westminster on the advice of a planning inspector in Bristol.

Shropshire Council opposes any move to make decisions on shale oil and gas extraction outside our county.

The Council will write to ministers to make an unequivocal statement that it believes that decisions on planning applications for shale oil and gas extraction must be made by local planning authorities. The council will also enlist the help of county MPs to in making the council's view known to ministers.”

An amendment was put by Mr M Pate on behalf of the conservatives which was as follows;

“To delete all words after “Ministers” in the first line and to add the following wording:-

(Ministers) “are understood to be considering giving the Secretary of State powers to determine unilaterally all applications nationwide for fracking. This Council congratulates the efforts of the Administration in making sure that local planning decisions are made locally in Shropshire. The Council will also resist any attempt to give the Secretary of State powers to determine unilaterally all applications nationwide for shale oil, gas and mineral extraction. Shropshire Council believes that such a proposal would be contrary to normal democratic planning procedures and requests Shropshire’s MP’s to oppose any such changes to current practice.”

Mr Boddington was happy to accept the amendment and in doing so agreed that this was a localism issue. After some debate and on being put to the vote, the amended motion was carried with a large majority of members voting in favour.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

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<u>Committee and date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Council	8
19 May 2016	Public

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

Responsible Officer Claire Porter

Email: claire.porter@shropshire.gov.uk

Telephone: (01743) 252763

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report deals with the overall constitution of committees, the overall entitlement of seats for each of the political groups and the proportionate allocation of seats between the groups across all committees.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Council confirms the constitution of committees and the allocation of seats to each of the political groups for the 2016/17 municipal year and the allocation of seats between the political groups, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report.

REPORT

3.0 Local Government and Housing Act 1989

- 3.1 The provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 require the Council to review the representation of each political group on committees, panels etc. at each annual meeting or as soon as practicable after that meeting. The regulations require that all Scrutiny, Standing and Regulatory Committees are politically balanced across the total number of committee places. Subject to that overriding requirement, each committee must also be politically balanced, as far as it is reasonably practicable.
- 3.2 The Executive (Cabinet) is not subject to the political balance rules, but the Standards Committee is required to be balanced.
- 3.3 Advisory Committees and other ad hoc bodies and groups are not subject to the political balance rules either, but traditionally political proportionality has been applied to them outside the overall aggregate balance referred to in paragraph 2.1 above.

4.0 Constitution of Committees

- 4.1 The Council is requested to approve the overall constitution of committees.
- 4.2 This requires 90 seats to be allocated proportionately across all committees and the Council is requested to approve the overall constitution as set out below:

<u>Committee Name</u>	<u>Seats per Committee</u>
Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee	10
Performance Management Scrutiny Committee	10
Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee	10
Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee	10
Young People's Scrutiny Committee	10
Pensions Committee	4
Audit Committee	5
Human Resources Committee	7
Strategic Licensing Committee	15
Standards Committee	9
Total	<u>90</u>

5.0 Allocation of Seats

- 5.1 The Council is required to approve the allocation of seats to the political groups for the coming year.
- 5.2 The maximum number of seats available to each group within the political balance rules will be:

<u>Group Name</u>	<u>Seats per Group</u>
Conservatives	58*
Liberal Democrats	16
Labour	11
Independent	5
Total	<u>90*</u>

- 5.3 * Although it is ultimately a matter for Council to determine the number and size of committees and the distribution of seats between political groups, legislation provides that the non-affiliated members are entitled to a Committee seat on the Council. In July 2014 Council agreed for a seat to be on the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee and in February 2016 Council agreed for a seat to be on the Strategic Licensing Committee.
- 5.4 The proportionate allocation of seats to the political groups across all committees is set out in Appendix 1 and the proposed allocation of these totals to individual members, in accordance with the wishes of the respective Group Leaders, is set out in Appendix 2 to this report (To Follow).

- 5.5 The Council is entitled to 11 seats on the Shropshire and Wrekin Combined Fire Authority. Under the present arrangements, the Conservative Group is entitled to 8 seats, the Liberal Democrat Group 2 seats and the Labour Group 1 seat.
- 5.6 The proposed allocation of seats meets the legal requirements, however, should the Council wish, it is possible to agree allocations which are not strictly politically balanced if no member dissents.

6.0 Appointment of Area Planning Committees

- 6.1 With regard to the allocation of seats on the area based Planning Committees (North, South and Central – 11 members of each) the Constitution requires members to be drawn from each of the individual areas, North, South and Central and for this reason the political balance rules have been disapplied. However, it has been agreed by Council that in order to recognise the local representation of each of the areas, the members of each of the Area Planning Committees will reflect the political balance of each local area.

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

Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Regulations made thereunder.

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The contents of this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights act 1998.

Environmental Appraisal: Not Applicable

Risk Management Appraisal

The Council is obliged to ensure that the membership of committees and related bodies is proportionate to individual group membership.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

Not Applicable

Cabinet Member: Malcolm Pate

Local Members: All

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Constitution of Committees and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

Appendix 2 – Proposed Allocation of Seats to Political Groups (To Follow)

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ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

Group	Cons	Lab	Lib Dem	Ind	Total
	46	10	13	4	73

SCRUTINY

Health and Adult Social Care	6	1	2	1	10
Performance Management*	7*	1	2	0	10*
Environment and Services	6	2	2	0	10
Enterprise and Growth	6	1	2	1	10
Young People's	6	1	2	1	10

STANDING AND REGULATORY

Pensions Committee	3	0	1	0	4
Audit Committee	3	1	1	0	5
Human Resources Committee	5	1	1	0	7
Standards	6	1	1	1	9
Strategic Licensing Committee	*10	2	2	1	15*
Aggregate No Seats Required	58*	11	16	5	90*

*One seat allocated on Performance Management Scrutiny Committee to non-affiliated Member

*One seat allocated on Strategic Licensing Committee to non-affiliated Member

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Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority Chair's Report of the Meeting held on 24 February 2016

Capital Programmes and Prudential Guidelines

The Fire Authority confirmed its 2016/17 to 2019/20 capital programmes, and approved its Prudential Guidelines, the Treasury Strategy for 2016/17 and the Minimum Revenue Provision 2016/17.

Adequacy of Provisions and Reserves and Robustness of Budget

The Fire Authority agreed the reserves, recommended by its Strategy and Resources Committee, and noted the Treasurer's assurances covering the robustness of the 2016/17 budget and adequacy of the reserves.

Revenue Budget 2016/17

The Fire Authority considered recommendations made by its Strategy and Resources Committee and Strategic Planning Group Members' Working Group in relation to the revenue budget for 2016/17.

The Committee had recommended, and it was agreed by the Fire Authority, a precept increase of 1.99% in 2016/17, followed by 0.5% in future years to 2019/20. The Fire Authority agreed this recommendation with the understanding that the assumptions in the later years i.e. 2017/18 to 2019/20 would be amended to reflect the most recently available information.

Revenue Budget: 2016/17 Precept

The Fire Authority agreed:

- A net budget requirement of £21,669,704
- A total precept of £14,285,986 to be levied on the billing authorities
- A Council Tax resulting in a basic amount of Council Tax at Band D of £94.05
- The amount payable by billing authorities for 2014/15, as follows:

Council	Precept £
Shropshire Council	9,867,019
Borough of Telford & Wrekin Council	4,418, 967
	14,285,986

Annual Plan 2016/17

The Fire Authority agreed the outline format and contents of the Annual Plan 2015/16. The following strategic aims were reaffirmed:

- To be there when you need us in an emergency with a professional and well equipped team
- To reduce the number of fires in our community
- To reduce the number of fire related deaths and serious injuries
- To deliver a fire and rescue service, which provides value for money for our community now and into the future

In addition the Fire Authority delegated responsibility to its Strategy and Resources Committee to agree the Service Targets 2016/17, which support the Fire Authority's four Strategic Aims.

Annual Review of Charges for Special Services

The Fire Authority has completed its annual review of the tariff for special services charges and agreed an increase of 1% with effect from 1 April 2016, in line with the 1% pay increase awarded to firefighters during 2015/16.

Amendments to the Pay Policy Statement

The Fire Authority has conducted its annual review of the Pay Policy Statement and agreed minor changes to bring it up to date. The amended Statement has now been published and will be reviewed annually, following notification of national pay decisions determined in respect of Gold, Grey and Green Book staff each year.

Scheme for Payment of Members' Allowances 2016/17

The Fire Authority agreed its 2016/17 Scheme for the Payment of Members' Allowances to take effect from 1 April 2016. The Scheme has been amended to include minor changes to travel allowances to bring them into line with the Government's 'approved mileage allowance payments', to which these allowances are now linked.

In addition, the Fire Authority also agreed to engage at least three members of the Independent Remuneration Panel, which carries out reviews of member allowances for Shropshire Council, to undertake a full review of the Fire Authority Allowances Scheme, with a report to be provided back to the Fire Authority during the 2016/17 municipal year.



Stuart West
Chair
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
April 2016

Background Papers

Agenda and Papers for the meeting of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority held on 24 February 2016

The agendas and reports (with the exception of exempt or confidential items) for all Fire Authority meetings and those of its Committees appear on the Brigade's website:

<http://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk>

To access reports go to the Fire Service's website and follow the steps below.

- Click on the 'Managing the Service' icon at the top of the page
- Click on the 'Fire Authority' icon
- Click on 'Meetings' in the list on the right hand side of the screen
- Click on '24 February 2016' and the various reports and appendices will be listed

If you have any difficulty with the website, please contact Lynn Ince, Executive Support Officer, on 01743 260225.

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Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority Chair's Report for the Meeting held on 3 May 2016

Localism Act 2011

Following notification from Chief Fire Officer John Redmond that he is to retire in July 2016, the Fire Authority agreed in principle to employ a Chief Fire Officer on a salary of over £100,000.

The Fire Authority has directed its Brigade Managers' Employment Panel to commence the recruitment process for a new Chief Fire Officer, reporting back to the Fire Authority with its recommendations for appointment

Integrated Risk Management Planning

In October 2014, the Fire Authority considered proposals for inclusion within the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2015 to 2020. As a result of these proposals, three major projects were identified. The Fire Authority received the findings of the IRMP Project Board in relation to these projects in order to make decisions on how to take these projects forward.

Project 1 Integrated Crewing Model

The Fire Authority tasked officers to undertake a project to identify all possible options that could reduce Wholetime Duty System staffing costs by approximately £400k per annum, whilst continuing to deliver a service matched to risk and ensuring that any resulting model matches resources to risk and is able to make use of the operational workforce as a whole.

The IRMP Project Board, working with departmental champions made up of volunteers from watch-based operational staff, undertook wide-ranging research into identifying potential alternative duty systems, which could be operated to optimise the availability of staff. The research identified 5 potential options, which were then explored with the staff concerned.

Direct consultation with staff was vital to this project to ensure that their views, on what would be the biggest change to their working conditions since the 1970s, were taken into consideration. An online survey tool was used to record and collate feedback during the consultation period. This enabled collection of statistical data regarding preferred options and the opportunity for staff to provide written feedback about their responses.

The Fire Authority's Strategic Planning (StraP) Working Group considered the findings of the consultation process, together with the response provided by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).

The StraP Working Group asked the Fire Authority to support the recommendation that a new duty system for wholetime staff be implemented on or before 1 January 2017, based on:

- A 4 watch flexible rostering duty system;
- Locally managed rostering;
- On a shift for shift basis; and
- With start and finish times of 0800 to 1800 and 1800 to 0800.

The Fire Authority agreed this recommendation and delegated responsibility to the StraP Working Group to monitor the implementation of these recommendations, reporting progress back to the Fire Authority at its meeting in October 2016. The Fire Authority also agreed that a 12-month review of the new duty system would be undertaken, from the date of its implementation, and reported back to the Fire Authority.

Project 2 Fire Control Review

In October 2014, having undertaken extensive consultation on a proposal to consider merging the Service's fire control function with that of another Service, the Fire Authority agreed that the Service should suspend existing merger proposals and undertake a Fire Control review project. Officers were tasked with identifying alternative options for improving the cost-effectiveness of the Fire Control function by up to £300k per annum. The Fire Authority also agreed to maintain a watching brief on all collaborative opportunities and any that may arise in the future.

The IRMP Project Board undertook an identical programme of research and consultation for this project to that detailed for the Integrated Crewing Model. The initial research by officer and Fire Control departmental champions identified 4 potential options for alternative duty systems, which could be operated within Fire Control.

Fire Control staff then completed a similar online survey tool, which again enabled collection of statistical data regarding preferred options and the opportunity for staff to provide written feedback about their responses.

The Fire Authority's StraP Working Group considered the findings of the consultation process, together with the response provided by the FBU and asked the Fire Authority to support the recommendation that a new duty system for Fire Control staff be implemented on or before 1 January 2017, based on:

- A self-rostering duty system;
- Locally managed rostering;
- Keeping the current start and finish times of 0800 to 1800 and 1800 to 0800; and
- Annualised hours.

The Fire Authority agreed this recommendation and in addition noted the introduction into Fire Control of new internal workstreams, which are aimed at enhancing service delivery and firefighter safety, as well as improving the efficiency of this important function.

Responsibility was again delegated to the StraP Working Group to monitor the implementation of these recommendations, reporting progress back to the Fire Authority at its October 2016 meeting.

Project 3 Telford Central Review

Following investments into both the Shrewsbury Headquarters site and the Wellington Fire Station site, Telford Central Fire Station is the last of the Service's fire stations to require significant investment to bring it up to modern standards. For this reason, the project was included in the Fire Authority's IRMP 2015 to 2020. Officers were tasked with undertaking a project to identify the Service's requirements for the site for the next 30 to 40 years and then undertaking a feasibility study to look at the costs likely to be incurred in fulfilling those requirements.

Officers identified that the main priorities for the Telford Central Project were to replace the current fire station and Training Department facilities currently located there. An integral part of the project would also be the facilitation of the Fire Control function being fully integrated into the Operations Department. In addition to these internal opportunities, the Service was also keen to explore how the site could be used to support businesses; charities and other partner agencies across Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire.

Having considered potential opportunities for the site, the Service identified three possible options that could be explored, which were:

- the minimum required by the Service;
- making optimal use for the Service; and
- making maximal use for the Service and its partners.

Telford and Wrekin's Design and Planning Team (biT) were commissioned to undertake the feasibility study. The biT Team provided a report, which estimated the costs for two versions of each option. The one version assumes each option is delivered, based on a refurbishment of the current build, and the other, based on a complete rebuild.

Having considered the feasibility study and officers' recommendations that the Service would prefer to pursue the third option – making maximal use for the Service and its partners, the StraP Working Group recommended to the Fire Authority that officers progress the project to the tender process stage, undertaking a detailed exploration of the costs for this option of both the refurbishment and rebuild versions.

The Fire Authority agreed this recommendation and the outline plan for the project will be presented to the Fire Authority at its next meeting in June. The Authority delegated responsibility for monitoring the Service's work on this project to its StraP Working Group up to the stage where tenders from building contractors have been received and a firm decision is required from the Fire Authority.

Annual Plan 2016/17

The Fire Authority has approved the final version of its Annual Plan 2016/17.

The forward-looking, Annual Plan supplements and underpins the Fire Authority's five-year strategy, which is set out in the Medium-Term Corporate Plan. The Annual Plan defines the Fire Authority's Strategic Aims and associated Service Targets and includes the Authority's purpose, core values and aims.

A copy of the Service Plan can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.shropshirefire.gov.uk/annual-plan-2016-17>



Stuart West
Chair
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
May 2016

Background Papers

Agenda and papers for the meeting of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority held on 3 May 2016

The agendas and reports (with the exception of exempt or confidential items) for all Fire Authority meetings and those of its Committees appear on the Brigade's website:

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- Click on the Managing the Service icon at the top of the page
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- Click on Meetings in the list on the right hand side of the screen
- Click on 3 May 2016 and the various reports and appendices will be listed.

If you have any difficulty with the website, please contact Lynn Ince, Executive Support Officer, on 01743 260225.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

AGENDA ITEM 13

QUESTION 1

MR DUNCAN KERR will ask the following question:

Question to the Cabinet Member for Housing;

As he will be aware George Osborne's Autumn budget has meant that social tenants claiming housing benefit for a tenancy created after the 1st of April this year will from 2018 be subject to the same restrictions currently placed on private tenants. This will have a devastating impact on single people under the age of 35 where benefit will be limited to the shared-room rate and for all tenants who have care and support needs which will no longer be eligible for benefit.

What is the Council doing to ensure that new tenants fully understand this situation and to lobby Government to ensure that the Discretionary Housing Allowance for Shropshire is increased so that all social tenants in the County can be protected?"

MR MALCOLM PRICE, the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing Regulatory Services and Environment will reply:

The reforms mentioned in Councillor Kerr's question are amongst a number of changes in the benefit system which could directly affect the affordability of rent for some of Shropshire's citizens.

- Reductions in the assessment of new housing benefit claims made this year will make the means test less generous for some. (1)
- Further changes to tax credits and Universal Credit in 2017 will particularly affect larger families. (2)
- We expect the reduced benefits cap to roll out later this year. (3)
- From April 2017 the automatic entitlement to housing support for new claims in Universal Credit from 18-21 year olds who are out of work will be removed although there are some exceptions. (4)
- The capping of Housing Benefit (HB) for social housing tenants to the same maximum as those in the private sector by applying the maximum Local Housing Allowance rates will include limiting allowances for single claimants aged under 35 without dependent children to the shared room rate. This cap will apply from 1 April 2018 but only to tenancies signed after 1 April 2016 (5)
- The Chancellor's autumn statement of 2015 announced the intention to apply these restrictions to supported housing but this is now under review. Government has said they are committed to protecting such housing and

has commissioned a supported accommodation research project and policy review to be published later this year the outcome of which will determine the level of any protections beyond April 2017. (6)

These changes are set against a backdrop of a four-year freeze to Local Housing Allowance rates from 2016-17 to 2019-20.

Discretionary Housing Payments

The Government announced in the Autumn Statement and Spending Review 2015 their intention to cap the amount of rent that Housing Benefit will cover in the social rented sector to the relevant Local Housing Allowance for new tenancies signed on or after 1 April 2016 (for supported housing 1 April 2017) with Housing Benefit entitlement changing from 1 April 2018 onwards. This includes the shared accommodation rate for single people aged under 35 years. The 12 month deferral of this policy for those in supported accommodation is to allow both DWP and DCLG to consider the impact of the Local Housing Allowance caps on supported housing tenancies in the social sector and to find longer term solutions.

These changes mean that with effect from 1 April 2016 (for supported housing 1 April 2017) social landlords have a duty to inform all tenants who sign a new tenancy agreement from this date of the above change. The Government have provided all Registered Social Landlord Chief Executives with a model document for notifying tenants who sign a new or renewal tenancy from 1 April 2016 onwards, and for those taking on supported accommodation from 1 April 2017.

The Government has consistently reviewed funding levels for Discretionary Housing Payments and has provided additional funding for Local Authorities to ensure there is adequate provision to help claimants affected by welfare changes.

The government's response has been to pledge increased funding for local authorities in the shape of Discretionary Housing Payments but this is still a limited pot of money which is not designed to permanently replace income lost through changes in the benefits system. Whilst Councils may top this up from their own funds, severe financial pressures on our budgets would make this difficult or simply impossible.

Shropshire's policy in delivering Discretionary Housing Payment has purposefully been one of addressing a person's needs holistically and making only short term awards to people whilst they address any underlying or contributory factors. This is particularly the case with people who, with some challenge over their financial decisions and some adjustments as a result, would be able to meet their needs from their own incomes.

Adopting this approach has meant that Shropshire's allocation of Discretionary Housing Payment funding has been spent well within limits, it has been spent on those applicants whose situations leave them few options.

No false demand has been created nor expectations raised, specifically because we believe future change in the benefit system is highly likely to increase the demand on this limited pot of money from people who also have few options.

Amongst other changes, young people striving to keep their home whilst looking for work and the cost of meeting shortfalls in allowances for more expensive rents for elderly or vulnerable citizens will contribute to the strain on Discretionary Housing Payments. In response to Councillor Kerr's question, Shropshire is in a better position than many to meet this future need from the money made available.

Welfare Reform Group

Shropshire Council is working closely with partners in the housing and support sector around a wide range of benefits changes through the Welfare Reform Strategic and Operational Groups. These forums are used to discuss and share strategy on Shropshire's approach to the impact of welfare reform include the communications strategy and pooling of available resources.

Additionally, because we do recognise that preventative measures will still miss some people, we will soon start work with our food banks so that they are better equipped to help those who come to them in need so that in addition to meeting the immediate need, the person is helped to address any underlying issues to achieve a more sustainable outcome.

(Notes to benefit changes)

- 1) Removal of the family premium in new claims to Housing Benefit
- 2) From April 2017, the child element in Universal Credit new claims – which we have been informed will roll out to a much wider population including families next year – will be restricted to the first 2 children. Universal Credit will include help with a person's rent.
- 3) The revised benefit cap which includes housing benefit in the calculation is £257.69 per week for single people and £384.62 per week for families. There are exceptions, these include pensioners and people with disabilities and not all benefits are included in the cap. The cap ceases to apply where a person works and is becomes entitled to working tax credit.
- 4) Universal Credit includes any element for help with rent. The roll out up to now has been mainly restricted to younger people. The exceptions to this automatic removal of entitlement are: vulnerable young people, those who may not be able to return home to live with their parents, and those who have been in work for 6 months prior to making a claim, who will continue to be able to receive housing support for up to 6 months while they look for work.
- 5) Those living in social sector accommodation will see their Housing Benefit restricted to the Local Housing Allowance rate from 2017 where a new tenancy is taken or renewed on or after April 2016. This is the rate applied to private renters
- 6) The most recent House of Commons briefing paper number 06080 April 2016 <file:///C:/Users/cc107154/Downloads/SN06080.pdf> has announced an evidence review in response to a number of comments received regarding the

intention to apply LHA restriction to supported accommodation. In his announcement, Lord Freud commented “My Lords, the introduction of local housing allowance limits to the social sector will apply to both housing benefit tenants and recipients of the housing element of universal credit from April 2018, but only where new tenancies have been taken out or renewed after April 2016. The department has jointly commissioned an evidence review with DCLG to look at the size and scope of the supported housing sector. The research results will guide our consideration for future policy development. We are collecting evidence about the size of the sector, who it supports, where the funding flows are coming from and how it is supported. There are various support sources, including the Supporting People fund and RR. We look to publish this report later this year. **I am able to announce today that the Government will put in place a year-long exception for all tenants of supported accommodation in the social sector so that this measure will only apply to these tenancies from April 2017, rather than April 2016. As examples, this will include refuges for those fleeing domestic abuse, homeless provision, housing for ex-offenders, as well as supported housing for older and disabled people. I can also confirm that the one year exception will extend to housing cooperatives, alms houses and Community Land Trusts.**”

QUESTION 2

MR DUNCAN KERR will ask the following question:

Question to the Leader of the Council;

At the last Council meeting I asked why Shropshire has made no progress in implementing “50 ways to save: Examples of sensible savings in local government” published by the DCLG in Dec 2012. At the meeting I reminded you that the first sensible way of saving money in this document was by sharing back office functions. In reply you kindly provided a list of services that we share, but it did not include one single back office service. So given that the Council is apparently contemplating the closure of parks, libraries and leisure centres can I ask Clive Wright for a list of the support services we have identified as suitable for sharing, the savings we would make, the partners we could approach, and most importantly of all, the date by which these new shared arrangements will become effective?”

MR MALCOLM PATE, the Leader will reply:

Thank you for your question.

In October 2015, Cabinet approved the Financial Strategy which included the following in relation to Support Services:

In total these costs equate to £24m across the council and it is assumed and built into the model that these costs will have to be reduced more severely than front line services, reducing by almost 50% or around £12m by 2020/21.

The methods by which this reduction will be delivered includes sharing of services where this is appropriate.

We are looking at options for sharing services with other Councils and also with local public sector organisations. So far we have held meetings with Staffordshire County Council and Herefordshire Council.

The back office services under consideration include Finance, Legal, Property Management, IT, HR and Communications. It is too early to say which of these services are viable in terms of sharing or any cost saving that might be delivered by doing so.

Sharing services is likely to be a more straight forward option for smaller Councils covering a much less sparse population and where there is more management and costs of management are greater than Shropshire.

As is usual practice, our officers will bring forward proposals and options when appropriate.

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