



Shropshire Council  
Legal and Democratic Services  
Shirehall  
Abbey Foregate  
Shrewsbury  
SY2 6ND

Date: Tuesday, 21 February 2017

**Committee:  
Cabinet**

**Date: Wednesday, 1 March 2017**

**Time: 12.30 pm**

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

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

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

**Members of Cabinet**

Malcolm Pate (Leader)  
Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader)  
Karen Calder  
Lee Chapman  
Simon Jones  
David Minnery  
Cecilia Motley  
Malcolm Price  
Stuart West  
Michael Wood

**Deputy Members of Cabinet**

Peter Adams  
Nicholas Bardsley  
Gwilym Butler  
Dean Carroll  
Nic Laurens  
Robert Macey  
Robert Tindall

Your Committee Officer is:

**Jane Palmer** Senior Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01743 257712

Email: [jane.palmer@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:jane.palmer@shropshire.gov.uk)

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May 2015

# AGENDA

## 1 Apologies for Absence

## 2 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.

## 3 Minutes

To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 8 February 2017. **TO FOLLOW**

Contact: Jane Palmer Tel: 01743 257712

## 4 Public Question Time

To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. Deadline for notification for this meeting is 5.00pm on Friday 24 February 2017.

## 5 Scrutiny Items

To consider any matters from Council or any of the Scrutiny Committees.

## 6 Quarter 3 Performance Report 2016/17 (Pages 1 - 6)

Lead Member – Councillor Michael Wood – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support

Report of the Director of Place and Enterprise

Contact: George Candler Tel: 01743 255003

## 7 Amalgamation of Hope CE Primary School, Worthen CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury (Pages 7 - 24)

Lead Member – Councillor David Minnery – Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Contact: Karen Bradshaw Tel: 01743 254201

**8 Commercial Strategy**

Lead Member – Councillor Michael Wood – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support

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

Contact: George Candler Tel: 01743 255003

**9 Draft Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021 (Pages 25 - 40)**

Lead Member – Councillor Steve Charmley – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Business and Economy

Report of the Director of Place and Enterprise

Contact: George Candler Tel: 01743 255003

**10 Application by Pontesbury Parish Council to be considered as a Neighbourhood Plan area (Pages 41 - 48)**

Lead Member – Councillor Mal Price – Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and the Environment

Report of the Director of Place and Enterprise

Contact: George Candler Tel: 01743 255003

**11 Community Asset Transfer Monkmoor Youth Centre (Pages 49 - 54)**

Lead Member – Councillor Michael Wood – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support

Report of the Director of Place and Enterprise

Contact: George Candler Tel: 01743 255003

**12 Exclusion of Public and Press**

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

**13 Bridgnorth Youth Centre, Innage Lane - Reprovision and Development of Adult Social Care Services and Reprovision of Youth Services**

Lead Member – Councillor Michael Wood – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support

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

Contact: George Candler Tel: 01742 255003



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## Committee and Date

Cabinet

1st March 2017

## **Quarter 3 Performance Report 2016/17**

**Responsible:** Tom Dodds, Performance Manager

e-mail: [tom.dodds@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:tom.dodds@shropshire.gov.uk)

01743 253068

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report presents Cabinet with the Council's Performance against its key Outcomes for Quarter 3 2016/17.
- 1.2 The draft Corporate Plan and the High Level Outcomes provide the shape and focus of the updated Performance Management Framework. The measures in the framework will be refined as the strategic action plans for the coming 12 to 18 months set out how the outcomes will be delivered.  
  
The new framework will include project milestones from the strategic action plans to help demonstrate the change being delivered.
- 1.3 The new framework is presented with four key outcome areas: Healthy People, Prosperous Economy, Resilient Communities and Your Council. The range of performance measures covers a broader range of service areas than previously reported.
- 1.4 As part of developing the new Performance Management Framework and reporting of additional measures, a different way of presenting performance information is now being developed. The online performance portal has been to be used in conjunction with this report, and can be accessed here -  
  
<https://shropshireperformance.inphase.com/>
- 1.5 This is the first stage of improving access to performance information and that of data transparency. Member and user feedback will help to inform further development of performance information, which will form part of the new IT system developments.

## **2. Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

- A. Consider the key underlying and emerging issues in the reports and appendices.
- B. Review the performance portal and identify any performance areas that they would like to consider in greater detail or refer to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

## **REPORT**

### **3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal**

- 3.1 Poor performance could have implications for vulnerable people (including children) who are supported by Council services and economic growth in Shropshire. In turn, there may be significant financial, legal and reputational risk to the Council, Schools (and Academies), and partners from across the public and voluntary and independent care sectors.
- 3.2 Effective monitoring and follow-up against key measures of success provides the opportunity to manage risks and ensure that Children and Young People and vulnerable adults in Shropshire remain safe and achieve the desired outcomes. Increasingly, performance reporting will reflect the impact of commissioning decisions by the Council, linking directly with the management of contracts and building on the current approach of looking at how effective the Council is at delivering its outcomes.

### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 This report does not have any direct financial implications, but presents service and financial information to support decision making. Accountable officers and senior managers may use the information to inform actions or interventions for improving service performance and the prioritisation and use of resources.
- 4.2 Full financial details are presented as part of the Financial Reports.

### **5. Introduction**

Each of the four outcome areas contains a number of sub-outcomes with a range of associated performance measures. The frequency of the availability of the data varies from monthly and quarterly updates to annual updates. All measures, regardless of frequency will be available on the forthcoming performance portal to improve accessibility to information.

Quarterly cabinet reports will be used to highlight performance exceptions and changes to measures reported annually.



## 6. **Healthy People**

The sub outcomes for Healthy People are; Improving Public Health, Keeping People Safe, Participation in Positive Activities for Health and Well-being.

- 6.1 Measures for Improving Public Health are mainly updated annually and will be reported as and when new data becomes available. No updates are reported for quarter 3.
- 6.2 Participation in positive activities is beneficial for both physical and mental well-being. Participation rates have been mainly positive with increased visitors to leisure centres, outdoor recreation sites, visitor attractions and Theatre Severn.
- There has been a slight reduction in visitors to the Old Market Hall and Libraries.
- 6.3 Keeping safe measures show that food and drink premises in Shropshire continue to maintain high food safety standards. 98.2% of premises are rated as generally satisfactory or higher.
- 6.4 Data for the number of people killed or seriously injured for quarter 3 was not finalised at the time of writing this report. An update will be provided in the quarter 4 report.

## 7. **Prosperous Economy**

The sub outcomes for Prosperous Economy are; Physical and Digital Infrastructure, Employment and Income, Educational Achievement.

- 7.1 Physical and digital infrastructure measures have seen a slight increase in the overall satisfaction of highways and transport in Shropshire. Full results of the 2016 National Highways Transport public satisfaction survey can be found in the NHT website. A link to the site is available from the performance portal.
- Results when compared to other local authorities show that there are above average levels of satisfaction with the condition and cleanliness of pavements and roads, with winter gritting, good park and ride schemes, levels of congestion and accessibility to work.
- Lower levels of satisfaction were expressed about the availability of public transport, information on public transport, street lighting, safety of walking and cycling and mud on some roads.
- 7.2 Connecting Shropshire is nearing the end of phase 1 with over 55,000 homes and businesses now having access to better broadband. Phase 2a will seek to add an additional 4,000 by winter 2017. Phase 2b plans to extend coverage to an additional 16,015 premises. This will extend the availability of Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband to premises in the Shropshire Council area where there are no commercial plans to provide it.
- 7.3 Being young and unemployed can lead to increase in the risk of poverty, de-skilling and social exclusion as well as cause loss of motivation and mental health problems. Current rate of claimants for Job Seekers Allowance or Universal Credit actively seeking work in Shropshire is below the regional and national averages. The

claimant count for young people (aged 18 – 24) saw a continued reduction from the peak in February 2013 when there were 1370 claimants. Since June 2015, there has been a levelling of claims. There was a slight increase following Brexit, but numbers have now returned to previous levels. Claims as at December 2016 were at 450, which equates to 2% of the 18-24 population.

- 7.4 2016 pay rates were published in December 2016. These show an increase in the average weekly pay rate for both Shropshire workplaces and residents pay.

Workplace pay has increased from £466.10 to £475.60, which is lower than the West Midlands average of £510.20. Residents pay has increased by c5% from £491.80 to £517.70, which is higher than the west Midland average of £507.80. This would suggest that a number of Shropshire residents commute to other areas where workplace pay is higher.

## **8. Resilient Communities**

The sub outcomes for Resilient Communities are; Support for Families and Keeping Children Safe, Volunteering, Keeping Communities Clean, People are Supported to Stay in their Local Communities, Adults Entering Paid for Care and Adult Social Care - User Feedback.

- 8.1 The number of children looked after by the authority has remained stable throughout the current year. At the end of December 2016 there were 284 looked after children, compared to 281 at the end of quarter 2 and 297 at the end of December 2015.

It is important to reaffirm that our Looked After Children strategy is not about reducing the number of children in care, but is about ensuring the right children are in care, at the right time and for the right duration. As evidenced by our reducing section 20 (legal status for children entering care) by providing care and support packages to keep children safely in the family home.

- 8.2 The number of adults entering residential care during quarter 3 has reduced and is now on target to meet the expected profile. The rate of Permanent admissions of older people (aged 65 and over) to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population at the end of quarter 3 was 452 (329 people) against a profile of 468. The service reaffirms that it is carefully monitoring to ensure that the most appropriate care and support is sought for individuals.

- 8.3 Delayed transfer of care from hospital is recorded by two methods. The number of delayed patients at a specific time of the month and the total number of days that all patients are delayed. The organisation deemed to be the primary cause of the delay is attributed to either the NHS, Adult Social Care or Joint responsibility.

The key measures used in the national Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) is the number of delayed patients. The snapshot count of delayed patients takes place at midnight on the last Thursday of the month.

As previously reported, performance in Shropshire started to decline in 2014. Performance from April to November shows a rate of 8.97 per 100,000 people or 23 people where delays are attributed to Adult Social Care. This compares to a rate of 8.54 or 21 people for the same period in 2015.

From May 2016, there has been wide monthly variances in performance. Relatively small numbers can cause these variations. October saw the lowest level of delayed patients for 18 months. These early positive signs following the winter health initiatives were reversed in November with an increase in delays at the Shropshire Community Health Trust. There are some signs that the rate of increase has stabilised but this will be monitored when new data is published.

More detailed trend information was presented to the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

- 8.4 Results of the 2015/16 Adult Social Care Survey were published during quarter 3. The measures tracked in the corporate framework show an overall improvement. Quality of life, social contact, feeling safe all showed an improvement whilst control over daily life saw a slight decrease but remains in line with other authorities.

## **9. Your Council**

- 9.1 The projected revenue forecast spend for the year, at Quarter 3, shows a potential underspend of £244,000 against the end of year gross budget of £568.8m (net budget of £204.5m). Full details of the revenue budget are reported to cabinet separately in the revenue monitoring report.
- 9.2 The number of non-school FTE employees has continued to reduce. From December 2015 to December 2016, there has been a reduction from 2677 to 2482, a reduction of 7.2%.

## **10. Conclusion**

- 10.1 This performance report provides an update on the results achieved and the impact on delivering the outcomes for Shropshire.
- 10.2 Performance in quarter 3 of 2016/17 has generally been positive with continued improvements or stabilisation of performance.
- The number of looked after children by the authority has continued to remain stable.
  - Increases in the 2016 pay rates and a return to the reduction in young claimants.
  - Improved satisfaction rates with highways and transport, albeit with some areas of concern.
  - Attendance at Theatre Severn, Leisure and Outdoor recreation sites have improved.
  - Permanent admissions to residential care are now on course to meet the expected profile.
  - Positive results from the Adult Social Care users survey

In addition to these improvements there are confirmed challenges to be faced, and these are being managed by the relevant service areas.

- Delayed transfer of care remains a key area of focus

- Whilst the numbers killed or seriously injured on the roads of Shropshire has not been updated in this report, the previously reported increase remains flagged as a concern.

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

Business Plan and Financial Strategy 2014 – 2017

Draft Corporate Plan 2016/17 – 2018/19

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Cllr Michael Wood - Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support

**Local Member**

All

**Appendices**

<https://shropshireperformance.inphase.com/>



## Committee and Date

Cabinet

Wednesday 1 March 2017

## **Amalgamation of Hope CE Primary School, Worthen CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury**

**Responsible Officer** Karen Bradshaw – Director of Children's Services

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

### **Summary**

This paper reports on the outcomes from the statutory period of representation on the proposal to close Hope CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury and consolidating provision on an enlarged site at Worthen CE Primary School.

### **Recommendations**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- a. note the outcomes from the statutory representation period
- b. agree to close Hope CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury, effective from 1 September 2017, consolidating provision on an enlarged site at Worthen CE Primary School.

### **REPORT**

#### **1. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal**

- 1.1 There are no identifiable risk management issues involved in this proposal. School places will be made available at Worthen CE Primary for pupils displaced should Hope CE Primary and St Mary's CE Primary Westbury close. There are no known human rights issues resulting from this proposal.
- 1.2 The revised transport arrangements for those pupils displaced may lead to an increase in traffic and carbon emissions in the area of the Worthen CE Primary School and may result in some congestion outside the school site at key times of the day.

- 1.3 The communities serving all of the three schools, together with those in neighbouring areas, have been given the opportunity to comment on the proposal at two stages in the statutory consultation process - during the first consultation stage between 22 September and 2 November 2016, and the second representation stage between 12 January and 8 February 2017. These statutory consultations are required to include consideration of risk management, human rights, equalities, community and environmental consequences.
- 1.4 There may be a requirement for the Council to cashflow this project in the short/medium term. Capital works will be required at the school in order to accommodate the consolidation of pupils onto one site prior to the disposal of the surplus sites. Whilst the Diocese of Hereford has confirmed that the receipts generated from the disposals will be made available to support the project there will be a transitional period, between works commencing and capital receipts being generated.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 The majority of school revenue funding is pupil-led which means that the funding for the pupils resulting from the closure of the Hope and Westbury sites will be retained by the remaining school at Worthen or follow any pupils transferring to other Shropshire schools. The consolidation of provision at an enlarged Worthen site will make the single school more financially viable and sustainable than operating the three separate schools.
- 2.2 It is anticipated that the cost of transport will increase in the event that the provision is consolidated on a single site. The costs for entitled pupils will have to be met by the Council from September 2017 onwards in the event that the closures are approved, as prescribed within the Council's School Transport Policy. The estimated cost is £20,000 per academic year.
- 2.3 Capital works will be required on the Worthen site to accommodate the pupils from the three schools and to allow for growth in pupil numbers to recover the numbers lost in the last year. Local authority officers are developing plans for the required expansion works on the Worthen site in the event that the closures go ahead.
- 2.4 The Diocese of Hereford have confirmed that the receipts from the disposals of the Hope and Westbury sites will be made available to support the funding of remodelling works at the Worthen site. This funding will be required for the capital works at Worthen. The letter attached at Appendix 1 confirms the commitment from the Diocese to passport the capital receipts.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 On 14 September 2016, Cabinet considered and approved a proposal to consult on the amalgamation of Hope CE Primary School, Worthen CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury. The subsequent consultation ran for a six week period from 22 September to 2 November 2016.
- 3.2 On 21 December 2016, Cabinet considered the outcomes of the first stage of consultation and agreed to proceed to the publication of closure proposals for Hope CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School, with a target date of 1 September 2017, consolidating provision on an enlarged site at Worthen CE Primary School. The representation ran for a four week period from 12 January to 8 February 2017.

### **4. Outcomes of the Statutory Period of Representation**

- 4.1 On Thursday 12 January 2017, the Council began a statutory four week period of formal consultation, known as the representation period. This was a final opportunity for any person to make comments or object to the proposal.
- 4.2 A consultation document was published and signposted to all prescribed and recommended consultees and posted on the Council's consultation web portal. The proposal document is attached for reference at Appendix 2a, together with the list of formal consultees at Appendix 2b.
- 4.3 A public notice was published in the Shropshire Star, and posted at prominent positions on the three school sites throughout the representation period. A copy of the public notice is attached at Appendix 2c.
- 4.4 The four week representation period finished on Wednesday 8 February 2017. No responses to the consultation were received during this period. The first consultation period in the early autumn only received five email responses and one letter. This community-led proposal, initiated by the governing body of the Hope Worthen Westbury Trinity – A Federation of CE Primary Schools with wide support from the respective communities, may explain the low levels of response.

## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Cabinet have received and considered two detailed reports on the amalgamation proposals, on 14 September 2016 and 21 December 2016. They have considered the key issues and factors, namely:
- standards of education
  - local communities
  - equal opportunities and community cohesion
  - diversity of provision
  - demography and population
  - finances
  - staffing.

They are satisfied that these issues have been given full and proper consideration as part of the decision making process.

- 5.2 The responses received from all stakeholders during the two statutory periods of consultation have been minimal and generally supportive. This particular proposal is unique in that it has been initiated and promoted by the federation governing the three schools, with the support of their community, the Diocese of Hereford and the officers and local members of Shropshire Council.
- 5.3 The federation have a clear vision for the longer term future of education in their communities. They have recognised that their vision cannot be achieved with the current organisational structures and so, with great courage and commitment, have been prepared to consider consolidating provision onto a single site. Their expressed priority has been to secure good and better education, focussing on delivering the best educational outcomes for the pupils while not being constrained by maintaining provision on specific locations.
- 5.4 On this basis, the recommendation of the Director of Children's Services is to proceed to the closure of Hope CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury, effective from 1 September 2017, and the consolidation of provision on an enlarged site at Worthen CE Primary School.



**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

David Minnery

**Local Member**

Heather Kidd – Chirbury & Worthen

David Roberts – Loton

**Appendices**

1. Letter from Diocese of Hereford
- 2a. Proposal document
- 2b. List of consultees
- 2c. Public notice

**Previous Reports**

1. Cabinet – 14 September 2016 - <http://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=3255&Ver=4>
2. Cabinet – 21 December 2016 - <http://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=3260&Ver=4>

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**Director of Education**

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10<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Mr Phil Wilson,  
Service Delivery Manager - Learning & Skills,  
Children's Service,  
Shropshire Council,  
Shirehall,  
Abbey Foregate,  
Shrewsbury,  
SY2 6ND.

Dear Mr Wilson,

**Re Worthen , Hope and Westbury Federation**

Firstly, I apologise for the delay in writing to you formally, but we have been awaiting advice from various bodies, which has still not been fully gathered, or considered.

Further to our previous discussions, relating to the proceeds of sale of both Hope C/E (VC) Primary and St Mary's C/E (VC) Primary Westbury schools, I am writing to confirm that, in principle, the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) will allow the proceeds of the sale of the these two sites to applied to the remodelling and refurbishment of the Worthen C/E School site.

However, this is subject to certain restriction and statutory obligations, which I will outline to you now:

**Westbury**

An application for an section 554 order will be made to the DfE. The order would provide 3/14<sup>th</sup> of the value to be placed into a 'religious education fund' to be administered locally. The remaining 11/14<sup>th</sup> would be vested in the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) and held within the Uniform Statutory Trust (UST).

Without the section 554 order, the schools buildings, and any assets arising from the disposal of such, could not be used to service a completely different C/E school.

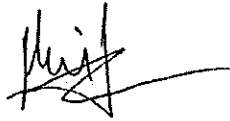
**Hope**

The trustee for this school building is the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF). Accordingly, any proceeds resulting for the sale of this site will be vested in the DBF UST. These funds can be made available to support other Church of England schools in the diocese. But would be earmarked for the Worthen project .

**NB** In both cases the proceeds will be subject to the deduction of related legal costs, agents fees and disbursements.

I trust that this will be sufficient information at this time. Please be assured that we will continue to work with you, the LA, Governors of the school to bring things to a satisfactory conclusion. Which will ultimately enhance the educational provision for children living in that area.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip J G Sell', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Philip J G Sell  
Diocesan Director of Education



## **Proposal to Close Hope CE Primary School and St Mary’s CE Primary School Westbury and Expand Worthen CE Primary School**

In accordance with The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013, the Local Authority - Shropshire Council – proposes to close Hope CE Primary School and St Mary’s CE Primary School Westbury with effect from 31 August 2017. Pupils will be offered places at Worthen CE Primary School. The local authority intends to expand provision at Worthen CE Primary School to accommodate the pupils from the closed schools from 1 September 2017.

Shropshire Council Cabinet, at their meeting on 21 December 2016, approved proceeding to the publication of the closure proposals and initiating the representation stage of the statutory process (as prescribed in the Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools Regulations), having received the report on the outcomes of the first consultation stage. The four week representation period of consultation will run from Thursday 12 January 2017 to Wednesday 8 February 2017. Cabinet will make the final decision at their meeting on Wednesday 1 March 2017, taking into account any representations and comments made during the initial consultation period.

### **Contact Details**

Any person may make comments or object to the proposals by writing to Hope Worthen Westbury Consultation, Learning & Skills Group, Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND or by emailing [HWWConsultation@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:HWWConsultation@shropshire.gov.uk) .

The details on the two schools the Council proposes to close are:

<b>Name of School and Address</b>	<b>Establishment Type</b>	<b>Age Range</b>
Hope CE Primary School Hope Minsterley Shrewsbury Shropshire SY5 0JB	Voluntary Controlled School	2 to 11
St Mary’s CE Primary School Westbury Shrewsbury Shropshire SY5 9QX	Voluntary Aided School	2 to 11

The details of the school in which the pupils will be placed are:

<b>Name of School and Address</b>	<b>Establishment Type</b>	<b>Age Range</b>
Worthen CE Primary School Worthen Shrewsbury Shropshire SY5 9HT	Voluntary Controlled School	5 to 11

All three schools are part of The Hope Worthen Westbury Trinity – A Federation of CE Primary Schools. The schools in the federation come under the Diocese of Hereford.

### **Implementation**

The intention is to implement the closures with effect from 31 August 2017.

### **Reasons for closure**

The Hope Worthen Westbury Trinity – A Federation of CE Primary Schools was established in May 2016, bringing together the three schools under the leadership of a single governing body and an acting headteacher. In July 2016 the federation appointed a permanent headteacher. The closure proposals were initiated by the federation's governing body, based on support from the community.

All three schools have faced substantial challenges in recent years, including the recruitment and retention of headteachers for each school and other teaching staff, Ofsted inspection judgements that were not yet good for two of the schools, falling pupil numbers and the associated pressures this has had on the schools' budgets.

Westbury currently has a 'Requires Improvement' judgement from Ofsted, while Hope was judged as 'Good' at its last inspection. Worthen, following an Ofsted inspection on 8 and 9 November 2016, has been graded 'Good' having previously been graded 'Requires Improvement'. The positive action by the leadership of the federation to change has resulted in this significant improvement. Despite this, the outcomes for pupils across the wider federation remain volatile and the capacity to improve more limited than in larger schools.

The three schools have collectively lost 29 pupils between January 2016 and the annual school census in October 2016, down from 114 to 85 (down nearly a quarter). The fall in pupil numbers is in part due to the cohort sizes in the individual schools being so small, with parents citing this as their main reason for removing children. With pupil numbers being the key basis on which schools receive their annual funding, this means that revenue is falling and budgets are and will become increasingly difficult to balance.

The governing body of the federation has a responsibility for, and a strong commitment to, securing and sustaining good or better outcomes for all their pupils. It is their view that this cannot be achieved with the current organisational structures and so governors formally determined, at a meeting on 6 July 2016, to initiate a statutory consultation process, via the local authority, on the closure of the sites at Hope and Westbury and the consolidation of provision on the Worthen site.

### Pupil numbers and admissions

The numbers of pupils in each of the schools for whom provision is currently made is detailed below.

<b>Hope CE Primary School</b>			
<b>Numbers on Roll</b>		Nursery	6
Nursery	6	Reception	1
Reception to Year 6		Year 1	3
		Year 2	3
		Year 3	3
		Year 4	2
		Year 5	3
		Year 6	4
		<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	9		
Male	16		

3 pupils receive special educational needs support

<b>St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury</b>			
<b>Numbers on Roll</b>		Nursery	9
Nursery	9	Reception	3
Reception to Year 6		Year 1	6
		Year 2	4
		Year 3	2
		Year 4	6
		Year 5	3
		Year 6	6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	21		
Male	18		

7 pupils receive special educational needs support

Worthen CE Primary School will have a Published Admission Number of 17 with an initial planned capacity of 120.

<b>Worthen CE Primary School</b>			
<b>Numbers on Roll</b>		Reception	9
Reception to Year 6	38	Year 1	1
<b>Gender</b>		Year 2	4
Female	16	Year 3	8
Male	22	Year 4	10
		Year 5	6
		Year 6	0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>

4 pupils receive special educational needs support  
 2 pupils have statements of special educational needs

### **Displaced pupils**

Displaced pupil from Hope CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury will be offered places at Worthen CE Primary School. The federation governing body implemented interim operational arrangements in September 2016, which have provided for pupils of school age from all three schools to be taught on the Worthen site, whilst the pre-schools have remained open at Hope and Westbury. In the event that Cabinet approve the school closures, the pupils from the two closing schools will have been part of the new school community at Worthen for a full academic year, which will minimise the impact on their education resulting from the closures. This will include support to pupils with special educational needs.

The current Worthen site will need to expand to accommodate the displaced pupils, for which capital provision is being made. It is not anticipated that the proposals will have any detrimental impact on neighbouring schools. No concerns were raised on this aspect of the proposals during the first stage of the consultation process.

### **Impact on the community**

The likely effects on the communities of Hope and Westbury have been considered in the light of experience gained from school closures which have taken place in Shropshire and elsewhere. If the schools were to close, the communities might become less attractive to some families, but it would not necessarily have an effect on most potential residents. It might change the balance of the type of potential residents without affecting their numbers.

There are a number of settlements in the surrounding area which currently do not have schools but remain viable. Some of these are already part of the community of other neighbouring schools. Schools would naturally seek to remain a focal point of not just their immediate settlement, but also the wider community as a whole. The headteacher and governors of the federation have made clear their intentions to retain close relationships with the communities of Hope and Westbury.



## **Rural primary schools**

Both Hope CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School are designated rural primary schools as defined under the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order. As such Shropshire Council has carefully and appropriately considered alternatives to closure, transport implications and the overall and long term impact on local people and the community from the closure of the village schools and of the loss of the buildings as community facilities. The Council has worked closely with the federation governing body and officers for the Diocese of Hereford in considering these issues.

## **Balance of denominational provision**

The three schools are in The Hope Worthen Westbury Trinity – A Federation of CE Primary Schools, which come under the Diocese of Hereford. The remaining provision at Worthen CE Primary School will remain under the Diocese of Hereford. The proposal does not therefore impact on parental choice in terms of access to a church school.

## **Early years provision**

The closure of Hope CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury would have an impact on local early years provision. Hope CE Primary School and St. Mary's CE Primary School Westbury both have pre-schools as part of their provision, while Worthen Pre-school is independently operated by a parent managed charitable group and runs from the village hall, next to the school.

Continued affordable and accessible early years provision is seen as being very important to the local community and the future success of the federation of schools. The governors would like to bring together the current mix of school led and voluntary managed early years provision into one, school run nursery on the Worthen site. The expectation would be for the nursery to open from 9 am to 3.00 pm, 5 days per week. The school will fully consult and work with their early years staff and the managers and committee of the voluntary managed provision at Worthen.

The Council has set aside resource from the capital programme for the development of early years provision in the area. This funding will be allocated towards the capital works required at the Worthen site. The provision will form part of the build on the school site, with staff accessing facilities - eg staff room and toilets - from the main school building rather than requiring their own and thus increasing capital costs.

## **Travel**

The interim operational changes implemented by the federation governing body from the beginning of the autumn term 2016 included the provision of transport arrangements for the pupils from the Hope and Westbury communities to Worthen CE Primary School. These arrangements are working effectively and so it is presumed, in the event that Shropshire Cabinet approve the closure of the two schools, that these transport arrangements will continue.

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**Consultee Distribution Checklist - Hope CE Primary School, Worthen CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Amalgamation**

Parish Councils	Minsterley Parish Council Westbury Parish Council Worthen with Shelve Parish Council
MPs	Daniel Kawczynski Philip Dunne
Neighbouring LAs	Powys County Council – Head of Children Services
SALC	
Local (& other) members	Cllr David Minnery Cllr Nick Bardsley Cllr Malcolm Pate Cllr Joyce Barrow Cllr Heather Kidd Cllr David Roberts
Local schools (governing body, all staff, parents) Head email Chair of governors email	To headteachers and chairs of governors at: Bishop's Castle Primary Chirbury CE Primary Hanwood, St Thomas & St Anne's CE Primary Minsterley Primary Norbury Primary Pontesbury CE Primary Stiperstones CE Primary Trinity CE Primary The Community College, Bishop's Castle Mary Webb School & Science College Hope Worthen Westbury Federation
Diocesan offices	Diocese of Hereford
Passenger Transport Services	Transport Commissioning Manager
HR officers and trades unions	

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## **Closure of Hope CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School Westbury**

Notice is given in accordance with The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 the Local Authority, Shropshire Council, intends to close Hope CE Primary School, Hope, Minsterley, SY5 0JB and St Mary's CE Primary School, Westbury, SY5 9QX, with effect from 31 August 2017. Pupils will be offered places at Worthen CE Primary School.

The Local Authority intends to expand provision at Worthen CE Primary School, Worthen, SY5 9HT to accommodate the pupils from the closed schools.

Pupils will be entitled to transport provision in line with the terms of the Shropshire Council school transport policy. Shropshire Council endeavours to minimise the use of low occupancy vehicles for home to school transport, and encourages the use of sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and school buses.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained: by writing to Hope Worthen Westbury Consultation, Learning & Skills Group, Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND, visiting the Council website at <http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/> , or by emailing [HWWConsultation@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:HWWConsultation@shropshire.gov.uk) .

Within four weeks of the publication of this Notice – by Wednesday 8 February 2017 – any person may make comments or object to the proposal by writing to Hope Worthen Westbury Consultation, Learning & Skills Group, Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND or by emailing [HWWConsultation@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:HWWConsultation@shropshire.gov.uk) .

Signed

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'K Bradshaw'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Karen Bradshaw, Director of Children's Services, Shropshire Council

Publication Date: Thursday 12 January 2017

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## Committee and Date

CABINET

1<sup>st</sup> March 2017

## **Draft Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy 2017 - 2021**

**Responsible Officer** George Candler, Director - Place and Enterprise

e-mail: [george.candler@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:george.candler@shropshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01743 258671

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Economic growth is one of the key priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan and the Council recognises that it has a significant role to play in supporting the successful and sustainable growth of Shropshire's economy.
- 1.2 This report presents Cabinet with a new draft Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire from 2017 to 2021. The aim of this draft Strategy is to provide the vision and ambition that will direct the actions that the Council will take to achieve increased economic productivity and support a prosperous and resilient economy over the next 5 years.
- 1.3 The draft Strategy has taken into account the recently commissioned work with IPPR North to develop a new economic vision alongside the Council's own Corporate Plan and vision to 'make Shropshire a great place to live, learn and work', as well as the sub regional plans and national economic context.
- 1.4 Subject to the outcomes of the consultation, the intention is that there is an annual review of the actions that are set out in this draft Strategy and that the evaluation of achievements and updates are reported to Cabinet.
- 1.5 Shropshire Council will consult on the draft Strategy particularly seeking the views of the business sector, voluntary and independent sector, Town and Parish Councils as well as the Marches LEP and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). The outcomes of this work will be brought back to Cabinet for final approval of the Strategy.

### **2. Recommendations**

- A** Cabinet notes the significant progress made to date in developing this draft Economic Growth Strategy 2017 – 2021 for Shropshire.
- B** Cabinet agrees that this draft Economic Growth Strategy 2017 – 2021 is now subject to formal consultation for 6 weeks and that the results of this consultation will help inform the final Strategy. The final strategy will be brought back to Cabinet for final approval at a later date in 2017.

## REPORT

### 3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 Shropshire's economy has generally been performing well but it has the potential to do much better and to raise its economic productivity. There are a number of current challenges and future trends that, without a strategic economic approach and in the absence of targeted actions to address them, mean that the economy of Shropshire will under-perform.
- 3.2 A key risk is that Shropshire is falling behind regional and national averages in economic output from businesses and employee earnings and this is leading to lower economic productivity compared to the West Midlands and UK as well as some of the surrounding authority areas. There is a declining population of traditional working age (16-64) in Shropshire and a particular lack of younger people staying in the County to work so talent and skills are being lost to elsewhere.
- 3.3 The retention of existing business, the ability to develop and retain skills and talent and successfully attract new inward investment from outside Shropshire are all key objectives to addressing these challenges and supporting a step change in economic performance.
- 3.4 The Council has a key role to play in each of these objectives and a significant opportunity to use its own investment power, services and influences to maximise economic growth. There are six priority actions for the Council that are detailed in the draft Strategy, these are;
- Target actions and resources on economic opportunities
  - enable businesses to grow and succeed
  - Deliver infrastructure to support growth
  - Meet skill's needs of businesses and people's aspirations for work
  - Promote Shropshire to investors
  - Build our reputation as a Council that is 'good to do business with'
- 3.5 The Council cannot deliver growth in isolation and does not have control over all actions and activities that will generate economic growth. Therefore the vision will only be achieved by working collaboratively across the public and private sectors and with our communities. Working with the West Midlands Combined Authority and Marches LEP as our key strategic partnerships and with our neighbouring authorities is important for us to deliver our strategy by being a part of a broader economic geography and joining larger investment propositions and campaigns.
- 3.6 Now is an important opportunity to communicate the importance of growth and work in partnership to achieve the best possible outcomes of a growing economy for the benefit of our people and businesses. A clear communications and relationship plan will underpin the delivery of the draft Strategy.
- 3.7 There are four targets in the draft Strategy that have been based on evidence from the current Local Plan together with recent studies and forecasts. These are targets for the 5 year period of the study and progress against these will be monitored and reported annually.



- 3.8 An annual review of the action plan, that will contain all of the actions from the draft strategy, will also be undertaken and progress together with any updates will be reported to Cabinet. These actions will be defined as immediate (next 6 months), short term (within the next 2 years), medium term (within 2 to 5 years) and longer term (over 5 years).
- 3.9 An ESIIA for the draft strategy is being undertaken, and as part of the forthcoming consultation, we will ensure all sectors of the community have an opportunity to feed into the strategy. The ESIIA will be regularly updated over the 5-year term of the strategy.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

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

#### **5. Background**

- 5.1 Creating a prosperous economy is one of the three high-level outcomes in the Corporate Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19. Developing a clear economic vision and strategy, attached at Appendix 1, is a key milestone in setting out the Council's commitment and ambition to grow the local economy and deliver this Corporate Plan outcome.
- 5.2 There is significant evidence and analysed findings that sit behind the draft Economic Growth Strategy including the commissioned research report with IPPR North (jointly commissioned with University Centre Shrewsbury) to help Shropshire develop a new economic vision and socio-economic research produced by the Council's Policy, Performance and Intelligence team.
- 5.3 In developing Shropshire's draft Economic Growth Strategy, the regional and national economic picture and context has been considered. It aligns with and informs the Marches LEP ambitions for growth as well as the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Strategic Economic Plan to 2030. Shropshire's role as a Non-constituent Member of the WMCA is an important development in the evolution of partnership arrangements with the wider West Midlands region and the mutual and shared benefits of growth.

## 6. Additional Information

- 6.1 The Government has recently launched the 'Building our Industrial Strategy' green paper for the UK and this provides a clear emphasis on the need for local economies to perform well, for this to be place led, and for the overall productivity of the UK to increase to close the gap that currently exists with other countries. This green paper has informed the development of our own draft Economic Growth Strategy and the intention is for the Council to respond to the Government's consultation by the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2017.
- 6.2 Shropshire Council will now undertake consultation on the draft Economic Growth Strategy over a 6 week period to seek the views from all sectors and communities. In particular, we will want to hear from the business sector, voluntary and independent sector, Town and Parish Councils, the Marches LEP and the WMCA. The outcomes of the consultation will help inform the final Strategy which will be brought back to Cabinet for final approval.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The new draft Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire for 2017 to 2021 presented in this report is setting out a clear ambition and set of actions to increase economic productivity.
- 7.2 This presents the opportunity for the Council to be bold, committed and focused in its leadership role to generate growth for the benefit and prosperity of its businesses and residents over the next five years.

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

Corporate Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19

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

Marches LEP Strategic Economic Plan and Ambitions for Growth

West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan

Building our Industrial Strategy Green Paper, January 2017

### **Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Councillor Steve Charmley, Portfolio Holder for Business and Economy

**Local Members**

All

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Shropshire Draft Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021

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# DRAFT ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY 2017 – 2021



# Economic Growth Strategy

2017-2021 DRAFT

Introduction

The Vision

Target actions and resources on Economic  
Opportunities

Enable businesses to grow and succeed

Deliver Infrastructure to support growth

Meet skills needs and people's aspirations  
for work

Promote Shropshire to investors

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

Performance and monitoring



## Introduction



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

It has taken into account the recently commissioned work with IPPR North to develop a new economic vision alongside our own corporate plan and vision to 'make Shropshire a great place to live, learn and work'. It also links into and informs the Marches LEP Strategic Economic Plan, the West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan and the national economic picture, in particular the modern Industrial Strategy for the UK.

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

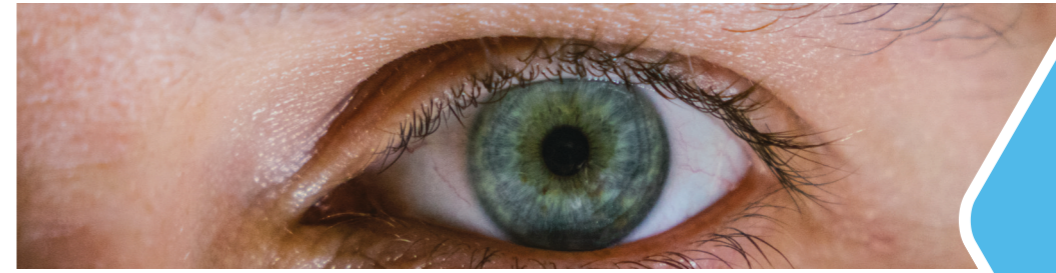
We are serious about the role we have to play in growing Shropshire's economy and this includes our own ability to invest into the economic growth agenda to accelerate activity through our financial capacities. The action plan that will be produced to support this strategy will inform the level of investment that will be required and over what timeframe.

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

We do however recognise that the Council does not have control over all actions and activities that will generate economic growth. Therefore our vision will only be achieved by working collaboratively across the public and private sectors and with our communities. We will commit to working with our strategic partners including the Marches LEP, West Midlands Combined Authority and neighbouring authorities for the benefit of Shropshire's economy, businesses and residents.

'Building an economic vision for Shropshire – A report by IPPR North', February 2017 has informed this draft strategy. The IPPR North report (jointly commissioned with the University Centre Shrewsbury) is centred on four themes: people, place, private businesses and public services and has made thirteen recommendations linked to these. Our strategy does not repeat these but has taken these recommendations into account in setting out the actions here. There is a wealth of evidence and analysed findings that sit behind this document including a research report from IPPR North, Oxford Economics forecasts and the Shropshire Socio Economic Context report produced by the Council's Policy, Performance and Intelligence team.

## The vision



**Our vision is for Shropshire to be an excellent location in which to do business, renowned for the pool of talent among its people and widely respected for its ability to attract investment. We will maximise our full economic potential and fully utilise our high quality assets to generate growth and increase productivity.**

Shropshire is a high quality location and has a generally well performing economy. It has one of the best natural environments in England, it already has a reputation for being a fantastic place to live, and an economically active population with higher levels of qualifications than the national or regional average. Shropshire people enjoy an exceptional high quality of life and environment. We won't lose sight of these wonderful assets and will continue to nurture them to ensure the quality remains.

### Our Objectives

There is however, a step change needed in Shropshire's economic productivity. It has significant potential to do more and do it better. We must be ambitious, focused and committed if we are to achieve maximum economic productivity from the assets and opportunities we have here in Shropshire. This will be based on three key objectives:

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

### Delivering our Vision – priority actions and targets

We believe the strategy that will deliver this vision and objectives will be through the following six priority actions:

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

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



## The vision

This ongoing two-way conversation will define clear messages and re-iterate the objectives of our economic growth strategy. We will continue to build on relationships with businesses, organisations and networks to achieve shared objectives, and maximise our use of communication channels for effective and positive outcomes.

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

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

These targets are ambitious, and importantly are informed by evidence from the current Local Plan together with recent studies and forecasts including work by Oxford Economics. The following sections set out each of the six priority actions. A detailed action plan will support this strategy.



## Target actions and resources on Economic Opportunities

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

- Strategic location and economic relationships

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

Shropshire is also in a relatively strong position to benefit from both Birmingham HS2 hub and the future Crewe hub. The Northern Gateway Development Zone is the area of growth potential surrounding the Crewe hub station and particularly for Shropshire, the North Eastern part of the County has the potential for positive benefits from this transformational investment in national infrastructure.

Immediate actions:

- Participate in the West Midlands Combined Authority as a non-constituent member for the benefit of Shropshire and focus on the key areas of collaboration that are set out in the Strategic Economic Plan to 2030 to accelerate economic growth, employment and productivity and focus on mutual priority actions, including specifically the Land Commission and Growth Company working groups.
- Welcome the Midlands Engine strategy and identify Shropshire's role within it.

Short/medium term actions:

- Work with Powys Council and Growing Mid Wales Partnership to understand the opportunities for collaboration on shared agendas – currently infrastructure and skills.
- Work with partners in the Northern Gateway Development Zone to align economic growth and infrastructure priorities in the North East of the County and ensure we are 'HS2 ready'.
- Position investment opportunities within promotional campaigns and collateral presenting the economic opportunities in the West Midlands Regions and other regions adjoining Shropshire.

- Major employment sites and growth corridors

There will be further opportunities to bring forward new employment land to meet our economic needs and we will work with developers and partners to prepare existing sites for occupation and to identify and prioritise deliverable future sites based on a return on investment. We want to build on our rich legacy of quality business, high added value, high wage rates quality of life and sustainability. The Local Plan review and the existing SAMDEV provide the framework for this identification and focus, ensuring that we have a plan-led approach.





## Target actions and resources on Economic Opportunities

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

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

● M54/A5 East growth corridor – this is linked to investment in Telford and the clustering and supply chain opportunities from existing and future companies in close proximity to this part of the County. This is a key road and rail transport corridor which reinforces Shropshire’s close proximity to the West Midlands and the growth potential that will develop from the Land Commission as part of the combined Authority structure. We recognise that there are site constraints in some of these urban centres, but there are also opportunities:

- To support the cluster of activities and key sectors in Bridgnorth and work with existing companies on future plans.
- For the Council to work with neighbouring Telford and Wrekin Council and other key stakeholders to play a leading role in capitalising on opportunities arising from the redevelopment of the former Ironbridge Power Station.

- A5 west growth corridor including the site for Oswestry Innovation Park and Oswestry as the second largest market town in the County.
- Central Shropshire – Shrewsbury is the County town and serves a much wider catchment including Mid Wales. Opportunities within the town centre and the major employment sites at Shrewsbury Business Park, Battlefield, and the Sustainable Urban Extensions to the South and West of the town.
- North East Shropshire and the A41 growth corridor linking to the M54 – related to Northern Gateway Development Zone and proximity to HS2 hub at Crewe and links to the North West to Cheshire and beyond. Includes the town of Whitchurch, Market Drayton and the Clive Barracks site that will become available for development in 2022.
- A49 growth corridor related to strategic north-south road and rail links and key market towns in the South including Ludlow, Church Stretton and Craven Arms with rail links that might potentially benefit from the proposed Crewe Hub and linking into Herefordshire, specifically to Leominster and Hereford.

Immediate actions:

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



## Target actions and resources on Economic Opportunities

Short/medium term actions:

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

- Target growing and under-represented sectors

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

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

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

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



## Target actions and resources on Economic Opportunities

### Immediate actions:

- Use this strategy to clearly set out the sectoral propositions and actions relating to each of these with partners.
- Work with the Marches Centre for Manufacturing and Technology in Shropshire and support the work of the partners in the engineering cluster.
- Prepare a coherent visitor economy strategy alongside the sector that clearly sets out the ambitions and opportunities and is clear on the Council's role within it.

### Short/medium term actions:

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



## Enable businesses to grow and succeed

There are over 15,200 businesses in Shropshire with the vast majority of these classed as small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) where the number of employees is less than 250. Continuing the positive work already in place to support this SME base, including the Marches Growth Hub, remains a key action in our strategy. The relationships and track record of success with this group of companies will not be underestimated in terms of the importance that they play in our economy.

We will identify fast growing companies and work with those who have potential to increase output and employee numbers through our business relationship management function.

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

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

### Immediate actions:

- Continue to deliver the Marches Growth Hub in Shropshire and work with partners, in particular Shropshire Chamber of Commerce, the Business Board and the universities to deliver a gold standard support package for SMEs.
- Ongoing business relationship management with our existing companies and provide efficient and effective responses to their queries.
- Continue to service the Business Board and work collaboratively with Board members to achieve this strategy for growth.

### Short/medium term actions:

- Record effectively all engagement with companies and communicate this internally within the Council with relevant departments to ensure businesses receive a joined up approach.
- Identify those sites that could provide space for smaller businesses in the County to expand.
- Revise the terms of reference for the Board and work with the Chair and Vice Chair to review and evaluate progress annually.

## Deliver Infrastructure to support growth



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

### Transport infrastructure:

Page 25  
There are a series of local, regional and national challenges to transport infrastructure provision to enable growth and the development of new homes and employment space in Shropshire. The transport infrastructure in Shropshire has a particular regional importance and the Council's involvement with Midlands Connect is key to enhancing its capacity. Shropshire Council and the Marches LEP is actively engaged with Midlands Connect at both Board level. The Marches LEP has also produced a Strategic Corridors study, supported by the three Local Authorities, which is informing the Midlands Connect programme. Through the Marches LEP we have identified our strategic transport corridors which are vital to deliver growth across the Marches area. These are the strategic road and rail networks that are the responsibility of Highways England and Network Rail and which will require investment from Central Government to improve them, which will provide benefits that spread beyond Shropshire onto the regional footprint.

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

Shropshire Council, through its active involvement and Directors seat within West Midland Rail Ltd is already having a tangible effect in gaining service improvements in the Franchise ITT for the Shrewsbury to Birmingham service, together with later and improved Sunday services.

Shropshire continues to input its development proposals into both the Midlands Connect process and the periodic Rail industry consultations to enable the use of rail to enable growth in those rail connected Shropshire market towns, which will support the wider WMCA Strategic Economic Plan objectives. An example of this is the extension of electrification from Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury.

The ever tightening public purse and the increasingly competitive environment to secure public investment into infrastructure means we must be smart and clear about our priorities and look at innovative ways to deliver schemes including co-ordinating with neighbouring authorities where appropriate. We have been successful in securing investment into some of our transformational local schemes including the Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Package, Oxon Link Road and feasibility funding for the North West Relief Road. We need to continue to demonstrate clearly the case for investment and articulate with partners how investment in our infrastructure facilitates economic growth.

## Deliver Infrastructure to support growth



### Digital connectivity:

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

Digital connectivity is no longer an 'add on', but a fundamental necessity for operating businesses whether global, small or for individuals in Shropshire working from home. Provision and reliability of the digital network will enable all aspects of business to operate and grow and will be a basic requirement of any investors looking to locate here.

### Utilities capacity:

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

### Housing:

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

We recognise that the delivery of housing is not always in our control as a Council but we must support the supply of housing by looking at the broad distribution and allocation of strategic sites through the local plan process. We will also need to support the delivery of sustainable residential development which provides appropriate access to local facilities, services and infrastructure. There are different requirements for different segments of our population and the needs of older people compared to graduates and families must be considered in the strategic planning of housing. There is a particular need to consider adequate provision for starter and affordable accommodation to help retain and attract families and young professionals to the area.



## Deliver Infrastructure to support growth

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

### Local place infrastructure:

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

The high quality of the natural environment and attractiveness of the historic and built environment is referred to later in this document as part of our activities to promote Shropshire to investors but within this infrastructure context, it is important to highlight the role of the Council in helping to shape the proposition of Shropshire as a place to live and work.

### All actions related to infrastructure to support growth

#### Immediate actions:

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

#### Short/medium term actions:

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



## Meet skills needs and people's aspirations for work

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

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

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

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

The current demographic make-up of Shropshire is well evidenced and documented including in the appended IPPR North reports. We need to work within this context and maximise the opportunities this provides us. We need to find ways of supporting a younger workforce and retaining the talent and skills of young people and graduates in the County. This is linked to the housing offer, affordability of the area, and cultural and vibrant hubs in the key towns.

We need to support the spectrum of ages within the 'middle' range of our working population by encouraging those people who are likely to be professional individuals or couples and families to choose to locate to or stay in Shropshire. Providing the opportunities of good quality employment and future potential in the work place for ambitious residents to progress are key factors for this demographic of population.

We have an under-employed skills base with those qualified people working in roles that they are over-qualified for. This gives us two key problems, one that there is the threat that these people will leave Shropshire to take on 'better' employment outside of the County and we lose these skills and resources (and those of their families potentially) and secondly,



## Meet skills needs and people's aspirations for work

that whilst these people are in these roles and not progressing then vacancies that lower skills people can take are not available. Tackling in work progression by working with companies and attracting new companies into our area with higher qualified opportunities for work is part of our strategy.

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

Whilst there is lower unemployment in Shropshire compared to regional and national averages, and unemployment is not a major concern, our strategy does recognise the barriers facing some of our residents in accessing employment. These challenges can be particularly complex and often relate to health and well-being issues as well as a lack of skills. This calls for a joint public sector approach between Health and Employment services to deliver support to individuals in a more holistic way.

Immediate actions:

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

Short/medium term actions:

- Agree a way of sharing information on future developments and sector growth with schools, colleges and universities to support young people to make informed decisions about their careers.
- Implement the Council's apprenticeship plan and work with vocational facilities and providers including the Marches Centre for Manufacturing and Technology to support the advanced manufacturing sector.
- Continue to collaborate on initiatives and programmes with the HE sector that will benefit Shropshire businesses and economy.
- Working with businesses, explore initiatives to facilitate in work progression, this could relate to retraining courses and programmes and some up-skilling.
- Work with the community and voluntary sector and public service partners to understand the volunteering capacities and opportunities and help to facilitate where appropriate.
- Explore best practice in multi-agency approaches to supporting individuals with health and employment skills needs and align this with the Government's new Work and Health Programme.



## Promote Shropshire to investors

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

We need to be bold and confident in our promotional pitch and sell the benefits that Shropshire can offer to companies and investors. Understanding what the private sector are looking for when making decisions on where to invest is key to informing the material we produce and the approach we take. Fundamentally this needs to be giving them confidence that their business will be successful and they will make a financial return on their investment. In addition to bespoke requirements that will be specific to each enquiry, the components set out in this draft strategy will be fundamental to their considerations.

We already have a strong relationship in place with the Department of International Trade and we will ensure these links are retained and built upon going forward, including with specific sector leads.

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

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

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

The quality of the environment for people to work and live in will form part of our proposition to investors and the opportunity for us to promote our strong heritage, cultural, and natural offer. The attractive combination we have to offer includes the mixture of market towns and within them the retail and historic cores, cultural activities, and open space. Their sustainable economic future is important.




## Promote Shropshire to investors

### Immediate actions:

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

### Short/medium term actions:

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



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

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

We will listen to and understand business needs, both existing and new, and instil the need for timely and clear responses and decisions across all services that have a role in economic growth and support businesses.

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

### Immediate actions:

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

### Short/medium term actions:

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



## Performance and monitoring

The actions identified in this draft strategy will be collated into an action plan and defined as immediate (6 months), short term (next 2 years), medium term (next 5 years) and long term (beyond 5 years). This action plan will be monitored regularly and updated annually for the duration of this strategy.

The overall targets set out in this draft strategy for the 5 year period will be reviewed and monitored on an annual basis.

Progress on both the actions and the targets will be reported to the Business Board, and Shropshire Council through Cabinet, regularly.



Committee and Date:

Cabinet

1<sup>st</sup> March 2017

## **Application by Pontesbury Parish Council to be considered as a Neighbourhood Plan Area**

**Responsible Officer** George Candler Director of Place and Enterprise

Email: [George.candler@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:George.candler@shropshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01743 258671

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### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the application by Pontesbury Parish Council for the Parish Council area to be considered as an appropriate area for a potential Neighbourhood Plan to be prepared by the Parish Council (attached as Appendix A, map as Appendix B).
- 1.2 Pontesbury Parish Council made the application to Shropshire Council in August 2016 under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Shropshire Council consulted on the proposed area for a period of four weeks between September and October 2016. Due to concerns expressed locally, a re-consultation took place for a further four weeks between November and December 2016. Only one response was received to these consultations but this did not object to the principle of using the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area.
- 1.3 It is the Council's role to decide if the Pontesbury Parish Council area is an appropriate area for the purposes of preparing the proposed Neighbourhood Plan. This consideration takes into account views expressed through the consultation process as well as information from the Parish Council. The recommendation focusses solely on the extent of the area to be used in the preparation of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan. This recommendation does not deal with the proposed or potential content of the Neighbourhood Plan, which are issues to be considered by Pontesbury Parish Council in cooperation with Shropshire Council in due course.

### **2. Recommendations**

1. Cabinet agrees that the Pontesbury Parish Plan area is an appropriate basis for the development of a Neighbourhood Development Plan and notifies the Parish Council accordingly.
2. Cabinet notes that if the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area is agreed, Pontesbury Parish Council will be able to prepare the Pontesbury Neighbourhood Plan, which will be subject to public consultation, examination and local referendum as set out in Regulations. Assuming any subsequent local referendum is successful, Shropshire Council's Full Council will then be asked to adopt the Final version on the Neighbourhood Plan.

## REPORT

### 3 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 The power to designate a Neighbourhood Area is exercisable under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under Regulation 5(1) of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 an Area Application has to include a map that identifies the area to which the application relates and a statement to explain why the area is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area and that the body is in fact a “relevant body” for the purposes of Section 61 G(2) of the Act. Pontesbury Parish Council is a relevant body for the purposes of the Act.
- 3.2 The relevant material (Area Application (Appendix A) and Map (Appendix B)) was received by Shropshire Council in June 2016 and as required by regulation, advertised on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016 for a period of four weeks. In advertising this information comments were invited through the ‘Get Involved’ section of the Shropshire Council website. Following this four-week consultation period Pontesbury Parish Council expressed concern that opportunities to advertise the consultation locally had been missed. Whilst it was considered Shropshire Council had met its regulatory requirements, it was nevertheless considered appropriate and beneficial to re-consult on the proposed area for a further four-week period between 11<sup>th</sup> November and 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016. This second consultation was advertised more extensively by the Parish Council in its locality. Shropshire Council and Pontesbury Parish Council received only one response to these consultations but this did not object to the principle of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area.
- 3.3 In determining the application Shropshire Council must have regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood area and the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas. In the event the designation is approved, it will be published on the Council’s website. In the event a designation is refused under Section 61G (9) of the Act reasons must be given and the decision publicised in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Regulations.
- 3.4 The designation of an appropriate area for a neighbourhood plan is to confirm the geographic area the Plan will cover. This does not set policies to be contained in the Neighbourhood Plan, or the thematic scope of that Plan. Indeed, the designation of a Neighbourhood Plan area does not commit the Parish or Town Council to producing or completing a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.5 When approved, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the statutory development plan for the area. The statutory framework covering the production of neighbourhood plans is therefore quite prescriptive and there is little risk for either Shropshire Council or Pontesbury Parish Council in following this carefully. However, it is important that a high degree of trust and cooperation between the Councils is maintained in order to reduce any risk of the inconsistency and conflict between the Neighbourhood Plan and those other parts of the Development Plan prepared by Shropshire Council.
- 3.6 A key issue to be considered through the Neighbourhood Plan’s preparation is the implications of the ongoing ‘Partial Review’ into the Shropshire Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans must be broadly consistent with other parts of the adopted Development Plan. Work on the ‘Partial Review’, which is being undertaken by Shropshire Council and is currently the subject of its first ‘Issues and Options’ consultation stage until 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017, is likely to be ongoing for the next two years. Once adopted, the ‘Partial Review’ will roll forward the plan period to 2036 and will replace the existing Core Strategy and SAMDev Plans. If the proposed Pontesbury Neighbourhood Plan area is approved as recommended, it is clear that early discussions between the two Councils will be required in order to define the



role and scope of their respective plans, and in particular, to determine the respective timeframes for the two Plans to ensure consistency is maintained.

- 3.7 A Neighbourhood Plan will, after passing through the relevant stages of consultation, submission, examination and the referendum, go on to become part of the statutory development plan for the area. By definition, the Neighbourhood Plan should be a product of the community and as such will contain policies that, whilst in general conformity with other elements of the Development Plan, should have its own distinct character. The degree of scrutiny to be applied to a Neighbourhood Plan through its examination process is dependent upon the scope of the plan but is unlikely to be to the same degree as the other elements of the Development Plan. However, it will continue to be important for appropriate evidence to be produced to inform the Plan. Statute provides that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the provisions of relevant Development Plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The weight given to the Plan thus remains to be balanced with other considerations when taken into the round by decision makers.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The Localism Act and Regulations provide that the following costs would fall to Shropshire Council: delivering a supporting role particularly in the latter stages of the Plan's development; appointing an Examiner for the Plan; and conducting an Examination and holding a Referendum. Current provisions allow an application for these additional costs to be met, and a reimbursement of costs will therefore be sought from the Government. As previously acknowledged in reports on the Much Wenlock and Shifnal Neighbourhood Plans, it is considered likely the robustness of the Neighbourhood Plan Policies will be tested over time by independent Planning Inspectors on Planning appeals made under Section 78 of the Planning Act. Members are advised that the liability for future appeal costs rests with Shropshire Council as Local Planning Authority and as such the usability of such plans and their impact on local decision making will need to be carefully monitored.

#### **5. Background**

- 5.1 Shropshire Council's localised planning approach supports Neighbourhood Plans being brought forward under the Localism Act and the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, indeed the Council is legally obliged to do so. However, we are also committed to promoting and supporting other forms of locality planning for neighbourhoods as potentially more cost effective and sustainable alternatives to a full Neighbourhood Plan through Community-led planning, parish planning, design guides etc. It is acknowledged these other forms of locality planning do not form part of the statutory development plan, but instead can be considered as material considerations in planning decisions.
- 5.2 Interestingly, the three success criteria cited by the government in their Impact Assessment for neighbourhood planning are - increasing housing supply, reducing opposition to economic growth, and increasing community engagement and involvement in planning and development. All of which are key components of Shropshire's localised approach to planning, not only in terms of locally defined policy guidance (such as design guidance) but also community endorsed prioritisation of infrastructure and other beneficial investment to help make more sustainable places. This is very much in conformity with the emphasis placed upon neighbourhood plans and how they should shape and direct sustainable development in their area, as outlined in paragraphs 184 and 185 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 5.3 The development of a Neighbourhood Plan must be facilitated by the Parish Council and will in most cases proceed with support and assistance from volunteers across the community. It is noted Pontesbury Parish Council have asked for volunteers to help the Plan's preparation. The Parish Council believes that this is a real opportunity for the community to have greater ownership on future planning policy for the parish, with particular focus on detailed policy in order to supplement the strategic policies of the adopted Core Strategy/SAMDev as well as the future 'Partial Review' of the Local Plan.
- 5.4 In due course and as part of the Neighbourhood Plan preparation process, Shropshire Council will consider whether the Neighbourhood Plan for Pontesbury conforms to its adopted strategic policies and, in agreement with the Parish Council, will put it forward for independent assessment. It will be the responsibility of Shropshire Council to arrange a local referendum to assess local support for the plan proposals and subject to a successful referendum outcome, a "yes" vote, Shropshire Council will have a legal duty to 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan for Pontesbury and bring it into force. This final decision to make the plan will be a matter for Full Council.

### **Consideration of Designation**

- 5.5 By the close of both the initial consultation and re-consultation only one response had been received. This was from Gladman Developments Ltd and did not seek to query the proposed designated area, but instead gave a generic summary of the role of neighbourhood plans and the regulatory requirements governing their preparation. Whilst clearly of help and interest, Gladman's response does not require further consideration in defining the Neighbourhood Planning area.
- 5.6 Pontesbury Parish Council seeks to ensure the future sustainable development of the settlement by providing detailed planning policies for their area. Whilst the exact scope and remit of the Plan is to be discussed, at this stage it is clear there is an understanding from the Parish Council as to the general role of the Neighbourhood Plan and the type of policies it is likely to introduce. Further discussions will help to clarify this. It is considered the proposed Designated Area, which covers the Parish of Pontesbury only, is a sensible and appropriate one, and will allow flexibility as the Parish Council further defines the scope of the Plan. Shropshire Council can also confirm there are no other designated areas in this area.

<b>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information):</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b> Councillor Mal Price, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and Environment
<b>Local Member:</b> Councillors Tudor Bebb (Rea Valley) and Roger Evans (Longden)
<b>Appendices:</b> Appendix A: Area Application Appendix B: Area Application map

## **Neighbourhood Plan for Pontesbury Parish**

### **Consultation on designation of proposed Neighbourhood Plan area**

Pontesbury Parish Council has agreed that a formal Neighbourhood Plan should be prepared for Pontesbury Parish. The first step is to designate the neighbourhood area. A neighbourhood area essentially defines the total area to be covered by the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan.

**The Parish Council proposes to designate the whole of Pontesbury Parish as the neighbourhood plan area.**

Before making a formal application to Shropshire Council we are seeking local residents' views on this proposal. If you have any comments, please contact the Parish Clerk by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

After this deadline an application for the neighbourhood area will be submitted to Shropshire Council and they will need to approve this before the plan can move to the next stage. Shropshire Council will publicise any application online and across the neighbourhood area by site notices in prominent places for a period of 4 weeks if the whole parish administrative boundary is included and 6 weeks in all other cases.

#### **What happens next?**

The views and involvement of the community are important to the success of preparing any Neighbourhood Plan, so following approval of the designated area by Shropshire Council, Pontesbury Parish Council will be organising community events to provide more information and seek your views on what should be in the plan. If you would like us to contact you with updates please email the Parish Clerk.

#### **Volunteers needed**

We will need volunteers to help produce the plan so if you have the skills or willingness to be involved in this exciting project, we need your help and we are keen to hear from you.

#### **Background on Neighbourhood Plans**

Following the 2010 General Election one of the new Government's main priorities was localism. A key part of this is the aim to return planning powers to local people. To try and achieve this, the Government has created a new neighbourhood planning tier that will be led by the community, rather than the relevant district, county or unitary council.

Neighbourhood planning was formally introduced by the Localism Act 2011, which, along with associated regulations, lays out all the processes for preparing and putting in place neighbourhood planning tools.

Parish and town councils and neighbourhood forums can write a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for their area. The NDP can set out policies and plans for that area, like a Development Plan Document but on a very local scale. Subject to conforming to national policies, as well as local plan policies for the area, and gaining support through a referendum of the local area, this plan will be adopted as a formal part of the development plan. This

means that planning decisions have to be made in accordance with the neighbourhood plan (and other parts of the development plan) unless *material considerations* indicate otherwise.

The neighbourhood plan cannot cover strategic issues, for example mining or major development, but can guide local issues. For example the plan should be able to say which important green spaces will be protected, or could identify sites that are appropriate for new local shops or a small affordable housing development. NDPs could also guide design standards in their area, to make sure that new development is of a high quality.

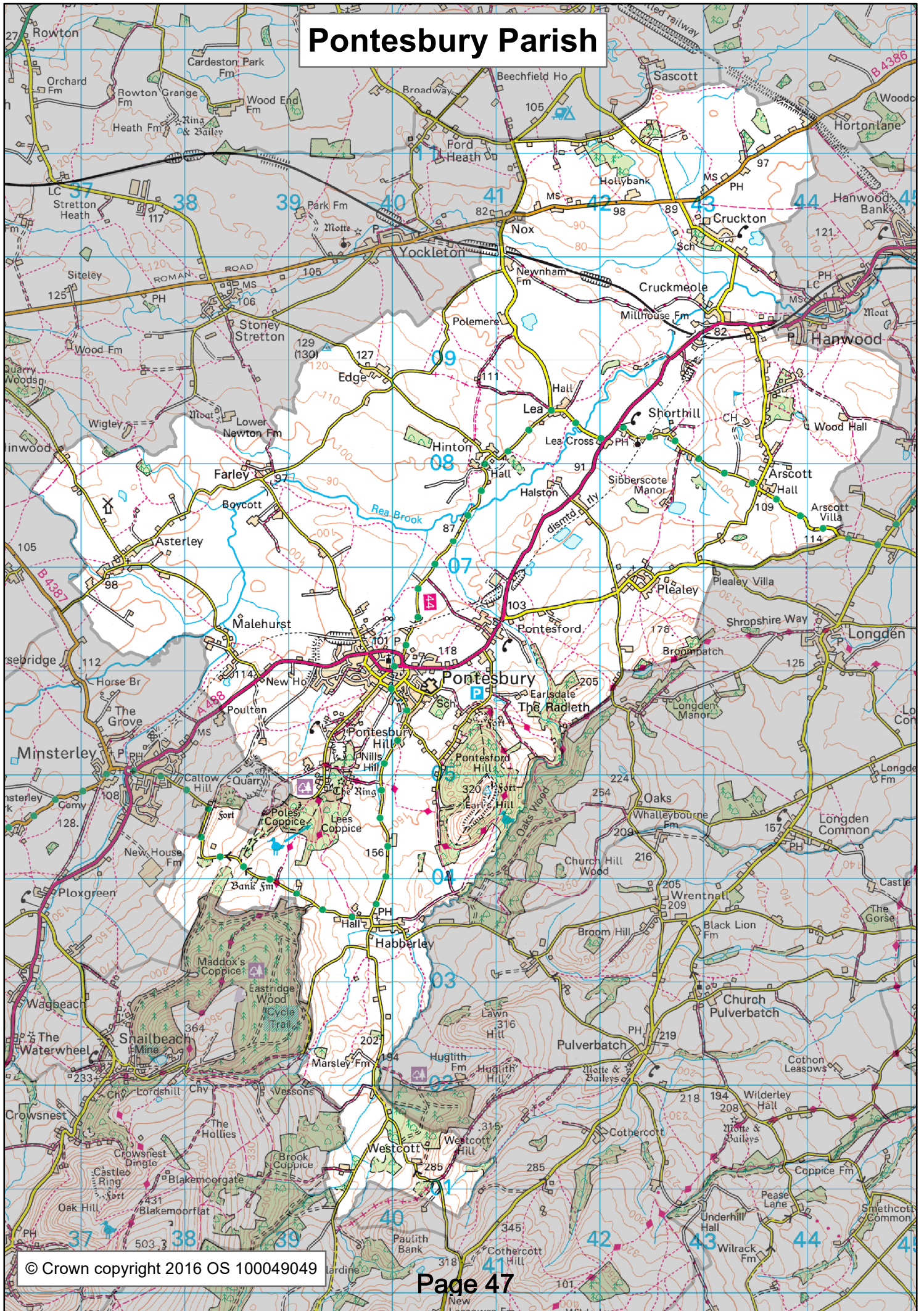
NDPs have to conform with 'the strategic priorities' of the relevant local plan, but in planning decisions, if there is a conflict between a neighbourhood policy and a non-strategic local policy, the neighbourhood policy will take precedence. 'Strategic priorities' are defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as:

- the homes and jobs needed in the area
- the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development
- the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat)
- the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities
- climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.

Additional information about Neighbourhood Plans is available online including the following website - <http://locality.org.uk/resources/neighbourhood-planning-roadmap-guide/>

Kate Sanderson – Clerk to Pontesbury Parish Council  
[pontesburypc@gmail.com](mailto:pontesburypc@gmail.com) or 01691 830637

# Pontesbury Parish



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Committee and date

Cabinet

1st March 2017

Item

Public

## **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER: MONKMOOR YOUTH CENTRE**

Responsible Officer: Steve Law, Strategic Asset Manager

Email: [steve.law@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:steve.law@shropshire.gov.uk)

Tel: 01743 258676

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### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 As part of the Council's core objective to strengthen our local towns and villages, the Strategic Asset Management team are working with town and parish councils, as well as the voluntary sector, to enable the transfer of suitable land and buildings to community groups and organisations. The Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy provides a framework and guidance to assess which transfers are viable and implement their transfer.
- 1.2 The policy contributes to the Council's objectives as set out in the Asset Management Strategy Section 5: Commission and work in partnership to empower communities. Release where appropriate through freehold transfer or leasehold transfer, properties to communities reducing revenue or maintenance burdens for non-core assets.
- 1.3 A report summarising the assessment of an application made by Shropshire Youth Association in respect of Monkmoor Youth Centre, SY2 5RR has been considered by the Director of Place and Enterprise and the recommendation is to progress to transfer by way of a 30-year lease which, in accordance with the CAT policy, is subject to Cabinet approval.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That, in principle, Shropshire Youth Association ("the Organisation") are granted a 30-year lease of Monkmoor Youth Centre with delegated authority to the Strategic Asset Manager to agree final terms of the lease and to complete the transaction.

## **REPORT**

### **1. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal**

- 1.1. Commissioning out youth services has meant that the building is now surplus to Shropshire Council's requirements. A transfer to Shropshire Youth Association gives the potential for youth activities to remain at the centre, along with other uses that will benefit other sectors of the community. Those youth services currently commissioned out will remain at the centre but this may change in the future subject to the delivery intentions of the appointed party.
- 1.2. If the Organisation fails to maintain the building the risk is that the building will return to the Council with some or no building improvements and the cost of operation would revert back to the Council.

### **2. Equalities and Diversity Issues**

- 4.1 The continuation of the use of the building and its availability for local groups will mean its accessibility continues into the future for the community.

### **1. Financial Implications**

- 2.1. The building is currently maintained by Shropshire Council as part of its corporate estate. The majority of the annual running costs of the building are incurred by the corporate landlord. The savings identified in reducing the revenue burden of operating the centre equate to approximately £14,000 per annum. There are £7,075 of condition works identified at the building that the Council will no longer be liable for.
- 2.2. A nominal rent of £1 from Shropshire Youth Association is proposed as the Organisation will not be operating the facility on a commercial basis. This will enable the building to be kept in good repair and lettings to be kept at an affordable rate for the community.

### **6 Additional Information**

- 6.1 Monkmoor Youth Club on Upton Lane has been the home of youth activities in the locality for several years. The facility has hosted weekly junior and senior youth clubs and a weekly session for young people with learning difficulties. The venue has also accommodated training sessions, community meeting and events for a range of local organisations.
- 6.2 SYA have occupied the building via a tenancy at will dated 28.09.15. Under this arrangement SYA occupy the office rooms edged red shown on the attached plan, and, along with other users of the building, occupy the toilet/kitchen facilities and circulation areas edged blue. They contribute to the facility's running costs.



- 6.3 The proposed transfer complies with State Aid. The applicant will provide services for the local community and as such are not the subject of competition across Europe.
- 6.4 The proposed grant of the lease for a £1 is a sum that is less than market value for a lease of the building. The disposal by way of the grant of the lease at a nominal rent is covered by Circular 6/03 under the Local Government Act 1972 General Disposal Consent 2003. This consent allows for the disposal of a property at less than best consideration where the disposal contributes to the promotion or improvement of one or more of economic, social and environmental wellbeing in the Council's area and where the difference in value is less than £2 million.
- 6.5 The lease will be on a full repairing and insuring basis, with a tenant only 12-month break clause.
- 6.6 In summary:
- 6.6.1 The Organisation delivers social benefits through providing infrastructure support to voluntary youth clubs across Shropshire, as well as direct delivery of youth activities. It aims to help young people develop their physical, mental and spiritual capacities. The CAT will enable the organisation to establish a base to administer services, including the training of youth workers.
- 6.6.2 The Organisation has a proven track record of youth activities and infrastructure provision. The Chief Executive Officer is a professionally qualified youth worker with a management qualification and 30 years' experience in delivering and managing youth work.
- 6.6.3 The governing body consists of 7 trustees, 3 board members and approximately 100 member groups. The Organisation has a dedicated finance and administration officer. Accounts are independently audited. Key policies (including insurance) and procedures are in place and up to date.
- 6.6.4 The Organisation's activities contribute to meeting the following Council's youth activity priorities:
- ensure all children and young people are safe and well looked after in a supportive environment
  - narrow the achievement gap in education & work
  - ensure the emotional wellbeing of children and young people by focusing on prevention and early intervention
  - keep more children healthy and reduce health inequalities

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

Shropshire Council Community Asset Transfer Policy

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

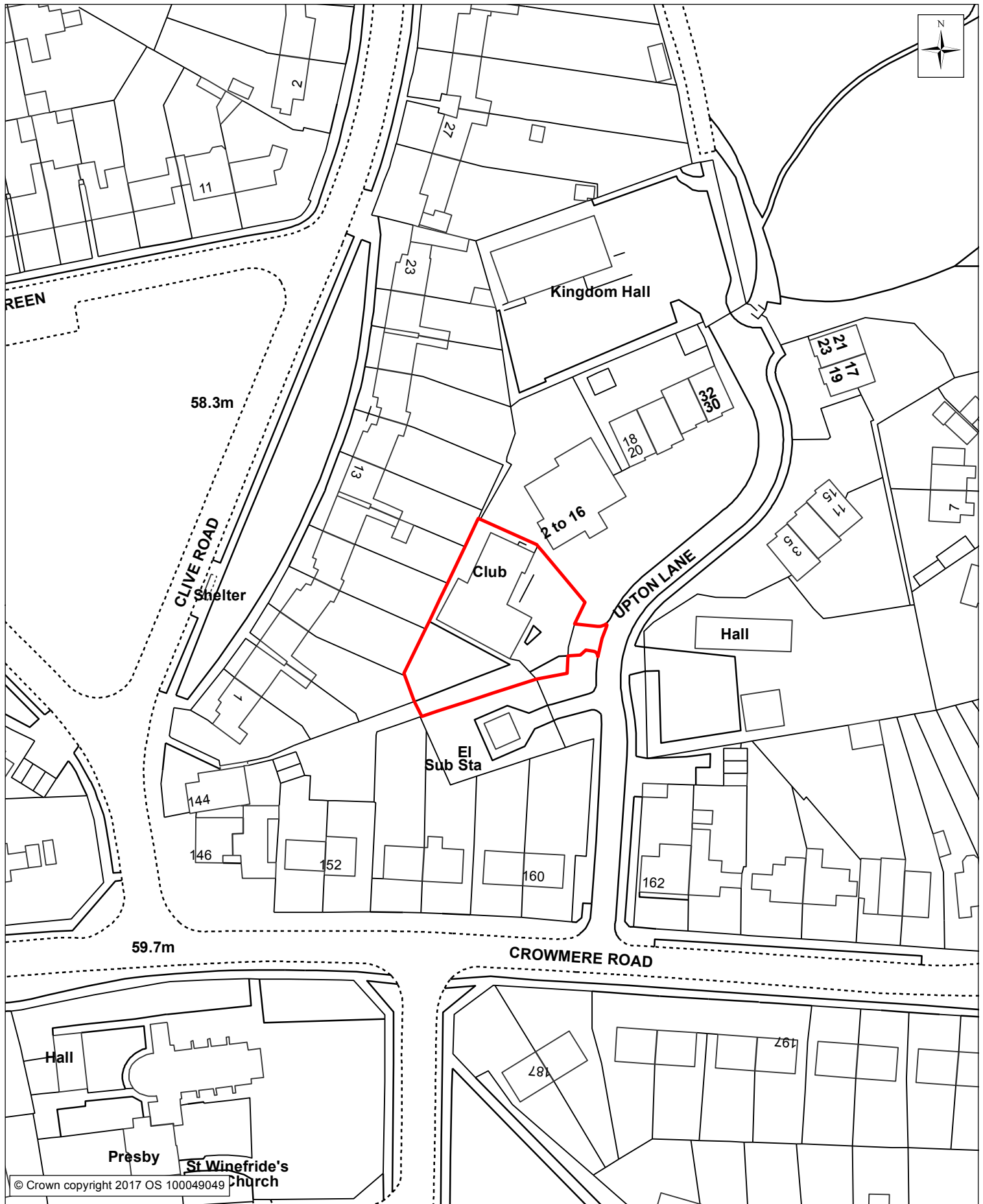
Councillor Michael Wood - Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support

**Local Members**

Councillor Pamela Moseley

**Appendices**

A. Plan of site



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**Business Enterprise and Commercial Services**

Shirehall, Abbey Foregate  
SHREWSBURY  
SY2 6ND

Title: The New Lodge Youth Centre, Upton Lane, Shrewsbury SY2 5RR

Drawing No:	001-267-V01
Scale:	1:1,000
Date:	February 2017
Drawn by:	Property Strategy and Review

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