

Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND
Date: Wednesday, 11 December 2019

Committee: Council

Date: Thursday, 19 December 2019

Time: 10.00 am

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

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

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

Ann Hartley (Chairman)	Rob Gittins	Peggy Mullock
Peter Nutting (Leader)	Nat Green	Kevin Pardy
Vince Hunt (Speaker)	Kate Halliday	William Parr
Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader)	Simon Harris	Vivienne Parry
Peter Adams	Nigel Hartin	Tony Parsons
Roy Aldcroft	Nick Hignett	Malcolm Pate
Clare Aspinall	Ruth Houghton	Alexander Phillips
Nicholas Bardsley	Richard Huffer	Lezley Picton
Joyce Barrow	Tracey Huffer	Ed Potter
Thomas Biggins	Roger Hughes	John Price
Ed Bird	Ioan Jones	Keith Roberts
Andy Boddington	Simon Jones	Madge Shineton
Gwendoline Burgess	Mark Jones	Robert Tindall
Gwilym Butler	Heather Kidd	Dave Tremellen
Karen Calder	Christian Lea	Kevin Turley
Dean Carroll	Matt Lee	David Turner
Lee Chapman	Elliott Lynch	David Vasmer
Ted Clarke	Robert Macey	Claire Wild
Gerald Dakin	Jane MacKenzie	Brian Williams
Steve Davenport	Chris Mellings	Leslie Winwood
Julian Dean	Paul Milner	Michael Wood
Pauline Dee	David Minnery	Tina Woodward
David Evans	Dan Morris	Paul Wynn
Roger Evans	Pamela Moseley	
Hannah Fraser	Alan Mosley	
	Cecilia Motley	

Your Committee Officer is:

Julie Fildes Committee Officer

Tel: 01743 257723

Email: julie.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk

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 (Pages 1 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2019.

4 Announcements

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

5 Public Questions

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

A petition, bearing over 1,000 signatures, has been received from Mr Frank Oldaker on behalf of Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth, requesting a debate under the Council's Petition Scheme. Mr Oldaker will be in attendance to present the petition.

The wording of the petition reads: We the undersigned petition the Council to agree a target date of 2030 for achieving 'net carbon zero' emissions from the council's activities, and to design an action plan in accordance with this target. We welcome the council's declaration of a climate emergency and commitment to work towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions for the council's activities and for the county. But time is short.

The petitioner will be allowed 5 minutes to outline their case, after which there may be a debate of up to 15 minutes.

6 Climate Change Strategy Framework (Pages 15 - 36)

Report of the Director of Place is attached.

Contact: Mark Barrow Tel 01743 258671

7 Setting the Council Tax Taxbase for 2020/21 (Pages 37 - 64)

Report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance is attached.

Contact: James Walton Tel 01743 258915

8 County Wide Street Lighting LED Lantern Replacement Project. (Carbon Reduction Programme) (Pages 65 - 86)

Report of the Director of Place is attached.

Contact: Mark Barrow Tel 01743 258671

9 Local Government Act 1972, Section 101 Proposed definitive Map Modification Order to Upgrade Footpath 18, 18Y & 18Z to Bridleway Status and the Addition of Three Bridleways in the Parish of Wroxeter and Uppington. Acceptance of the Delegation to Telford and Wrekin Council to Investigate and make the Order on Our Behalf (Pages 87 - 92)

Report of the Director of Place is attached.

Contact: Mark Barrow Tel 01743 258671

10 Proposed Removal of Licensing Act Hearing Procedure from the Council's Constitution (Pages 93 - 96)

Director of Public Health's report is attached.

Contact: Rachel Robinson Tel 01743 252003

11 Portfolio Holder Report for Housing and Strategic Planning

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning is **to follow**.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Robert Macey

12 Report of the Portfolio Holder Finance and Corporate Support (Pages 97 - 106)

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support is attached.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor David Minnery

13 Annual Report 2018/19 - Place Overview Committee (Pages 107 - 110)

The annual report of the Chair of the Place Overview Committee is attached.

Place Overview Committee Chair: Councillor Joyce Barrow

14 Annual Report 2018/2019 - Performance Management Scrutiny Committee (Pages 111 - 114)

The annual report of the Chair of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee is attached.

Performance Management Scrutiny Committee Chair: Councillor Claire Wild

15 Appointments to Committees

To confirm the following changes of membership:

Northern Planning Committee

Cllr Roger Evans to replace Cllr Hannah Fraser as a substitute member of the Northern Planning Committee.

16 Motions

The following motions have been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 16:

1 The following motion has been received from Councillor Dan Morris and supported by the Conservative Group:

This Council supports the principle of a 20 mph speed limit outside all schools in the county and asks officers to bring a report to Council within 6 months to consider how this could be implemented.

2. The following motion has been received from Councillor Karen Calder and is supported by the Conservative Group

The RBL is encouraging councils across the country to adopt the practice of offering all ex service men and women the opportunity of an interview for jobs becoming available within the authority, of course they have to have meet the basic criteria. Kirklees is the latest council to adopt this and was agreed cross party. The motion would be something in line with below.

“This Council recognises the invaluable contribution made to our community and country by members of the Armed services, the life and professional skills they gain through military service and our debt to them in perpetuity.

This Council also recognises that their service whilst equipping them with many practical skills does not always equip them with administrative and literary skills needed to satisfy some of today’s initial employment application questionnaires and procedures.

This Council therefore commits to offering all former service personnel a guaranteed interview for any vacancy applied for where they meet the essential criteria and will encourage our arm’s length partner organisations and the wider Shropshire business community to also offer interviews.”

3 The following motion has been received from Councillor Andy Boddington and supported by Councillors Julian Dean, Heather Kidd, Nigel Hartin and Chris Mellings

In July, the Committee on Climate Change recommended that the UK plants 30,000 hectares of trees a year. The committee warned that if carbon reduction measures are not delivered rapidly, we will need to plant 50,000 hectares a year. In November, the UN Environment Programme called for a faster reduction in greenhouse gases. There is a consensus that planting trees can help us achieve the UK's goal of net zero by 2050 at the latest.

Woodlands have many benefits. They create a carbon reservoir that helps slow climate change. They boost wildlife and help promote public health. Woodlands are a major economic resource, providing material for construction and power. Woodlands support jobs.

Well managed broadleaf woodlands promote biodiversity. They boost tourism. They are a public good.

No one doubts that doubling woodland cover will be a major challenge. Introducing a public money for public goods system to support farmers and landowners requires national legislation. Local authorities have limited resources and expertise is thinly spread. But there is potential for groups of local authorities to work together, supported by wildlife charities and experts, to develop regional policies for increasing woodland cover. Councils either side of Offa's Dyke through the Marches would be ideal partners.

This council requests its leader and the portfolio holder for climate change to work with other local authorities to develop plans to double woodland cover in the Marches by 2050.

4 The following motion has been received from Councillor Chris Mellings and supported by Councillors Ruth Houghton, Nigel Hartin, David Vasmer, Andy Boddington, Heather Kidd and Roger Evans.

"Fireworks are used by people throughout the year to mark different events. While they bring much enjoyment to some people, they can cause significant problems and fear for other people and animals. They can be a source of fear and distress for many animals (including pets, farm livestock and wildlife). Animals affected not only suffer psychological distress but can also cause themselves injuries – sometimes very serious ones – as they attempt to run away or hide from the noise. Many residents have raised concern about the impact of fireworks on animals in particular.

In response to the concerns, Council therefore resolves:

To encourage all public firework displays within Shropshire being appropriately advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people

To actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people (including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks)

To encourage events to consider the use of silent displays with music for the youngest children and to protect animals

To compile and display on its website and via social media, a list of public firework displays with appropriate information to enable residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people

To make representations to the Government via the relevant Portfolio Holder urging it to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays

To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock "quieter" fireworks for public display"

5 The following motion has been received from Councillor Roger Evans and supported by the Liberal Democrat Group:

Lib Dem motion on 20mph 17 December 2019

Many councils have or are in the process of implementing wide area 20mph speed limits on residential and urban roads without traffic calming.

Many bodies with a remit for public health support a reduction in speed limits to 20mph on residential streets. Wide area 20mph limits rarely need traffic calming measures. They are an affordable way to improve health equality by creating child, disability, elderly and dementia friendly streetscapes that help reduce inactivity, obesity and isolation.

Implementing wide area 20mph limits must be a core part of Shropshire Council's public health strategy.

This council requests the Director of Public Health and Director of Place bring a report to council by May 2020 setting out the parameters and timetable for introducing area wide 20mph limits across Shropshire's towns and major villages.

17 Questions from Members (Pages 115 - 124)

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

18 Exclusion of Press and Public

To resolve 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 items.

19 Exempt Minutes of 19th September 2019 (Pages 125 - 130)

To approve as a correct record the exempt minutes of the Council meeting held on 19th September 2019.

20 Shrewsbury Shopping Centres - Pride Hill Repurposing

Exempt report of the Director of Place **will follow**.

Contact: Mark Barrow Tel: 01743 258919

21 Shopping Centres Holding Structures Review (Pages 131 - 142)

Exempt report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance [Section 151 Officer] attached.

Contact: James Walton Tel: 01743 258915

22 Strategic Property Acquisition - Oswestry Central (Pages 143 - 164)

Exempt report of the Director of Place is attached.

Contact: Mark Barrow Tel 01743 258919

23 Shrewsbury Schools Place Planning

Report of Director of Children's Services is **to follow**.

Contact: Karen Bradshaw Tel: 01743 254201

24 Ludlow Assembly Rooms Budget

Exempt report of Director of Place is **to follow**.

Contact: Mark Barrow Tel: 01743 258671

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Committee and Date

Council

19 December 2019

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019

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

10.00 am

Responsible Officer: Amanda Holyoak

Email: Amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257714

Present

Councillors Peter Nutting (Leader)

Councillors Vince Hunt (Speaker), Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader), Peter Adams, Roy Aldcroft, Nicholas Bardsley, Joyce Barrow, Thomas Biggins, Ed Bird, Andy Boddington, Gwendoline Burgess, Gwilym Butler, Karen Calder, Dean Carroll, Lee Chapman, Ted Clarke, Julian Dean, David Evans, Roger Evans, Hannah Fraser, Rob Gittins, Nat Green, Kate Halliday, Simon Harris, Nigel Hartin, Nick Hignett, Ruth Houghton, Richard Huffer, Ioan Jones, Simon Jones, Mark Jones, Heather Kidd, Christian Lea, Robert Macey, Chris Mellings, Paul Milner, Dan Morris, Pamela Moseley, Alan Mosley, Cecilia Motley, Kevin Pardy, William Parr, Vivienne Parry, Malcolm Pate, Alexander Phillips, Lezley Picton, Ed Potter, John Price, Keith Roberts, Robert Tindall, Dave Tremellen, Kevin Turley, David Turner, David Vasmer, Claire Wild, Brian Williams, Leslie Winwood, Tina Woodward and Paul Wynn

40 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gerald Dakin, Steve Davenport, Pauline Dee, Ann Hartley, Tracey Huffer, Roger Hughes, Matt Lee, Jane Mackenzie, David Minnery, Peggy Mullock, Tony Parsons, Madge Shingleton and Michael Wood.

41 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

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

The Leader of the Council said that he would not take any part in discussion or voting and would leave the room for agenda item 8 – New School Provision in West Shrewsbury – as a member of his family lived close to the site of the proposed new school.

The following Members had a prejudicial interest in Motion 5 in relation to the Private Rental Market and left the room during the discussion and voting on this Motion:

Councillors: T Biggins; D Carroll; E Bird; G Butler; L Chapman; R Gittins; N Green; N Hignett; R Houghton; M Jones; P Milner; D Morris; C Motley; W Parr; A Phillips; L Picton; E Potter; J Price; R Tindall; C Wild;

Councillor A Phillips also left the room during discussion and voting on this Motion.

42 Minutes

It was proposed by the Speaker and seconded by the Leader and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

43 Announcements

Chairman's Engagements

The Speaker referred Members to the list of official engagements carried out by himself and the Chairman since the last meeting of the Council on 25th July 2019, as circulated at the meeting.

44 Public Questions

Petitions

The Speaker advised that a petition, bearing over 1000 signatures has been received from Mr D L Cheese requesting a debate under the Council's Petition Scheme on the closure of the Whitehall Medical Practice, Shrewsbury.

Mr Cheese was given 5 minutes to open the debate and outline his case, which was briefly as follows; the Whitehall Medical Practice which was due to close was very much needed, particularly in the light of all the houses being built locally. The Practice was a popular one and rated as good by the CQC. Patients at Whitehall had been experiencing difficulties securing another practice close by and the nearest practices could not cope with an influx of patients, vulnerable people had needed to queue up outside the nearest GP surgery to try and secure a place. It appeared the future was going in the direction of 'super practices' and the one in Shrewsbury had recently been rated as inadequate.

During the ensuing debate, some members expressed concern that elderly and vulnerable patients may now have to travel further distances to access a doctor. They felt that the Council should take some action about this and work closely with the CCG in decision regarding location of services. Concern was also expressed around the communication around the closure

In making his reply, the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Dean Carroll, replied for the Council said that he had looked into this issue on a number of occasions, and had met with the Chair and a Director of the CCG along with the Director of Public Health. The issue not within the gift of the Council, the CCG was the commissioner and ultimate decision maker. The Council understood that there was capacity on the lists of surrounding practices, none of which had contracted their boundaries as had been suggested. This was not a decision the Council was able to influence and therefore he reported that no further action be taken in response to the petition.

The Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirmed that the Committee had held a special meeting on this 23 August 2019 and had requested an item on future GP provision by the CCG for its 18 November 2019 meeting.

Public Questions

The Speaker advised that four public questions had been received from Miss Lawrence, Mr Kearns, Mr Piggot and Mr Wilson. Mr Kearns, Mr Piggot and Mr Wilson were present at the meeting and received answers to their questions from the respective Portfolio Holders.

It was noted that a copy of all the questions and answers would be included with the formal record of the meeting, would be circulated to those who had posed the questions and made available on the website.

45 Returning Officer's Report - Meole Electoral Division

It was proposed by the Speaker, Councillor V Hunt, and seconded by the Leader, Councillor P Nutting that the report be received and noted.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Returning Officer's report be noted that on 15 August 2019 Gwendoline Laura Burgess was elected as Councillor to represent the Meole Electoral Division.

46 Returning Officer's Report - Bishops Castle Electoral Division

It was proposed by the Speaker, Councillor V Hunt, and seconded by the Leader, Councillor P Nutting that the report be received and noted.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Returning Officer's report be noted that Ruth Margaret Houghton was elected as Councillor to represent the Bishop's Castle Division.

47 New School Provision in West Shrewsbury

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor E Potter, and seconded by Councillor K Roberts that the report of the Director of Children's Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

During discussion Members expressed support for the proposed development. The Portfolio Holder was asked to provide update reports at regular intervals for Members and he agreed to do this as required. He also provided reassurance that construction would be to the highest possible standards.

RESOLVED:

That

- i) Two new schools be constructed on the community land at Bowbrook so as to enable the activation of Clause 7 of the Third Schedule of the S106 Agreement and the respective leases be approved, as set out in this report.
- ii) The construction of the special school be managed using the self-delivery model as set out in this report.
- iii) The procurement and construction of the mainstream school be managed as set out within this report in conjunction with the delivery of the special school.
- iv) The Executive Director of Children's Services be granted delegated authority to deliver the recommendations as set out above in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.
- v) The Executive Director of Place be granted delegated authority to deliver the land and property aspects of the recommendations as set out above in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration.

48 Care Leaver Covenant: Shropshire's Pledge and Sign up

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Councillor E Potter and seconded by the Deputy Portfolio Holder, Education, Councillor N Bardsley, that the report of the Director of Children's Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

The Portfolio Holder explained that the intention was for Shropshire Council to sign up to the Care Leavers Covenant and for each Directorate to consider opportunities that could be offered to care leavers. Businesses and organisations across the county would be encouraged to sign up to the covenant and offers of support would be published on the national My Covenant App.

RESOLVED:

- i) That Shropshire Council sign up to the Care Leaver Covenant and that each Directorate consider opportunities that could be offered to our care leavers as set out in section 5.5 of the report.
- ii) That Shropshire Council calls on other organisations and businesses to sign up to the Care Leaver Covenant.

49 Proposed Removal of the Existing Five Hackney Carriage Zones

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder, Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services, Councillor G Butler and seconded by Councillor K Roberts, that

the report of the Director of Public, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

Members noted that the proposed removal of the zones would create a single area that would permit Shropshire Council licensed hackney carriages to operate across the whole of the administrative area, rather than being restricted to the zone for which they were currently licensed. All vehicles would be required to be wheelchair accessible and the proposed implementation date of 1 April 2021 would provide a transition period to adjust to the proposed arrangements and satisfy the new requirements.

RESOLVED:

That the five existing Hackney Carriage Zones, which are defined by reference to the five district and borough council areas that existed prior to the creation of Shropshire Council, be removed, and that all provisions of the hackney carriage licensing regime be applied across the whole of the administrative area of Shropshire Council with effect from 1 April 2021.

50 Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations 2019

It was proposed by the Speaker, Councillor V Hunt and seconded by the Leader, Councillor P Nutting, that the report of the Returning Officer, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed. A Member highlighted the importance of free and accessible parking close to polling stations.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the changes as set out in the recommendations of the report, which have been agreed with Ward Members be approved, in order for them to be implemented on or by 1 December 2019.
- ii) That delegated authority be granted to the Returning Officer to find a suitable alternative, in conjunction with local members, should any polling station not be available for a particular election.

51 Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel

It was proposed by the Speaker, Councillor V Hunt and seconded by the Leader, Councillor P Nutting, that the report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the following be appointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel of Shropshire Council:

- Mr Stephen Donkersley

- Richard Garnett
- Tim Griffiths

52 Community Governance Reviews

It was proposed by Councillor B Williams and seconded by the Portfolio Holder, Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services, Councillor G Butler, that the report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the request from Ellesmere Town Council to undertake a Community Governance Review of Ellesmere and its surrounding Parishes was felt to be premature and not appropriate at the current time, prior to the implementation of any changes as a consequence of a wider review of Shropshire undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. This view was supported by the Local Members. The Portfolio Holder reported that he was currently in discussion with Shropshire Association of Local Councils about how to deliver a larger scale review.

RESOLVED

That, whilst it is recognised that a Community Governance Review is desirable, in view of the likelihood that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England will shortly undertake a wider review of the Electoral Divisions within Shropshire, the Council considers that the current request is premature and that it is not appropriate to commence a review at this time.

53 Appointments to Committees

It was proposed by the Speaker, Councillor V Hunt and seconded by the Leader, Councillor Peter Nutting that the changes to Committee memberships be considered and agreed;

RESOLVED:

That the following changes to Committee memberships be confirmed:

Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor D Vasmer replaced Councillor V Parry as a substitute member of the committee.

Housing Supervisory Board

Councillors R Aldcroft, J Barrow, N Bardsley, S Harris, N Hignett, P Mullock, R Evans and K Turley be appointed as substitute members of the board.

North Planning Committee

Councillors N Green and D Vasmer be appointed as members and Councillors H Fraser and C Mellings be appointed as substitute members of the committee.

South Planning Committee

Councillors A Boddington and R Huffer be appointed as members and Councillors N Hartin and R Evans be appointed as substitute members of the committee.

54 **Motions**

1. The following motion has been received from Councillor Julian Dean and is supported by Councillors Pauline Dee, Andy Boddington, David Vasmer and Roger Evans:

This Council recognises the damage that is likely to result from a No-Deal Brexit, highlighted by the 'Operation Yellowhammer' reports. For example, we note the threat to people's health due to the risk of shortages in medicines, and we note the threat to the livelihoods of our farming community due to the additional checks and changes to tariffs. We note that NFU President Minette Batters has said that a No-Deal Brexit will be "socially and economically absolutely disastrous."

This Council further recognises the Home Secretary's plans for a no-deal Brexit may well have a negative impact on those members of our community who have chosen to move from elsewhere in the EU to live and work in Shropshire, many of whom are essential workers in the NHS and in our agriculture sector.

This council states, loud and clear, to EU citizens living in Shropshire; 'you continue to be welcome here'.

This council calls on the MPs representing Shropshire to work to prevent a No-Deal Brexit. Allowing such a disaster to happen can be avoided by the UK Parliament so refusing to take the necessary action to prevent this would be to willingly inflict harm on the people of this county.

Finally, this council calls on the leader to write to the Prime Minister to make it clear to him that Shropshire Council is opposed to a No-Deal Brexit which will harm our community.

During debate of the motion, some members expressed concern that a No Deal Brexit would particularly harm Shropshire's rural economy especially in relation to food and fertilizer costs and export tariffs. Others felt that there was a need to end uncertainty as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion be not supported.

2. The following motion has been received from Councillor Peter Adams and is supported by Councillors Dean Carroll, Steve Charmley, Peter Nutting and Brian Williams:

Shropshire Council supports a proposal To extend The M54 Motorway From Junction seven at Wellington To Preston Boats Junction near Shrewsbury

Shropshire is experiencing a prolonged period of sustained growth, and this needs to be enhanced and reinforced with the continued levels of house building in the County. There is a need for increased levels of investment in the County's infrastructure.

With this in mind I would like Council to accept the above proposal. Foreign investors use decisions as to where they put their money and often rely on knowledge of the motorway systems of the Countries being examined, and in this respect, Shropshire is weak.

With the North West Relief Road being given the go ahead, this will open up North Shropshire and parts of Mid Wales for development.

Council is asked:

1. To encourage Local Members of Parliament to lobby Government and Highways England to extend the M54.
2. To allow Officers to signal our intentions to Partners like Midland Connect.
3. To ask Officers to provide a Business Plan.

During discussion of the motion, some members questioned the need for extension of the M54, particularly in the light of the Climate Emergency and the need to find more sustainable transport solutions. Other felt that an extension would support the whole conception of good transport links to and from Shropshire - often a focus of large firms and businesses in making decisions around location of investments. Members also asked about the extent of the work that would be needed on the ground or if this would largely be a matter of changing signage and administrative change. Others felt that priorities should lay with improvements to Shropshire's other arterial roads.

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion be supported.

3. The following motion has been received from Councillor Andy Boddington and is supported by the Liberal Democrat Group:

Shropshire Tree Bank

Shropshire Council declared a Climate Emergency at its May 2019 meeting. This council supports the work in progress by the council and its partners to reduce its carbon emissions, including the creation of a task and finish group to map the route forward to zero carbon. The formation of a working group does not rule out Council establishing initiatives where there is a clear need to so do in the context of the declared climate emergency.

The role that trees can play in mitigating the increase in atmospheric CO2 and promoting biodiversity is well understood. But this council has not set out a specific ambition for increasing tree cover in the county. This motion declares such an ambition and provides an innovative mechanism for helping achieve it. The mechanism, the Shropshire Tree Bank, recognises that sometimes householders, housing providers, landowners and developers cannot replace felled trees on site but would welcome the opportunity for substitute planting.

Specifically, this council resolves:

- 1) To declare its ambition to ensure that at least one additional tree is planted in the unitary area for every resident before 2050 – an estimated 345,000 trees.
- 2) To create a Shropshire Tree Bank. Where a tree is lost without replacement, the council should encourage a voluntary financial contribution towards the Tree Bank, a central pot that will distribute free native saplings each autumn (perhaps in a similar manner to the council's earlier Free Tree Scheme).

Such a scheme should be cost neutral to Shropshire Council and might be administered by either the Council or an independent body. By way of indication, those felling a tree without replacement might be encouraged to pay for two saplings at £5 each. This fee would be more than adequate to cover the cost of the saplings and contribute towards administrative, storage and distribution costs.

The scheme would initially be open to householders, housing providers and landowners. Scope for opening extending the scheme to developers will need to be considered in the context of the government's proposals to mandate biodiversity net gain for most developments in the forthcoming Environment Bill.

In seconding the motion, the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Climate Change said that there was already a commitment to large scale tree planting, and the proposal would take this one step further. Others expressed support for the motion but felt that more detailed work was needed to before an informed decision could be made, and that the proposal should be part of a more comprehensive policy.

RESOLVED

That the notice of Motion be supported.

4. The following motion has been received from Councillor David Vasmer and is supported by the Liberal Democrat Group:

Highways Contract Arrangements

Members will be aware of the deep concerns that exist over the state of Shropshire's highways. I propose that firstly:

This Council Notes:

1. The poor record of Ringway who were responsible for highway projects and schemes, pothole repair, gritting, bridge maintenance, grass cutting, drainage, street lighting, emergency responses, winter maintenance and extreme weather provision.
2. That Kier were appointed to take over on 1st April 2018
3. That when the contract was awarded in October 2017, Steve Davenport, the Cabinet member for Highways and Transport said: "We're confident we have found the best contractor for this work and we look forward to working with them (Kier) to deliver the best possible highways maintenance services for the people of Shropshire.
4. Since April 2018 the service provided by Kier has not delivered the improved services we were promised, and in some cases is now worse than that provided by Ringway. Councillors of all parties have found it very difficult to get essential highway repairs done.

This Council Resolves:

1. To conduct an urgent review of the current arrangements for highways maintenance and whether the standards set out in the contract with Kier are being met.
2. To include within the review, options for the Council to take over functions from Kier and bring services in-house at some point in the future
3. To conclude the review before the next Council meeting so that the Council can debate its content and agree how we can deliver the quality of services our residents deserve.

In addressing the motion, the Leader pointed out the financial pressures that the Council was under as a result of demand in the areas of adult social care and children's services which had led to a reduction in the highways budget. It was only possible to do so much with the money available.

A number of Members drew attention to frustration and concern expressed across the county in relation to highways issues such as pot holes and gully clearing, and asked if the contract was being applied and delivered properly and if not, why not. The contract had been scheduled for discussion at a Scrutiny Committee in September but this had not happened and issues were now urgent.

The Leader felt that the right place to examine this issue in depth was at the Place Scrutiny Committee. The Chair of the Place Overview Committee confirmed that progress, issues and performance of the contract was on the agenda for the meeting scheduled for 7 November 2019. The Deputy Portfolio Holder for transport welcomed consideration of the issue by Scrutiny

RESOLVED:

That the notice of motion be not supported

5. The following motion has been received from Councillor D Vasmer and is supported by the Liberal Democrat Group:

This Council Notes

- i. The growing numbers of people across England reliant upon the private rented sector for their homes, including families on low incomes or receiving benefits, single parents, people living with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people, older people, and people who are from two or more of these categories.
- ii. The use of Section 21 of the Housing Act to evict private rental tenants, via a no-fault eviction, where a landlord needs to provide no reason, and needs to provide only two months' notice, leaving the tenant to cover moving and relocation costs, irrespective of their circumstances.
- iii. The impacts that no fault evictions have on those evicted, who may not have sufficient funds to find new accommodation in the time available, including forcing children to move schools, tearing people away from their friends and communities, and leaving tenants financially compromised and requiring support from the state.
- iv. The impact that the threat of a no-fault eviction has on tenants who cannot plan their lives when they have no confidence where home will be in 12 months' time or are intimidated into not complaining about disrepair or mistreatment.
- v. The impact that no fault evictions have on local authorities like Shropshire, increasing the numbers of people they must support as a consequence of being forced into homelessness following a S21 eviction.

This Council calls for:

- a. Reform of the private rental market to make it fairer for private renters.
- b. Support for private renters to enable them to safely report health and safety issues in rented properties.
- c. Local authorities to be enabled to create and maintain registers of landlords providing private rental properties for lease.
- d. Tenants to be given the first refusal to buy the home they are renting when a landlord decides to sell during their tenancy, and at the market rate according to an independent valuation.
- e. Longer tenancies of three years or more, with an inflation-linked annual rent increase built in giving tenants security and limit rent hikes.

- f. Improved protections against rogue landlords through mandatory licensing and allow access for tenants to the Database of Rogue Landlords and Letting Agents

This Council resolves:

- To encourage renters across Shropshire to take part in the End Unfair Evictions coalition online survey as part of the Government consultation on scrapping section 21. Including sharing support for the End Section 21 campaign on all social media channels
- That the Leader of the Council will write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to stress that any changes to section 21 and section 8 cannot allow no-fault evictions through the back door.
- Call on the member of parliament to publicly state his support for the abolition of section 21.

An amendment was circulated at the meeting by the Conservative Group, proposed by Councillor R Macey and seconded by Councillor S Harris, as follows:

Delete all wording after 'this Council notes' and replace with:

That the Government in April of this year outlined its plans to consult on new legislation to abolish Section 21 evictions – so called 'no fault' evictions, creating a fairer deal for both landlords and tenants.

It further notes that a Government consultation 'A new deal for renting: resetting the balance of rights and responsibilities between landlords and tenants' is open until 12th October 2019.

The possibility exists that some Shropshire residents and landlords will be affected by any future change in legislation, in addition, this Council has stated its desire to see more people with a suitable home. Therefore. Council instructs the Chief Executive and Officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Housing and Strategic Planning, to consider any formal response, which is required to the Government's consultation.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Leader spoke to the amended motion and referred to the need to express the view of the council to central government through the consultation mechanism. The Proposer and Secunder asked that the response made to central government have member involvement on a cross party basis.

On being put to the vote the amendment was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the notice of motion with the amendment be supported.

55 Questions from Members

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

- i) Received from Councillor A Boddington and answered by Councillor L Picton, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Waste and Communications, in relation to green waste collections 2018/19.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor A Boddington asked what support Shropshire Council gave to local businesses to recycle food waste. The Portfolio Holder reported that a food waste collection operated across most of the county and that she would provide a complete written response to Councillor Boddington.

- ii) Received from Councillor R Evans and answered by Councillor S Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Car Parking, in relation to flooded roads and blocked gulleys.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor R Evans asked for a fuller answer to be provided by the Portfolio Holder as he did not consider his question to have been answered.

56 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED:

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

57 Exempt Minutes of 25th July 2019

RESOLVED:

That the confidential Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25th July 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

58 Local Housing Company - Funding and Land Transfers

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning, Councillor R Macey and seconded by Councillor S Jones, that the exempt report of the of the Director of Place, a copy of which is attached to the exempt signed minutes, be received and approved.

RESOLVED:

That the three exempt recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

59 Strategic Property Acquisition - Oswestry East

It was proposed by the Deputy Leader, Councillor S Charmley and seconded by Councillor P Milner, that the exempt report of the of the Director of Place, a copy of which is attached to the exempt signed minutes, be received and approved.

RESOLVED:

That the two exempt recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

60 Rural Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness Investment Programme Phase 1 (Bishop's Castle Business Park)

It was proposed by the Deputy Leader, Councillor S Charmley and seconded by Councillor R Tindall, that the exempt report of the of the Director of Place, a copy of which is attached to the exempt signed minutes, be received and approved.

RESOLVED:

That the five exempt recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

61 Warm Homes Fund Award Report

It was proposed by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning and seconded by the Portfolio Holder Adult Social Services and Climate Change Councillor D Carroll, that the exempt report of the of the Director of Place, a copy of which is attached to the exempt signed minutes, be received and approved.

RESOLVED:

That the three exempt recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

0



Committee and Date

Council 19th December 2019

Item

Public

CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Responsible Officer Mark Barrow, Executive Director Place
e-mail: mark.barrow@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 258919

1. Summary

- 1.1. The mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation measures to build resilience are now essential to prevent the worst outcomes of the climate emergency. Following Shropshire Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in May, Council officers and members have been busy considering a range of policies and practical initiatives to mitigate Shropshire Council's carbon footprint and improve the adaptation and resilience of its services in the face of extreme climate events.
- 1.2. This report recommends that Council approve a Climate Change Strategy Framework document which identifies the scale of the challenge, key objectives and principles and a route map for our response. The initial focus will be on the development of a Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan containing initiatives to mitigate the Council's own carbon footprint and adapt its services to the challenge of the climate crisis. This will then allow the Council to 'lead by example', using its direct and indirect influence to foster positive changes by other public and private sector organisations, communities and individual residents in Shropshire.
- 1.3. In order to track the Council's carbon management performance, Council is also recommended to approve the preparation of an annual 'budget' for its carbon performance in parallel with established systems for annual reporting on its financial budget. To inform the preparation of the Strategy, and to act on its objectives, the Council have pulled together a Task Force of key officers who are leading various streams of activity across the full range of Council services under the leadership of a senior manager.

2. Recommendations

- A. That Council approves the Climate Change Strategy Framework document (Appendix 1);
- B. That Council approves the preparation of an annual Climate Impact Budget which will identify the climate impacts of Council services and major projects and will report on annual performance trends in parallel with the Council's financial budget.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1. The climate crisis is a serious threat to civilised society and the lives of millions of people both globally and locally. The mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation measures to build resilience is now urgent and essential to prevent the worst outcomes of the climate crisis. There is irrefutable evidence to demonstrate that human activity has already caused approximately 1.0°C of global heating above pre-industrial levels. However, global temperatures are likely to rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels between 2030 and 2052 if the current rate of change continues. A rise of 2°C will have a significant impact on public health, food security, water supply, livelihoods and economic growth (globally and locally). The 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C', published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in October 2018 describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared with a 1.5°C rise, and confirms that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society and the private sector.
- 3.2. We will continue to experience significant rises in sea-levels and more pronounced and frequent episodes of extreme weather effects. Within 50 years there is a global threat to food supply chains and economic systems. The much greater frequency of extreme weather events will significantly increase insurance risks and may make many property assets un-insurable. UK insurers alone hold over £1.8 trillion in invested assets and recent studies identify a high risk that the next global downturn could be triggered by insurance claims. In addition to financial impacts, continued access to adequate energy, water, food and housing are all essential human necessities which affect the health, wellbeing and future resilience of our communities.
- 3.3. The climate crisis therefore represents a significant strategic risk to Shropshire and Council services. This risk is most likely to manifest itself in terms of financial impacts (e.g. operating costs, impacts on the Shropshire economy) and impacts on the health and well-being of staff and residents as service users. In declaring a Climate Emergency on 16 May, Council also resolved that greenhouse gas emission appraisals would be attached to all policy reports and a template and guidelines are being developed to ensure that, once implemented, future policy reports will provide a short but consistent commentary on the climate impacts of the decision proposed. In addition to this, good practice suggests that Council should commit to the preparation of an annual Carbon Impact Budget which will identify the greenhouse gas impacts of Council services and major projects and will report on annual performance trends in parallel with the Council's financial budget.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. Measures to reduce Shropshire Council's carbon footprint and adapt service delivery to address the impacts of extreme weather events will significantly reduce financial risk and generate very real savings to the public finances as well as delivering on our corporate responsibilities to the environment and our communities.

- 4.2. The independent national Climate Change Committee which advises Government estimates that the annual costs of meeting net-zero emissions are between 1-2% of GDP in 2050. Improving Shropshire Council's carbon performance and resilience will require significant capital investment in energy efficiency and low carbon technologies. However, failing to reduce the Council's carbon footprint and implement climate change adaptation measures represents a significant financial threat to both revenue costs and the value of the Council's capital assets. This means that there is a strong financial incentive for the Council to 'Invest to Save' to mitigate the risk of future costs.
- 4.3. Many measures to reduce dependence on greenhouse gasses also offer opportunities to both generate a financial return and to provide community leadership which highlights the growth potential of new technologies and adaptation measures in the Shropshire context. Such an approach is consistent with the national Clean Growth Strategy (2018) and the Council's adopted Economic Growth Strategy which recognise the opportunity to achieve clean growth which will both increase productivity and help protect our climate and environment.

5 Background

- 5.1 National Government data suggests that Shropshire's current carbon footprint amounted to 1.76 million tonnes CO₂e in 2017. Shropshire Council is directly responsible for its own carbon performance and for adapting its services to respond to the likely impacts of climate change. The best available data suggests that Shropshire Council's carbon footprint has fallen from around 31,000 tonnes CO₂e in 2012 to around 23,000 tonnes CO₂e in 2017. Whilst this represents only around 1.3% of Shropshire's total carbon footprint, more work is needed to establish an accurate picture. However, in addition to managing its own impact, Shropshire Council also has an important role to play in encouraging behavioural changes which will help to reduce emissions both locally and further afield. Therefore, whilst its initial focus must be on its own performance so that we can 'lead by example', Shropshire Council should also use its direct influence to encourage a rapid transition to net zero greenhouse gasses through its procurement and regulatory decisions on planning and economic growth. Finally, the Council should exercise significant community leadership, using its indirect influence to foster positive changes by other public and private sector organisations, communities and individual residents in Shropshire.
- 5.2 Shropshire Council has already implemented a range of measures to reduce its carbon footprint. This has been achieved through rigorous monitoring of its resource use, energy efficiency measures, waste management and renewable energy generation. For example, there are now 41 solar energy arrays installed across 28 sites. The total greenhouse gas emissions avoided since installation of these arrays is nearly 3,000 tonnes CO₂e with a financial saving to the Council of £1.36m. Further measures such as changes to street lighting and the introduction of zero emissions vehicles are proposed to deliver both a reduction in emissions and financial savings.
- 5.3 At its meeting on 16th May 2019, Council considered a motion which recognised that the climate crisis represents a serious threat and that urgent action is needed to prioritise the climate emergency that we face and resolved:

- i. To declare a 'Climate Emergency'.
 - ii. To support the work currently being undertaken by Shropshire Council in this field and reaffirm our support to tackling climate change.
 - iii. To ask the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to encourage Government to be ambitious in its plans for carbon reduction targets, aiming for national carbon neutrality.
 - iv. Attach carbon emission appraisals to all policy reports.
 - v. Create a Climate Action Partnership of stakeholders and the wider community, to partner with the Council to provide advice, support and encouragement to public, business and charitable organisations to adopt similar policies and practices across the county. This is to be taken and considered by the appropriate Task and Finish Group.
 - vi. To review its progress on addressing the climate emergency annually, with a view of setting an ambition target for Shropshire Council to be being carbon neutral.
- 5.4 Since May, the cross-party Task and Finish Group on Climate Change and the Climate Change Officer Working Group have been busy considering a range of existing and potential policies and practical initiatives to reduce Shropshire's carbon footprint and to improve adaptation and resilience in the face of extreme climate events. The Council has committed to producing a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan which will set out how Shropshire Council proposes to mitigate and adapt to the challenge of the climate emergency, including the identification of the scale of the work required to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions for the council's activities. To inform its preparation, and to act on its objectives, the Director of Place has now assembled a Task Force of key officers who are leading various streams of activity in this area of work across the full range of Council services and has appointed Adrian Cooper to lead this work.
- 5.5 The Climate Change Strategy Framework (attached as Appendix 1) establishes an overall goal of making Shropshire Council net greenhouse gas neutral by 2030 and sets out:
- i. The Climate Crisis Risks to Shropshire Council's services;
 - ii. Shropshire Council's baseline greenhouse gas performance including a graphic illustrating the scale of the challenge facing us;
 - iii. A review of the carbon initiatives which are already being planned and implemented, together with the greenhouse gas reductions which they have generated;
 - iv. A set of clear objectives and principles to guide corporate actions on greenhouse gas reduction, mitigation and adaptation measures including a 2030 target date for zero greenhouse gas emissions;
 - v. A description of the process and programme through which the Council will take its response to the Climate Emergency forward.

- 5.6 The Framework identifies a number of key themes where both direct and indirect interventions to reduce Shropshire's carbon footprint and improve its resilience to the climate crisis will have the greatest effect, including:
- i. **Demand management** (Direct impact on SC Buildings and property; Indirect impact through the regulation of other development): 'Hard' measures (physical or technology changes) to reduce the consumption of energy and water and waste production and 'Soft' measures such as staff training and optimising control systems;
 - ii. **Transport and travel:** (Direct impact through SC fleet management and staff policies; Indirect impact through regulatory roles): Support measures which reduce the need or impact of travel such as the planned distribution of future growth and SC staff flexible and agile working policy. Support active travel and invest in infrastructure which enables the rapid take up of electric and ultra-low emission vehicles;
 - iii. **Renewable energy generation and storage:** (Direct impact on SC Buildings and property; Indirect impact through joint ventures with other organisations): Potential for solar arrays, wind turbines, hydro-electric power, battery or heat storage solutions and heat networks on Council land and buildings to help meet corporate and community energy needs;
 - iv. **Sustainable land management:** (Direct impact on SC land holdings; Indirect impact through regulatory roles and working with other landowners): Multiple benefits may be generated including carbon capture and storage, reduced flood and drought risk, wildlife gains, positive impacts on human health and wellbeing and adaptation measures to mitigate risks from extreme climate events;
 - v. **Clean and inclusive growth:** (Direct impact on the development of SC buildings and property; Indirect impact through procurement, regulation and working with others): Our county needs to grow while our emissions shrink and we need to save energy and resources without reducing shared prosperity. Support skills investment and business growth which accelerates Shropshire's transition to a low carbon economy and investment in low carbon infrastructure;
 - vi. **Adaptation and resilience:** (Direct impact on delivery of SC services; Indirect impact through procurement, regulation and working with others): Further changes to the climate are now inevitable, and the frequency of extreme weather is likely to increase. The physical infrastructure and staff of Shropshire Council and other public and private sector organisations will require investment to allow services to adapt and become more resilient in the face these changes.

Next Steps

- 5.1 Subject to Council approval, the Climate Change Task Force will use the Strategy Framework (Appendix 1) to develop and consult on a draft Climate Emergency Strategy. The consultation findings will then be reported to Council, together with a final version of the Strategy. Once adopted, the Strategy will be implemented through a 'live', publicly accessible Action Plan which will:

- Prioritise the investments and interventions which will make the most cost-effective contribution to in reducing Shropshire Council’s carbon footprint and building resilience to the climate crisis;
- Allow Shropshire Council to lead by example and provide community leadership;
- Adopt the principles outlined in the Climate Emergency Strategy

5.8 A draft timetable for the next stages of work is identified below.

Draft Climate Emergency Strategy	Spring 2020
Public Consultation	Spring 2020
Adopted Climate Emergency Strategy	Summer 2020
‘Live’ Climate Change Action Plan	Summer 2020 onwards

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

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Dean Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change

Local Members

All

Appendices

1. Climate Change Strategy Framework Document



SHROPSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

A Route Map to a Zero Carbon Shropshire

Shropshire Climate Change Task Force
19th December 2019

Climate Change Strategy Framework

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	The Impact of Global Heating	2
3	Policy Context	4
4	Shropshire’s Carbon Performance.....	4
5	Climate Emergency Objectives and Principles	7
6	Carbon Management Measures	10
7	Developing and Implementing our Climate Emergency Strategy	13

Climate Change Strategy Framework

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This purpose of this document is to provide a framework for the development of a strategy and action plan to reduce Shropshire Council's carbon footprint and promote adaptation measures and increase the resilience of the Council's services. The Strategy Framework identifies the risks posed by the current climate crisis to Shropshire and to the Council specifically, our current carbon footprint and the initiatives which are already being planned and implemented in response. The document also identifies a set of clear objectives and principles to guide future corporate actions and a description of the process and programme through which the Council will take its response to the Climate Emergency forward.
- 1.2 Measures to reduce Shropshire Council's carbon footprint and adapt service delivery to address the impacts of extreme weather events will significantly reduce financial risk and generate very real savings to the public finances as well as delivering on our corporate responsibilities to the environment and our communities. Placing the initial focus on our corporate performance will also allow the Council to 'lead by example', using its direct and indirect influence to foster positive changes by other public and private sector organisations, communities and individual residents in Shropshire.

2 The Impact of Global Heating

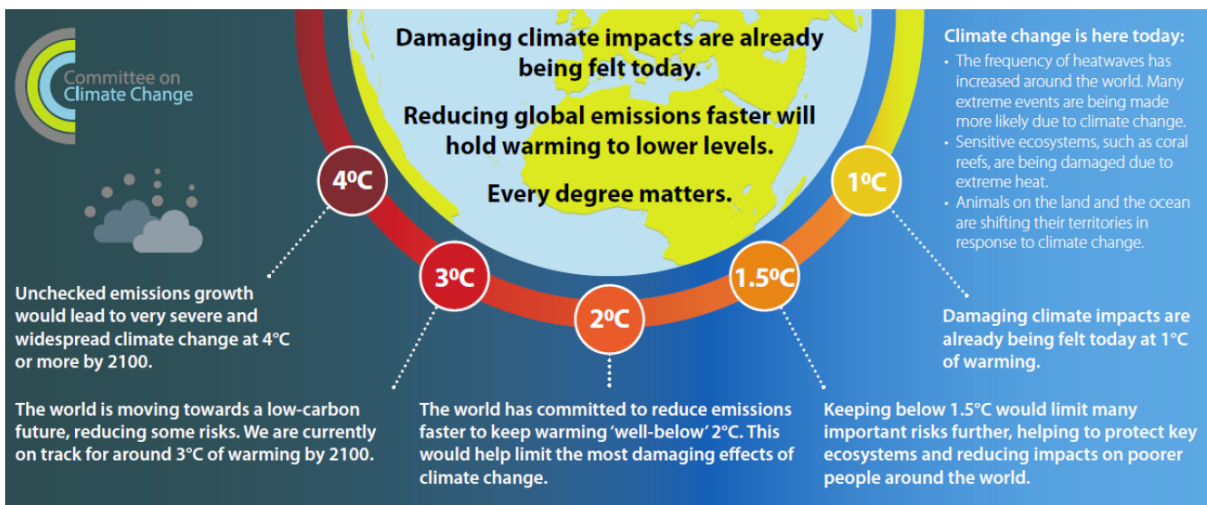


Figure 1 –Climate Change Impact (Committee for Climate Change May 2019)

- 2.1 The actual impacts of the climate crisis are very real now. Although perhaps not formally recognised, financial costs from flash flooding, water damage, surface water drainage and road maintenance costs already represent a significant financial risk to Council budgets and the wider Shropshire community and economy. These direct physical impacts are supplemented by exacerbated unmanaged costs such as travel costs, health and wellbeing and staff productivity.
- 2.2 There is scientific consensus that human activity has already caused approximately 1.0°C of global heating above pre-industrial levels. However, global temperatures are likely to rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels

Climate Change Strategy Framework

between 2030 and 2052 if the current rate of change continues. A rise of 2°C will have a significant impact on public health, food security, water supply, livelihoods and economic growth (globally and locally).

- 2.3 Global heating is expected to generate a significant rise in sea-levels, above the 20cm already experienced, and more pronounced and frequent episodes of extreme weather effects. Within 50 years there is a global threat to food supply chains and economic systems. The much greater frequency of extreme weather events will significantly increase insurance risks and may make many property assets un-insurable. UK insurers alone hold over £1.8 trillion in invested assets and recent studies identify a high risk that the next global downturn could be triggered by insurance claims. In addition to financial impacts, continued access to adequate energy, water, food and housing are all essential human necessities which affect the health, wellbeing and future resilience of our communities.
- 2.4 The climate crisis threatens continued access to adequate energy, water, food and housing, which are all essential human requirements which affect the health, wellbeing and future resilience of all our communities. Children are likely to be particularly vulnerable because a heated and unstable climate exposes them to more infectious diseases and poor air quality that hinders the development of their lungs. Children's diets are also at risk, with under nutrition and malnutrition set to rise as the climate crisis threatens current food production.
- 2.5 Impacts of a hotter and more unstable climate on our natural environment and wildlife represents a significant risk to the maintenance of healthy, diverse and resilient ecosystems. The health of our natural environment underpins the delivery of a wide range of services and long-term natural capital benefits for people and places in Shropshire, such as flood protection, agricultural food production, recreation and water and air quality. Land management practices can have a significant direct impact on carbon performance in Shropshire. For example, significant losses of soil carbon occur with conversion of pasture to arable land, losses of soil from farmland into rivers, or, perhaps most significantly, the draining of wetlands. A potential danger for Shropshire is that drying peat bodies will start to emit more carbon than they currently soak up. As an example, the moss-lands of Fenn's and Whixall National Nature Reserve stores millions of tons of carbon, some of which could potentially be released if temperatures rise to the point that we can't keep these sites permanently wet. When dry these sites are also at risk of burning that further increases the emission of carbon dioxide.
- 2.6 Further changes to the climate are inevitable, and the frequency of extreme weather is likely to increase. This means that the Council's physical assets and staff will require investment to allow its services to adapt and become more resilient in the face these changes. The return on such investment needs to be evaluated in the context of the projected financial risks and costs of the climate emergency.

Climate Change Strategy Framework

3 Policy Context

- 3.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 is the basis for the UK’s approach to tackling and responding to climate change. It requires that emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are reduced from 1990 levels by 45% by 2025, rising to 100% by 2050 and that risks associated with the climate emergency are prepared for. The Act also establishes the framework to deliver on these requirements. Government expects local authorities to lead by example by tackling their own emissions and by encouraging other local organisations to follow suit. The national Clean Growth Strategy (2018) supports the shift towards a Low Carbon Economy across all sectors and is recognised as a key Government driver to secure jobs and mitigate utilities costs. The objectives of these national policies have informed the aspirations of our Economic Growth Strategy (2017-2021) and the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan which recognise that energy infrastructure, both supply and demand, are key to unlocking future clean growth potential.
- 3.2 The Shropshire Council Corporate Plan brings together corporate strategies and information and sets out how we're responding to the challenges which it identifies from Shropshire. The Plan identifies clean growth and energy efficiency, together with sustaining our natural capital, including water supply and quality and raw materials as well as flood management, as key challenges.

4 Shropshire’s Carbon Performance

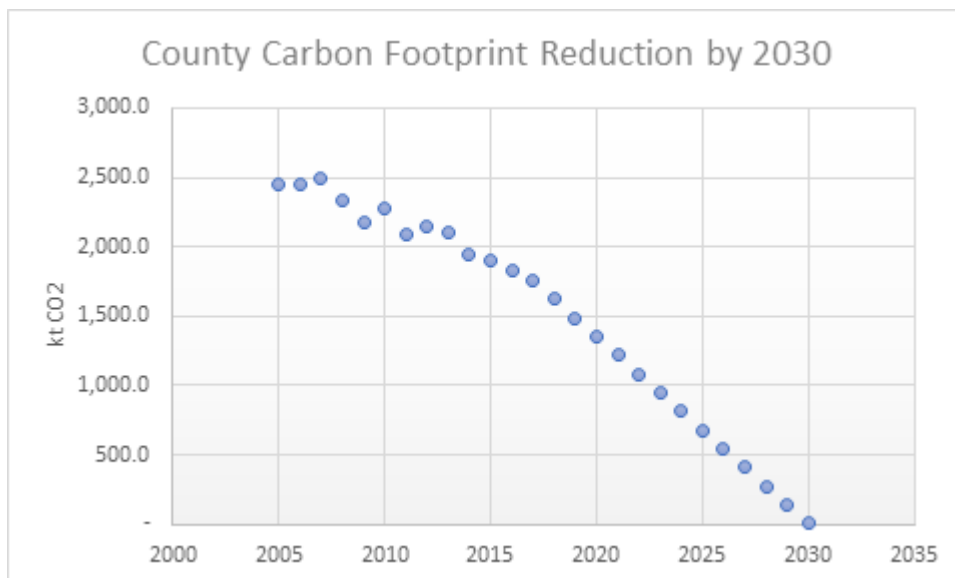


Figure 2 - Shropshire’s Carbon Footprint Projection (thousand tonnes CO2e) (DBEIS, 2015)

- 4.1 National Government data for Shropshire indicates that total greenhouse gas emissions amounted to 1.76 million tonnes CO2e in 2017. The level of emissions has reduced by around 18% between 2012 and 2017. As a county we would need a year on year reduction of 7.7% or 135,000 tonnes per year to reach carbon neutrality by 2030. The average annual emissions per person

Climate Change Strategy Framework

in Shropshire has reduced from 8 tonnes CO₂e (2008) to 6.5 tonnes CO₂e (2015) and 5.5 tonnes (2017), although the actual footprint may be higher in reality due to the limited availability of information about local consumption habits, food, and air travel. Good progress has also been made in commerce and industry and the domestic sector. Recent trends and the scale of the remaining challenge are illustrated in Figure 2 above.

- 4.2 Analysis of data on a range of relevant issues by Friends of the Earth has allowed comparative performance between similar local authorities as part of a league table. Shropshire's performance is currently in the mid-range at 68% and is joint 6th of 33 local authorities in the West Midlands.

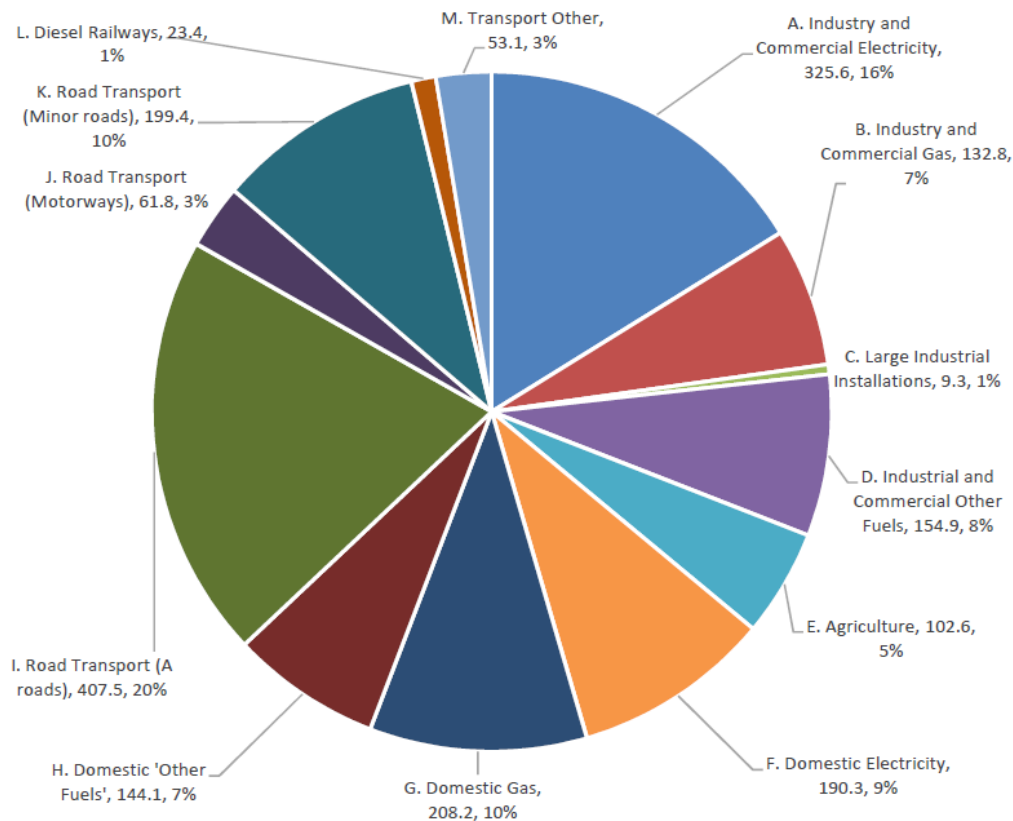


Figure 3 – Sources of Shropshire's Carbon Footprint (thousand tonnes CO₂e) (DBEIS, 2015)

Shropshire Council's Carbon Performance

- 4.3 The best available data suggests that Shropshire Council's own carbon footprint has fallen from around 31,000 tonnes in 2012 to around 23,000 tonnes in 2017. Whilst this represents only around 1.3% of Shropshire's total carbon footprint, more work is needed to establish an accurate picture. A breakdown of the main sources of carbon and forecasts for future performance are shown in Table 1 and Figure 4 below:

Climate Change Strategy Framework

Year	Total (tCO2e)	Building Assets	Street Lighting	Fleet Transport	Staff Business Travel	Housing
2008 Baseline	91,303	38,991	6,000	11,889	695	33,728
2012/13	30,822	23,909	4,952	1066	895	n/a
2016/17	22,765	18,396	3,000	597	771	n/a
2020	13,659	11,038	1,800	358	463	n/a
2025	9,106	7,358	1,200	239	308	n/a
2030 (net zero)	0	0	0	0	0	n/a

Table 1 - Shropshire Council's 2008/9 baseline carbon footprint and annual carbon accounting across a 5-year period, plus future projections to 2030.

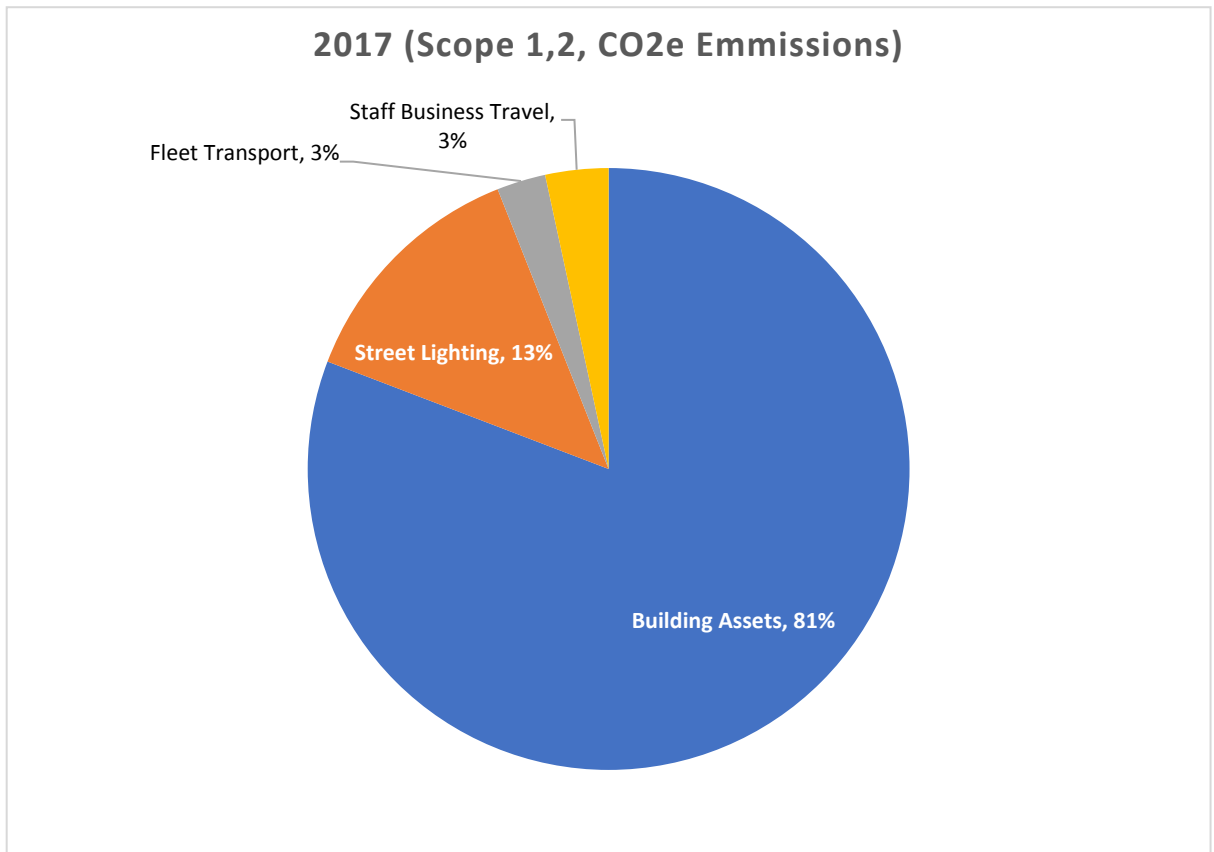


Figure 4 – Sources of Shropshire's Carbon Footprint 2017 (%) (SC 2019)

- 4.4 Shropshire Council's carbon performance between 2008 and 2012 has been affected by significant changes to the Council's assets. For example, what was termed Council Housing became a connected but independently managed housing operation; several public owned properties were sold and many schools have changed to become academies. These changes mean that housing and schools are not shown in scope for either the baseline or update calculations.

Climate Change Strategy Framework

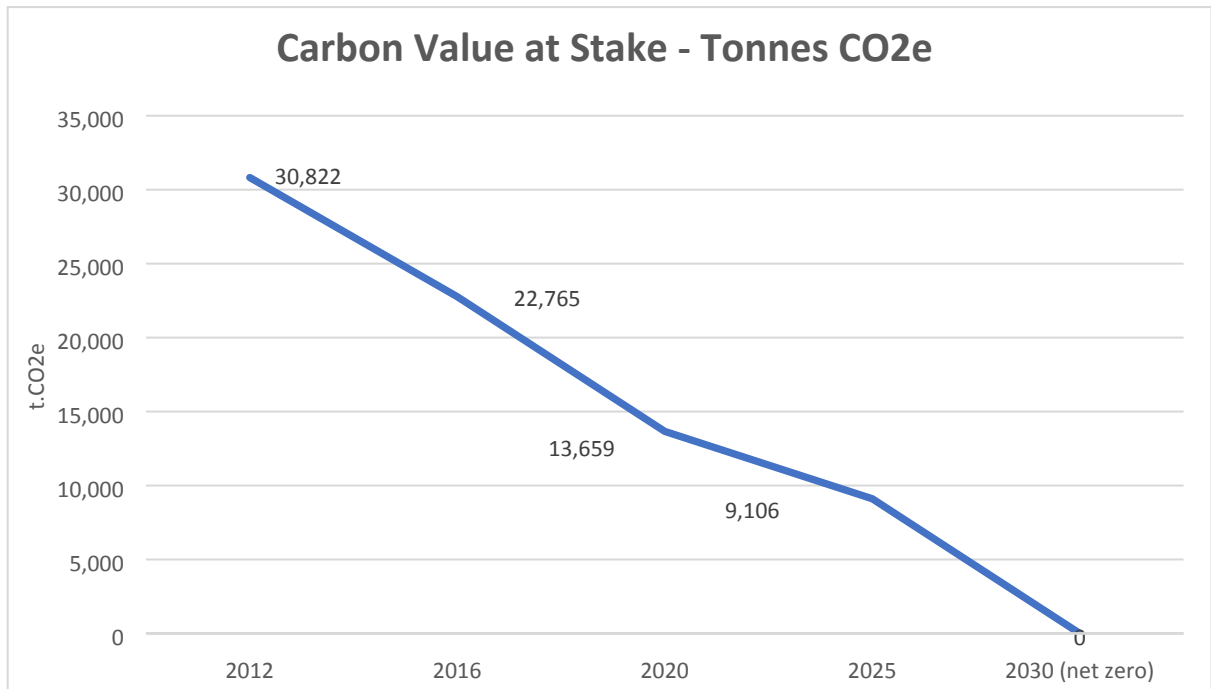


Figure 5 – Shropshire Council’s Carbon Footprint Projection (thousand tonnes CO2e) (SC 2019)

5 Climate Emergency Objectives and Principles

Key Objective:

Reduce Shropshire Council’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net carbon zero by 2030 (GHG Scope 1,2 & 3)

- 5.1 We recognise the impacts an unstable climate is already having on our services and our duty to reduce our footprint both locally and globally. We are in the early stages of developing our Climate Strategy and so have not yet developed a costed action plan. Targets on emissions are not straightforward because the causes of emissions are not straightforward and there isn’t yet a full understanding of the impacts that such targets would have on the economy and the health and wellbeing of our population. However, there is an urgent need to achieve significant emission reductions and the transition to a low carbon economy will generate many economic, health & wellbeing, and environmental benefits. Taking early action on what we can directly control is likely to prove a more effective approach than expending significant effort in planning and target setting.
- 5.2 Our current emissions reduction trajectory, for direct emissions (scope 1 & 2), demonstrates that we are on course for net zero by 2030 and we know that net zero GHG emissions by 2030 is theoretically possible for both direct and indirect emissions. In these circumstances we have opted to set ourselves the

Climate Change Strategy Framework

goal of achieving net zero for direct and indirect GHG emissions by Shropshire Council by 2030. This is not a legally binding target and may be subject to change based on future evidence, but it is a challenging goal commensurate with our recognition of a climate emergency. The achievement of this goal will require extensive support in both financial and policy terms if it is to be delivered in practice and Council has already resolved to write to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to encourage Government to be ambitious in its plans for carbon reduction targets.

5.3 Shropshire Council will use its experience to work with others and provide community leadership to help reduce Shropshire's overall carbon footprint. Much more work and evidence is needed before a target date can be identified for net zero GHG emissions for the county as a whole.

5.4 **Focus for action:**

- Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reductions;
- GHG sequestration;
- Resilience and adaptation to the climate crisis.

Key Principles:

5.5 **Prioritise Actions:**

- a. We need to stop adding to the problem whilst recognising that work on sequestration and adaptation is also critical.
- b. It is already too late to 'fix' the climate crisis just by reducing emissions, so we will need to adapt by putting place physical and operational adaptation measures to mitigate risks to our assets and services from extreme climate events.
- c. 81% of Shropshire Council's direct (scope 1 & 2) GHG emissions in 2017 were generated from energy use in its buildings and a further 13% was generated by street lighting, so these will be priorities for early intervention.

5.6 **Support Clean and Inclusive Growth**

- a. Our county needs to grow while our emissions shrink. The transition to a green economy can provide significant growth opportunities for businesses as well as providing a cleaner and more inclusive future;
- b. We want the Shropshire economy to shift to one which is zero carbon and abides by circular economy principles, whilst enabling our communities to build and enjoy their prosperity. The choices we make now will determine whether we can deliver on our obligations, and the extent to which we can do so in a way which is also socially progressive;

Climate Change Strategy Framework

- c. We will support skills and training which allow our communities and businesses to benefit from Shropshire's transition to a low carbon economy.

5.7 *Invest in Climate Action*

- a. Significant investment will be required if Shropshire Council is to achieve its goal of becoming net carbon zero by 2030. Once drafted, Shropshire's Climate Action Plan will estimate the level of investment required and present an initial programme for the most effective areas for investment and intervention. There is no evidence that the significant investment required to achieve net zero GHG emissions will have a detriment impact on the economy.
- b. The business case for individual investment projects will also demonstrate the potential for a financial saving in both the short and long terms. Shropshire Council has already invested in a range of low carbon technologies that have provided a return on investment.
- c. Shropshire Council is under severe financial pressure and the Climate Action Plan will therefore prioritise interventions which generate a positive and direct return on investment. Within these investments we will try to prioritise investments that benefit those members of public of greatest need first, for example energy efficiency measures installed in affordable and social housing.
- d. Some Climate Action investments may not generate returns that are easily quantifiable in financial terms and others are just very complicated to calculate. Some returns may be beneficial for carbon reduction but may have negative impacts in other areas, for example planting trees on habitats with high wildlife value. Measures which generate co-benefits (e.g. cost saving and improved environmental and social performance) are particularly attractive.
- e. We will report on savings achieved through low carbon measures and consider ring-fencing these savings for future investment in mitigation and adaptation measures. Investment in mitigation and adaptation will require an approach which recognises a longer term and potentially indirect return on investment.

5.8 *Work with others*

- a. We are on a shared journey and will need to work with others, learn from them and make use of external resources to help us, and the wider community, to achieve net carbon zero while also dealing with the effects of extreme climate events.
- b. We will establish a Climate Action Partnership of stakeholders and the wider community, to work with the Council to provide advice, support and encouragement to our communities, businesses and charitable organisations to help them to mitigate their emissions and adapt to the inevitable impacts of the climate crisis.
- c. The climate crisis is of particular significance for young people who will inherit the consequences of our actions. We will therefore work with

Climate Change Strategy Framework

schools across the county to ensure that the Climate Emergency is integrated as an issue across the curriculum and provide opportunities for schools and young people to contribute directly to the development and implementation of our Climate Emergency Strategy.

- d. Throughout the development and implementation of our Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan we will be as open as possible to engage the wider community and provide opportunities for them to contribute.

5.9 *Influence the behaviour of others*

- a. In addition to direct control of our own GHG emissions, we have significant influence over emissions indirectly resulting from our policies, procurement and regulatory functions – these are known as ‘scope 3’ emissions.
- b. We will commission a full analysis of our scope 3 emissions. This should include estimates of the scale of emissions in each area and a review of current and proposed means of reducing these emissions.
- c. Shropshire Council has significant influence through its purchasing power. We will put in place measures to assess the carbon footprint of our procurement choices.
- d. We will lead by example and seek to positively influence the purchasing power or funding allocations of others like the Marches LEP to favour low carbon initiatives and products.

5.10 *Assemble and publish evidence*

- a. Better local evidence is needed to identify the most effective targets for intervention and investment. We have significant gaps in knowledge and this includes the impacts of choosing one net zero carbon deadline over any other. Shropshire’s Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan will highlight evidence gaps and prioritise areas of research required. It will also spell out the monitoring requirements that need to be established to fully measure our progress towards zero carbon.

6 Carbon Management Measures

- 6.1 As a Council, we are already seeking to optimise energy efficiency through encouraging the use of electric vehicles, and renewable energy generation at Council buildings. National Grid capacity is already constrained in Shropshire and the Council is therefore exploring opportunities for microgeneration to deliver cost-effective solutions for the distribution of energy generated from local low carbon and renewable energy sources, and options to combine power generation with energy storage. Shropshire Council is also exploring options to promote energy efficiency and the use of renewables in Shropshire through loans for investment in energy efficiency measures and by encouraging local landowners and businesses to install renewable energy generation and storage facilities.
- 6.2 Shropshire already generates a significant amount of energy from renewable sources. In 2017, the total installed renewable capacity for Shropshire was

Climate Change Strategy Framework

172 MWe. In 2019, Government data shows that Shropshire was ranked 5th nationally for installed renewable energy capacity, largely as the result of significant installed solar PV and anaerobic digestion facilities. Shropshire is home to the largest amount of installed capacity of anaerobic digestion, in all amounting to around 16 MW or over 5% of the total UK installed capacity. Solar PV farms make up 157 MW of a total 230 MW additional capacity which is planned or in development. Further projects are either under construction or have secured planning permission.

6.3 In recent years Shropshire Council has implemented a range of measures to reduce its carbon footprint, including resource and energy efficiency measures, IT management, renewable energy generation and waste re-use. Shropshire corporate sites moved entirely to 'Pure Green' electricity from 1st September 2019. These measures have reduced greenhouse gas emissions and generated financial savings. Further measures to deliver both a reduction in emissions and financial savings are proposed, including:

- a. Development of EV Charging infrastructure that compliments the commercial roll out of EV charging infrastructure across the county, whilst ensuring that any infrastructure is sustainable and in keeping with the development of EV vehicles and other alternatively powered vehicles.
- b. Development of an Active Travel Strategy that promotes walking and cycling wherever possible whether that be for part of or a complete journey.
- c. Reduce the carbon footprint of staff travel on work related journeys, through the promotion of active travel, the use of digital technologies and the further development of the Enterprise car club scheme.
- d. Identify alternatively fuelled vehicles that will reduce the Council's carbon footprint across the breadth of the vehicle fleet that the Council operates, whilst ensuring that service delivery can be maintained at the appropriate levels.

1.2 Further information about recent and proposed carbon reduction measures is provided in Table 2 below.

Measure	Carbon Reduction	Financial Saving
Energy efficiency savings 2012-17	5,513 t.CO ₂ e	£0.96m
Proposed ICT Datacentre refresh project	32.6 t.CO ₂ e	£13,800
Solar Energy (41 Arrays across 28 sites)	3,000 t.CO ₂ e	£1.36m
Warp-it Re-use scheme (1 st 6 months)	15.8 t.CO ₂ e	£35,531
Proposed LED street lighting	794.5 t.CO ₂ e	Up to £900,000

Table 2 - Shropshire Council's recent and proposed carbon reduction measures

1.3 Table 3 below identified a number of key themes which will provide the opportunity for both direct and indirect future interventions to reduce Shropshire's carbon footprint and improve its resilience to the climate crisis:

Climate Change Strategy Framework

Theme	Direct Influence	Indirect Influence	Example Measures
Demand management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC Buildings • SC Street Lighting • SC ICT systems • SC Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector Buildings • Public sector Buildings Infrastructure • Utilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical or technology changes to reduce the consumption of energy and water and the production of waste; • ‘Soft’ measures such as staff training and optimising control systems;
Transport and travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC fleet management • SC business travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation • Procurement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planned distribution of future growth; • SC staff flexible and agile working policy; • Infrastructure which enables the rapid take up of electric and ultra-low emission vehicles;
Renewable Energy Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC Buildings and property; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint ventures with other organisations • Community Energy Schemes • Marches Renewable Energy (MarRE) project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for solar arrays, wind turbines, hydro-electric power; • Battery or heat storage solutions; • District heating and whole place solutions.
Sustainable land management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC land holdings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory roles • Working with other landowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon capture and storage; • Wildlife gains, • Physical adaptation measures to mitigate risks from extreme climate events;
Clean and inclusive growth:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC buildings and property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement; • regulation • Working with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for low carbon business • investment in low carbon infrastructure • skills investment
Adaptation and resilience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement; • regulation • Working with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and operational adaptation measures to mitigate risks from extreme climate events;

Table 3 - Key themes for direct and indirect future intervention measures

Climate Change Strategy Framework

2 Developing and Implementing our Climate Emergency Strategy

7.1 Recent guidance to Local Authorities by ARUP¹ on tackling ‘climate emergency’ commitments will help inform our work. A summary diagram of the nine suggested process stages is presented below:

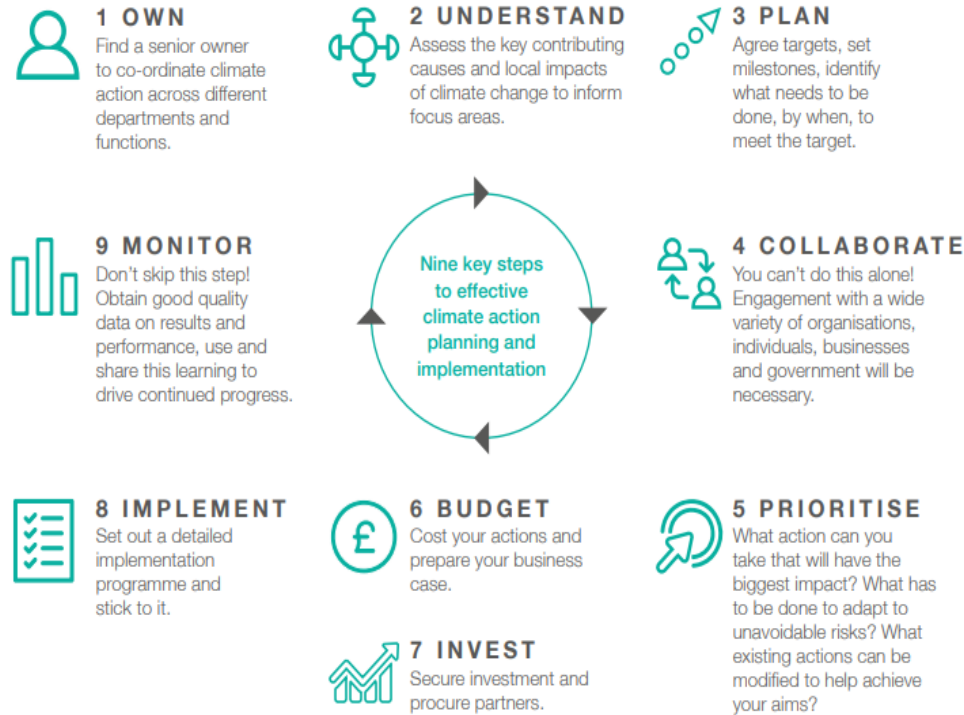


Figure 6 – Suggested process stages for Local Authority responses to Climate Change (ARUP 2019)

7.2 While the above diagram is sequential, Shropshire Council will be working on several aspects in parallel while using the structure to keep on track and ensure specific stages are not neglected. The ARUP document suggests a similar approach: “Don’t stop acting just because you’re planning”. Shropshire Council has already made some progress in most of the areas listed in the above diagram, but only point 1 has been completed with the establishment of a Climate Change Task Force, led by a senior manager.

7.3 The Climate Change Task Force will use the Strategy Framework to develop and consult on a draft Climate Emergency Strategy. The consultation findings will then be reported to Council, together with a final version of the Strategy. Once adopted, the Strategy will be implemented through a ‘live’ Action Plan which will prioritise the investments and interventions which will prove most effective in reducing Shropshire Council’s carbon footprint and building our resilience to the climate crisis. Taking a flexible approach helps implement the strategy in a way which is adaptable to economic uncertainty and political challenges, whilst still achieving the required performance and resilience. A draft timetable for the next stages of work is identified below.

¹ ARUP (2019). You’ve declared a Climate Emergency... what next? Guidance for local authorities. <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/ARUP-Climate-Emergency-What-Next.pdf>

Climate Change Strategy Framework

Draft Climate Emergency Strategy	March 2020
Public Consultation	April-May 2020
Adopted Climate Emergency Strategy	June 2020
Climate Change Action Plan	June 2020 onwards

7.4 To inform the preparation of the Climate Emergency Strategy, and to act on its objectives, the Director of Place has assembled a Task Force of key officers who are leading various streams of activity in this area of work across the full range of Council services. The work of the Task Force will be supported by a Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) comprising Council officers with specific skillsets whose role is related to sustainability, energy and the environment and by an external Technical Advisory Group. Oversight will be provided by the cross-party Member Task and Finish Group on Climate Change. The proposed working structure is illustrated in the diagram below:

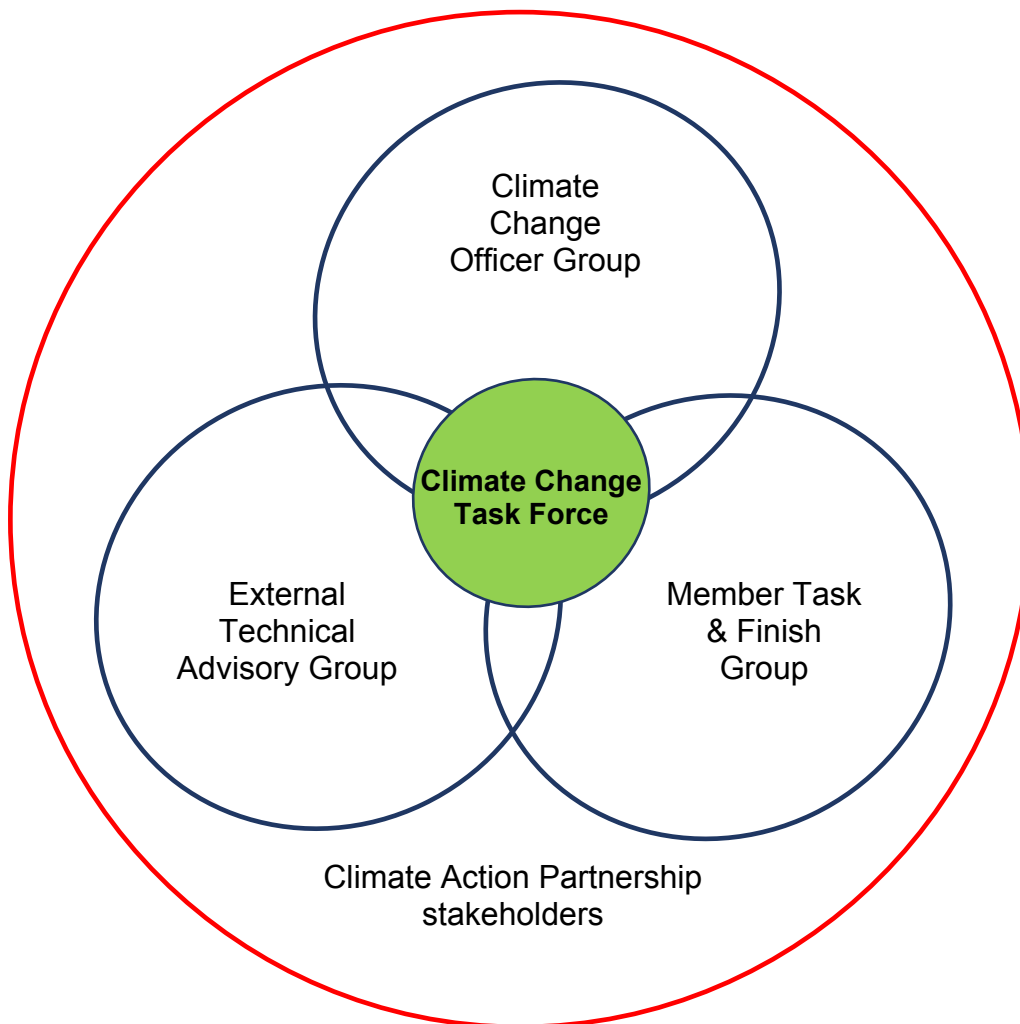


Figure 7 – Climate Change Working Structure

7.5 In order to provide updates on our progress, community leadership and to engage Shropshire businesses and communities, the Council will:

Climate Change Strategy Framework

- a. establish a Climate Action Partnership of stakeholders and the wider community as described in 5.6 above;
 - b. Develop a web-based portal to provide regular updates on climate related evidence; case studies; good practice; tips and guidance; FAQ's; events and training opportunities.
- 7.6 The strategy's objectives will also be imbedded in and referenced from other Council plans and strategies right across the organisation. For example, in declaring a Climate Emergency on 16 May, Council also resolved that carbon emission appraisals would be attached to all Policy reports and a template and guidelines are being developed to ensure that, once implemented, future policy reports will provide a short but consistent commentary on the climate change effects of the decision proposed. In addition to this, good practice suggests that Council should commit to the preparation of an annual Carbon Impact Budget which will identify the carbon impacts of Council services and major projects and will report on annual performance trends in parallel with the Council's financial budget.



<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Council 19 December 2019	 <u>Public</u>

SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX TAXBASE 2020/21

Responsible Officer James Walton
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1. Summary

- 1.1. In order to determine the appropriate Council Tax levels for Shropshire Council, it is necessary to determine the Council Tax taxbase for the area. The budget requirements of the various precepting authorities are divided by this figure to arrive at the Band D Council Tax.
- 1.2. For 2020/21 the Council Tax taxbase will be 113,557.43 Band D equivalents, this is an increase of 2.08% from 2019/20.
- 1.3. The Council Tax taxbase has a direct impact on the Council Tax that will be levied by the Council for 2020/21.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked:

- 2.1 In accordance with the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 to approve the revised discretionary power to levy a Council Tax premium in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years i.e. increasing the premium to 200% in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years and the resulting inclusion of an additional 382.22 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.
- 2.2 To approve the publication of a notice regarding the new discretionary Council Tax discount policy awarded in respect of vacant properties within 21 days of the determination.

On the assumption that the changes to the discount policy in relation to vacant dwellings detailed in Sections 2.1 and 7.3 of this report have been approved, members are asked:

- 2.3 To approve, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Shropshire Council as it's Council Tax taxbase for the year 2020/21, as detailed in Appendix A, totalling 113,557.43 Band D equivalents.
- 2.4 To note the changes to the Council's localised Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme in 2020/21. The scheme is attached at Appendix B.
- 2.5 To note the Council Tax Support Scheme amendments detailed in Section 6 have no impact on the taxbase determination.
- 2.6 To note the exclusion of 8,801.98 Band D equivalents from the taxbase as a result of localised Council Tax Support.
- 2.7 To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy of 0% in respect of second homes (other than those that retain a 50% discount through regulation as a result of job related protection) and note the inclusion of 705.45 Band D equivalents in the Council Tax taxbase as a result of this discount policy.
- 2.8 To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy to not award a discount in respect of vacant dwellings undergoing major repair, i.e. former Class A exempt properties.
- 2.9 To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy in respect of vacant dwellings, i.e. former Class C exempt properties, of 100% for one month i.e. effectively reinstating the exemption and the resulting exclusion of 266.55 band D equivalents from the taxbase.
- 2.10 To note continuation of the "six week rule" in respect of vacant dwellings, i.e. former Class C exempt properties.
- 2.11 To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy to levy a Council Tax premium of 100% in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years (but less than five years) and the resulting inclusion of an additional 288.55 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.
- 2.12 To approve a collection rate for the year 2020/21 of 98.3%.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 Expression of Council Tax Support in terms of Band D equivalents results in a higher potential for inaccuracies in the determination process as Council Tax Support is a significantly more volatile discount element.
- 3.2 Details of the potential risk in relation to establishing a collection rate allowance is detailed within this report in Section 9.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Council Tax taxbase figure impacts on the Council Tax that will be levied by the Council for 2020/21.
- 4.2 The implication of the Council's localised Council Tax Support scheme are detailed in Section 6.
- 4.3 The implications of maintaining the discount in respect of second homes at 0% are detailed in Section 7.1.
- 4.4 The implications of maintaining the discount in respect of vacant dwellings are detailed in Section 7.2.
- 4.5 The implications of maintaining the premium of 100% in respect of properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years and increasing the premium from 100% to 200% in respect of properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years are detailed in Section 7.3.
- 4.6 The implications regarding the determined collection rate are detailed in Section 9.

5. Background

- 5.1 Shropshire Council has responsibility for determining the Council Tax taxbase for the Council's geographical area.
- 5.2 The taxbase for Council Tax must be set between 1 December 2019 and 31 January 2020 in relation to 2020/21, as prescribed by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012.

- 5.3 The Council is also required to inform the major precepting authorities, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority, of the taxbase in order to enable the calculation of Council Tax for the following year. Each town and parish council is also notified of its own Council Tax taxbase.
- 5.4 The purpose of this report, therefore, is to determine and approve the Council Tax taxbase for Shropshire Council for 2020/21.

6. Council Tax Support

- 6.1 The 2010 Spending Review announced the localisation of council tax support and The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit from 31 March 2013 and required that Local Government created a localised Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme effective from 1 April 2013, accommodating a reduction in funding of 10%.
- 6.2 Shropshire Council's localised CTS scheme was approved in December 2018. A number of minor changes are proposed to the existing scheme to take effect from 1 April 2020. The current scheme summary that reflects these amendments is attached at Appendix B.
- 6.3 The proposed amendments relate to the following areas:
- Defining a council tax reversal as an amount of Council Tax Support to which the claimant was not entitled
 - Clarification of what action the Council will take depending on whether the reversal is caused by claimant error or official error
 - Clarification of the definition of pensioner in accordance with new benefit rules for mixed age couples and eligibility for Local Council Tax Reduction Schemes
 - Clarification that any payment made by the Home Office under the Windrush Compensation Scheme or the Windrush Exceptional Payment Scheme will be disregarded as capital
- 6.4 A consultation on these amendments ran from 11 October 2019 to 22 November 2019. There were no responders.
- 6.5 From 2013, therefore, council tax support has taken the form of reductions within the council tax system, replacing national council tax benefit. Making reductions as part of the council tax system reduces a billing authority's Council Tax taxbase. Billing and major precepting authorities receive funding (Council Tax Support Grant) which reduce their council tax requirement and, depending

on the design of the local council tax scheme, can help offset the council tax revenue foregone through reductions.

- 6.6 An estimate of the effect of the local Council Tax Support Scheme on the Council Tax taxbase has been determined for Shropshire. It is estimated that the Council Tax Support Scheme will reduce the Council Tax taxbase by 8,801.98 Band D equivalents.
- 6.7 As Council Tax Support entitlement will vary throughout the year and this will affect the taxbase it is more likely that the amount of Council Tax collected in 2020/21 will vary from the estimate.
- 6.8 A link to the full scheme for 2019/20 is below.

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/12531/ctrs-scheme-2019-20.pdf>

7. Discretionary Discount Policies

7.1 *Second Homes*

- 7.1.1 Second homes are defined as furnished properties which are not occupied as a person's main residence and include furnished properties that are unoccupied between tenancies.
- 7.1.2 The Local Government Act 2003 gave councils new discretionary powers to reduce the 50% Council Tax discount previously awarded in respect of second homes to between 10% and 50% with effect from 1st April 2004. Councils retain the additional income raised by reducing the second homes Council Tax discount.
- 7.1.3 The Local Government Act 2012 further extended billing authorities' discretion over the second homes discount to between 0% and 50%. On 17 October 2012 Cabinet approved the reduction of the second homes Council Tax discount from 10% to 0%.
- 7.1.4 The figures used for the 2020/21 Council Tax taxbase incorporate a 0% Council Tax discount in respect of second homes (other than those that retain a 50% discount through regulation as a result of job-related protection). Implementation of this policy results in the inclusion of 705.45 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.

Vacant Properties

7.2 *Former Class A & Class C Exempt Properties*

- 7.2.1 The Local Government Act 2012 abolished both Class A and Class C exemptions and gave billing authorities' discretion to give discounts of between 0% and 100%. Class A exemptions were previously available for up to 12 months in respect of a vacant property which required, was undergoing, or had recently undergone major repair work to render it habitable, or a structural alteration. Class C exemptions were previously available for up to six months after a dwelling became vacant.
- 7.2.2 On 14 December 2017 Council approved the removal of a 50% Council Tax discount in respect of vacant dwellings undergoing major repair, i.e. former Class A exempt properties.
- 7.2.3 In respect of former Class A exempt properties the figures used for the 2019/20 Council Tax taxbase allow for the continuation of the decision previously approved by Council, i.e. to award no discount.
- 7.2.4 On 17 October 2012 Cabinet approved the award of a 25% Council Tax discount in respect of vacant dwellings, i.e. former Class C exempt properties.
- 7.2.5 Implementation of this policy resulted in a large number of low value Council Tax demands being raised primarily in relation to landlords whose properties are between tenants. A significant number of landlord complaints were received in relation to these Council Tax demands and these small amounts proved to be very difficult to collect. It was, therefore, proposed and approved that a 100% discount be awarded for one month, i.e. effectively reinstating the exemption, and then a 25% discount be awarded for the remaining five months.
- 7.2.6 In order to avoid fraudulent 100% claims in respect of these types of properties it was also proposed and approved that the "six week rule" be applied, i.e. if a dwelling which is unoccupied and unfurnished is either exempt or entitled to a discount, becomes occupied or substantially furnished for a period of less than six weeks, after which it falls empty again, it will only resume exemption or discount for any of the original exemption or discount period which remains.
- 7.2.7 On 14 December 2017 Council approved the continuation of the policy to award one month exemption when a property becomes unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (subject to the six week rule) and approved a revised policy to remove the 25% for the following five months. This means that when a property becomes unoccupied and substantially unfurnished it would attract one month exemption, then pay full charge for the following twenty three months, then attract an additional 100% council tax premium after two years.
- 7.2.8 In respect of former Class C exempt properties the figures used for the 2020/21 Council Tax taxbase incorporate a discount of 100% for one month. Continuation of this policy to award the one month exemption results in the exclusion of 266.55 Band D equivalents from the taxbase.

7.3 **Empty Homes Premium**

- 7.3.1 The Local Government Act 2012 amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and also gave billing authorities' discretion to levy an empty homes premium of 50% after a dwelling has been empty and substantially unfurnished for at least two years. In December 2013 Shropshire Council chose to enact this discretionary power with effect from April 2014.
- 7.3.2 On 1 November 2018 the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 was passed which further amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992. This gave billing authorities' discretion to levy an empty homes premium of 100% for the financial year beginning 1 April 2019 after a dwelling has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least two years. The Act also allows for a 200% premium from 1 April 2020 for properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least 5 years and a 300% premium from 1 April 2021 for properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least 10 years.
- 7.3.3 Members are asked to approve a revised policy to levy an empty homes premium of 200% after a dwelling has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least five years.
- 7.3.4 The figures used for the 2020/21 Council Tax taxbase incorporate a 100% Council Tax premium in respect of dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years and a 200% Council Tax premium in respect of dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years. Implementation of this policy results in the inclusion of 288.55 Band D equivalents in the taxbase in relation to properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years and 382.22 Band D equivalents in the taxbase in relation to properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years.

8. **Taxbase Calculation**

- 8.1 Based on the valuation list, the Council Tax taxbase is the number of properties in the area falling within each council tax property valuation band, modified to take account of the adjustments set out below. Taxbase is expressed as a Band D equivalent.
- 8.2 An analysis of Council Tax bands within Shropshire Council is detailed below:

Property Band	House Value	Ratio to Band D	Analysis of Dwellings on the Valuation List (%) (as at 9 th September 2019)	% Increase / (Decrease) over 2018/19
A	Under £40,000	6/9	18.5	0.0
B	40,001 - 52,000	7/9	25.7	0.8

C	52,001 - 68,000	8/9	20.8	1.5
D	68,001 - 88,000	9/9	14.3	1.2
E	88,001 - 120,000	11/9	11.2	2.3
F	120,001 - 160,000	13/9	6.0	2.9
G	160,001 - 320,000	15/9	3.2	1.9
H	Over 320,000	18/9	0.3	1.5

8.3 There are 144,653 properties in the valuation list for the Shropshire Council area. This compares with a figure of 142,967 in the list at the same time last year. There has been an increase of 1,686 properties overall, which equates to 1.18%. The number of properties in property bands B – G has increased, the number of properties in band A has decreased.

8.4 The methodology followed for calculating the taxbase is as follows:

- Ascertain the number of properties in each Council Tax band (A to H) shown in the valuation list as at 9 September 2019.
- Adjust for estimated changes in the number of properties through new build, demolitions and exemptions.
- The number of discounts and disabled relief allowances which apply as at 7 October 2019.
- Convert the number of properties in each Council Tax band to Band D equivalents by using the ratio of each band to Band D and so arrive at the total number of Band D equivalents for the Council.
- Adjust the total number of Band D equivalents by the estimated Council Tax collection rate for the year

These calculations are undertaken for each property band in each parish.

9. Collection Rate

9.1 In determining the taxbase, an allowance has to be made to provide for changes to the taxbase during the year (e.g. due to new properties, appeals against banding, additional discounts, Council Tax Support award changes, etc.) as well as losses on collection arising from non-payment. This is achieved by estimating a Council Tax collection rate for the year and must be common for the whole of Shropshire.

9.2 A collection rate of 98.0% was assumed for the 2019/20 financial year and it is recommended that a collection rate of 98.3% should be assumed for the purpose of determining the Council Tax taxbase in 2020/21.

9.3 Actual in year collection rates in 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 were 98.4%, 98.4% and 98.2% respectively. The collection rate for 2019/20 is currently projected to outturn at around 98.2%.

- 9.4 The reduction in the Collection Rate for 2018/19 was mainly due to the changes to the Council Tax Support scheme that were implemented in 2018/19.
- 9.5 A survey of other Councils that have introduced a minimum payment to their Council Tax Support scheme has shown that there is a detrimental effect on their overall council tax collection rate. This has varied among different Councils between 0.3% and 0.7% in the first year, but gradually improving over subsequent years. Therefore, the proposed collection rate for 2020/21 has been increased from 2019/20.
- 9.6 A rate of 98.3% is considered prudent given the current level of recovery, the collection rates of the last 3 years and the continued impact of the Council Tax Support scheme changes.
- 9.7 If the actual rate exceeds 98.3% a surplus is generated, which is shared between the Unitary Council, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority, pro rata to their demand on the Collection Fund for the relevant year. Conversely, any shortfall in the collection rate results in a deficit, which is shared in a similar manner. The surplus or deficit is taken into account in setting the Council Tax in the following year.

10. Council Tax Base

- 10.1 The estimated Council Tax taxbase for the whole of the area will be used by this Council to calculate its Council Tax Levy. It will also be used by West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority to calculate the levy in respect of their precepts.
- 10.2 The Council Tax taxbase for this purpose in 2020/21 is 113,557.43 Band D equivalents, an increase of 2.08% from 2019/20. The detailed build of this figure analysed by both parish and town council and Environment Agency region is shown in Appendix A.

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

N/A

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

David Minnery

Local Member

N/A

Appendices

Appendix A: 2020/21 Parish and Town Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council.

Appendix B: Shropshire Council's Localised Council Tax Support Scheme

2020/21 Parish and Town Council Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council	APPENDIX A
Parish / Town Council	Council Tax Taxbase (Band D Equivalents)
Abdon & Heath	106.92
Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley & Langley	266.25
Acton Scott	37.85
Adderley	207.86
Alberbury with Cardeston	398.50
Albrighton	1,524.50
All Stretton, Smethcott & Woolstaston	174.18
Alveley & Romsley	860.30
Ashford Bowdler	36.90
Ashford Carbonel	186.65
Astley	202.68
Astley Abbotts	244.78
Aston Bottrell, Burwarton & Cleobury North	115.12
Atcham	203.56
Badger	57.25
Barrow	264.46
Baschurch	1,107.15
Bayston Hill	1,802.43
Beckbury	154.31
Bedstone & Bucknell	316.42
Berrington	425.79
Bettws-Y-Crwyn	91.50
Bicton	411.97
Billingsley, Deuxhill, Glazeley & Middleton Scriven	164.64
Bishops Castle Town	658.85
Bitterley	351.28
Bomere Heath & District	866.46
Boningale	137.90
Boraston	75.58
Bridgnorth Town	4,578.46
Bromfield	123.58
Broseley Town	1,550.09
Buildwas	103.66
Burford	432.50
Cardington	207.44
Caynham	530.76
Chelmarsh	229.92
Cheswardine	394.93
Chetton	159.70
Childs Ercall	299.00
Chirbury with Brompton	341.28
Church Preen, Hughley & Kenley	129.48
Church Pulverbatch	165.12
Church Stretton & Little Stretton Town	2,175.18
Claverley	871.19
Clee St. Margaret	69.73
Cleobury Mortimer	1,171.56
Clive	240.73
Clun Town with Chapel Lawn	515.73
Clunbury	248.58

2020/21 Parish and Town Council Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council		APPENDIX A
Parish / Town Council		Council Tax Taxbase (Band D Equivalents)
Clungunford		152.19
Cockshutt-cum-Petton		304.15
Condover		882.82
Coreley		136.19
Cound		210.80
Craven Arms Town		805.01
Cressage, Harley & Sheinton		411.66
Culmington		168.10
Diddlebury		266.58
Ditton Priors		338.53
Donington & Boscobel		600.37
Eardington		242.80
Easthope, Shipton & Stanton Long		201.99
Eaton-Under-Heywood & Hope Bowdler		181.60
Edgton		47.70
Ellesmere Rural		930.74
Ellesmere Town		1,487.25
Farlow		185.10
Ford		304.42
Great Hanwood		411.45
Great Ness & Little Ness		519.52
Greete		46.76
Grinshill		113.46
Hadnall		365.61
Highley		1,109.67
Hinstock		506.94
Hodnet		577.64
Hope Bagot		28.88
Hopesay		237.26
Hopton Cangeford & Stoke St. Milborough		161.67
Hopton Castle		41.41
Hopton Wafers		296.62
Hordley		102.84
Ightfield & Calverhall		200.94
Kemberton		116.10
Kinlet		413.29
Kinnerley		491.08
Knockin		117.74
Leebotwood & Longnor		200.50
Leighton & Eaton Constantine		205.37
Llanfairwaterdine		100.58
Llanyblodwel		261.39
Llanymynech & Pant		674.38
Longden		533.22
Loppington		283.85
Ludford		243.20
Ludlow Town		3,515.95
Lydbury North		224.37
Lydham & More		128.01
Mainstone & Colebatch		85.08

2020/21 Parish and Town Council Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council	APPENDIX A
Parish / Town Council	Council Tax Taxbase (Band D Equivalents)
Market Drayton Town	3,963.49
Melverley	51.40
Milson & Neen Sollars	122.58
Minsterley	593.30
Montford	257.84
Moreton Corbett & Lee Brockhurst	129.54
Moreton Say	202.61
Morville, Acton Round, Aston Eyre, Monkhopton & Upton Cressett	367.40
Much Wenlock Town	1,220.73
Munslow	175.14
Myddle & Broughton	631.26
Myndtown, Norbury, Ratlinghope & Wentnor	263.29
Nash	137.66
Neen Savage	155.68
Neenton	62.60
Newcastle	128.74
Norton-In-Hales	314.89
Onibury	133.02
Oswestry Rural	1,681.59
Oswestry Town	5,329.77
Pontesbury	1,280.68
Prees	1,133.91
Quatt Malvern	94.14
Richards Castle	141.97
Rushbury	271.92
Ruyton-XI-Towns	456.84
Ryton & Grindle	80.15
Selattyn & Gobowen	1,256.70
Shawbury	879.74
Sheriffhales	318.04
Shifnal Town	3,276.53
Shrewsbury Town	25,178.17
Sibdon Carwood	48.30
St. Martins	935.17
Stanton Lacy	166.27
Stanton-Upon-Hine Heath	243.00
Stockton	130.49
Stoke-Upon-Tern	479.85
Stottesdon & Sidbury	329.79
Stowe	48.35
Sutton Maddock	106.14
Sutton-Upon-Tern	401.88
Tasley	415.81
Tong	123.70
Uffington	120.75
Upton Magna	156.96
Welshampton & Lyneal	374.32
Wem Rural	685.71
Wem Town	2,015.05
West Felton	565.59

2020/21 Parish and Town Council Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council		APPENDIX A
Parish / Town Council		Council Tax Taxbase (Band D Equivalents)
Westbury		527.07
Weston Rhyn		849.56
Weston-Under-Redcastle		123.51
Wheathill		73.40
Whitchurch Rural		608.01
Whitchurch Town		3,352.12
Whittington		915.23
Whitton		59.91
Whixall		343.57
Wistanstow		332.26
Withington		106.41
Woore		597.70
Worfield & Rudge		920.05
Worthen with Shelve		786.00
Wroxeter & Uppington		160.74
Shropshire Council Total		113,557.43
Environment Agency - Severn Trent Region		106,674.72
Environment Agency - Welsh Region		4,383.52
Environment Agency - North West Region		2,499.19
Shropshire Council Total		113,557.43

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL – BENEFITS SERVICE

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT (CTS)

Introduction

The current Council Tax Benefit scheme is a means tested benefit that helps people with a low income to pay their Council Tax.

From April 2013 this will be abolished and all local authorities will provide a new scheme called 'Council Tax Support'. The funding that is provided for this scheme will be reduced by 10% and therefore it is likely that some people will have to pay more towards their Council Tax bill.

The changes will not affect pensioners even though they will move into the new scheme. The Government have confirmed that all pensioners will be protected and receive the same amount of benefit they do now under the current Council Tax Benefit Scheme.

Each local authority will be able to provide Council Tax support in a different way depending on local needs, funding available and how it can be administered. Each Council is expected to devise a new scheme and then put this to public consultation by the end of 2012.

Our new scheme was devised and published on the Shropshire Council website for customers, stakeholders and other agencies to comment on. Public consultation closed on the 14th December and the new scheme was formally adopted by the Council on 16th January 2013.

Anyone of working age will now be subject to the new scheme from April 2013. The differences that you will see in the new Council Tax Support Scheme are: -

- Removal of second adult rebate
- Reduction of the capital limit from £16,000 to £10,000
- Removal of earnings disregards
- Removal of child benefit disregard
- Increase in non-dependant deductions

Please note the following amendments are for the calculation of Council Tax Support only and do not affect Housing Benefit calculations.

Removal of Second Adult Rebate

Second Adult Rebate (2AR) is awarded to a customer based on the circumstances of a second adult living in the property. Under the new scheme this has been abolished and will no longer be effective from 01.04.13.

Reduction of the capital limit

For working age people the capital limit will reduce to £10,000 from 01.04.13. This will mean that if a customer’s savings amounts to more than £10,000 they will not be entitled to CTS. The lower capital limit of £6,000 remains the same.

Tariff income calculations remain as is i.e. from the total amount if capital £6,000 is deducted, the remainder is then dived by 250 if the result is not an exact multiple of £1 the result is rounded up to the next whole £1

All other capital rules including static savings, land and property, shares, etc remain the same.

Removal of Earnings disregards

All income disregards for working age people will cease from the 01.04.13.

Removal of Child Benefit disregards

Child benefit will no longer be disregarded from the calculation of CTS from the 01.04.03.

Increase in non-dependant earned income deductions (working age only)

From 01.04.13 non dep deductions will increase to the following: -

- £5 for anyone earning under £100,
- £10 for anyone earning between £100 and £150
- £20 for anyone earning over £150 per week

This deduction will only be made from their earned income. It won’t affect any other income they receive.

Non-dependant earned income deductions (pension age only)

Gross income less than £186.00	=	£3.65
Gross income £186.00 to £321.99	=	£7.25
Gross income £322.00 to £400.99	=	£9.15
Gross income £401.00 or above	=	£10.95

Unearned income will attract the following disregards (working age and pension age):

Others aged 18 or over incl. JSAC & ESAC	=	£3.65
In receipt of Pension Credit, IS, JSA (IB), ESA(IR)	=	nil

(This disregard will be up-rated annually in line with figures provided annually by DCLG)

A new minimum earnings threshold will be introduced with effect from 01/04/15 to reflect the current arrangements in the Housing Benefit scheme.

This minimum earnings threshold will help to determine whether a European Economic Area (EEA) national's previous or current work can be treated as genuine and effective for the purposes of deciding whether they have a right to reside in the UK as a worker or self-employed person.

The minimum earnings threshold has been set at the level at which workers start to pay National Insurance Contributions (NICs), currently £153 a week in the 2014/15 tax year. If an EEA national can prove that they have been earning at least this amount for a period of 3 months immediately before they claim CTS their work can be treated as genuine and effective and they will have a right to reside as a worker or self-employed person.

If they do not satisfy the minimum earnings threshold criteria, a further assessment will be undertaken against a broader range of criteria (such as hours worked, pattern of work, nature of employment contract etc.) to determine whether their employment is genuine and effective.

Ultimately, if an EEA national's income does not meet the minimum earnings threshold or the additional criteria to be classified as genuine and effective employment they will not be eligible for CTS.

Special Educations Needs Allowance – to be disregarded in full with effect from 01/09/14

War Pensions / Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Guaranteed Income Payments – to be disregarded in full with effect from 01/04/13 (and to be consistent with Housing Benefit)

From 01/04/15 the CTR scheme will include changes to the habitual residency test to reflect changes to the Housing Benefit (HB) regulations.

The amendments to the CTS scheme removes access to CTS for EEA jobseekers who make a new claim for CTS on or after 1 April 2015. EEA nationals who are self-employed, are workers or who are unemployed but retain their worker status have the same rights to CTS as a UK national and their situation remains unchanged.

EEA jobseekers who are entitled to CTS and JSA(IB) on 31 March 2015 will be protected until they have a break in their claim for CTS or JSA. If their JSA ends because they have started work, then as long as we can be satisfied that their employment is genuine and effective they will be able to access in-work CTS as either a worker or a self-employed person. Claimants receiving in-work CTS beyond 1 April will continue to be able to access CTS, if they become entitled to JSA(IB) on or after that date, but only if they retain their worker status. If they are a jobseeker then their CTS entitlement ends from the Monday following the cessation of work.

Changes with effect from 1 April 2018 to bring the scheme in line with Housing Benefit changes

- **2 child cap**
The Government has announced that they will limit benefit support by only taking into account a maximum of two dependent children per family. It affects all claims where new children are born after April 2017. This will apply in Housing Benefit to families that make a new claim from April 2017
- **Loss of the family premium**
The Government removed the family premium for new claims within the assessment of Housing Benefit with effect from May 2016
- **Bereavement Support Payments to be disregarded in full**
This was introduced into Housing Benefit with effect from April 2017
- **Any payments from the 'We love Manchester Fund' and the 'London Emergency Trust' to be disregarded in full**
- **Maximum backdate period of 1 month**
- **Absence from home limited to 4 weeks when outside GB**
The temporary absence rules for Housing Benefit were amended in 2015 reducing the allowable period of temporary absence outside Great Britain from 13 weeks to 4 weeks.

The limit applies to new periods of absence only. Exceptions are when an absence is in relation to
 - Death of a partner, child or close relative
 - Receiving medical treatment
 - A person who has fled their home due to fear of violence
 - A member of Her Majesty's forces posted overseas
- **Beneficial changes in circumstances to be reported within one month of the change in order for the claim to be updated from the date of change, otherwise changes will take effect from the Monday following date notified.**
- **All working aged claimants who receive Council Tax Support (unless they are a pensioner or classed as vulnerable) will pay 20% of their council tax liability, (after appropriate discounts have been awarded)**

An example of this change is as follows:

1) Current scheme (which allows for 100% reduction)

The customer's liability is £20.00 per week. As they are in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance they are entitled to full Council tax reduction making their council tax balance for the year £0.00

2) Proposed new scheme (20% minimum payment)

The customer liability is £20.00. Before any calculation takes place 20% of this amount is reduced from the liability to be used. This means that any calculation will be carried out on a figure of £16.00. Again the customer is on Jobseekers Allowance and so they are entitled to a full award. This will mean their council tax balance for the year will be £208.00 (£4.00 x 52).

- **De Minimis change amount of £10.00 per week for claimants in receipt of Universal Credit**
- **Apply a minimum award of £1.50**
- **Claimant or partner who meet the specific criteria of severe disablement contained within the policy will be protected from any percentage reduction in council tax support. Claimant or partner in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance will be protected from any percentage reduction in council tax support. This will also apply to customers who meet the criteria for receiving a war compensation related benefit or pension. Specifically this includes**

Criteria to be awarded for the severe disability premium:

- The customer has to be in receipt of
 - 1) Attendance allowance or
 - 2) Higher or middle rate care component of disability living allowance or
 - 3) The daily living allowance rate of personal independence payments
- They must not have a resident non-dependant
- No person is entitled to, and in receipt of, carers allowance in respect of caring for the customer and;
- If the customer has a partner they must also meet all above criteria

Criteria to be awarded the support component of employment and support allowance

It is accepted that some people's difficulties or disabilities are such that not only is the person not expected to look for work but are also not expected to undertake an work related activities or plan for starting work due to the severity of their difficulties

Criteria to qualify for the war pension's exemption

The customer and/or partner has to be in receipt of either:

- War pension
- War disablement pension
- War service attributable pension
- War widows pension
- War mobility supplement

Changes with effect from 1 April 2019

Severe Disability Premium does not exist in Universal Credit. From 1 April 2019 claimants or couples that have moved into Universal Credit but meet the above criteria for the severe disablement premium will be exempt from the percentage reduction.

Employment and support allowance does not form part of Universal Credit. Instead there is a limited capability for work and limited capability for work related activity element in Universal Credit which is similar to that used for identifying the work related activity group and support group of Employment Support Allowance. From 1 April 2019 claimants or partners in receipt of the limited capability for work related activity element in Universal Credit that is the equivalent to the support element of employment and support allowance will be exempt from the percentage reduction.

Changes with effect from 1 April 2020

- We have defined a council tax reversal as an amount of Council Tax Support to which the claimant was not entitled, and we have clarified what action the Council will take depending on whether the reversal is caused by claimant error, or official error.
- We have clarified that where a reversal is due to claimant error the total sum of the reversal shall be fully chargeable and recoverable as part of the claimant's council tax liability
- We have clarified that where the reversal arose due to official error, that where the claimant or their representative could reasonably have been expected at the time to realise that the assessment had been made in error, the total sum of the reversal shall be fully chargeable and recoverable as part of the claimant's council tax liability. Otherwise, the amount of the reversal will not be chargeable and recoverable as part of the claimant's council tax liability
- In the event of a council tax reversal, the Council will consider any underlying award that the claimant should have been entitled to provided evidence is received from the claimant within 1 month of the claimant being notified of the reversal, or where an appeal against a recoverable reversal is made
- We have clarified the definition of pensioner in accordance with new benefit rules for mixed age couples and eligibility for Local Council Tax Reduction Schemes

- Any payment made by the Home Office under the Windrush Compensation Scheme or the Windrush Exceptional Payment Scheme will be disregarded as capital

SUMMARY OF CHANGES FROM 01.04.13

Current Council Tax Benefit Scheme (CTB)	Council Tax Support (CTS)
Second Adult Rebate - Awarded to the customer based on the circumstances of 'second adult'. Can be awarded due to a 'better buy' comparison	No award due for second person. On 'better buy' calculation customer will only be awarded any CTS due.
Reduction of the capital limit - Upper capital limit of £16,000. Above this limit the person would not qualify for CTB. Lower capital of £6,000. Below this figure amount is ignored. Amounts above £6,000 attract tariff income at £1 for every £250 or part of above the lower capital limit	Upper capital limit of £10,000. Above this limit the person would not qualify for CTB. Lower capital of £6,000. Below this figure amount is ignored. Amounts above £6,000 attract tariff income at £1 for every £250 or part of above the lower capital limit
Removal of earnings disregards – Permitted work - £97.50 Lone parents - £25.00 Disabled, carers or special occupations - £20.00 Couples - £10 Single £5	Permitted work - £0 Lone parents - £0 Disabled, carers or special occupations - £0 Couples - £0 Single £0
Removal of Child Benefit disregard – Child Benefit is fully disregarded for the calculation of CTB	Child benefit is fully included for the calculation of CTS
Increase in non-dependant deductions (using current figures) On pass ported benefit - £0.00 On JSA C/ESAC - £3.30 Works less than 16 hours on maternity, paternity, adoption or sick leave - £3.30 Income more than £394.00 per week – £9.90 £316.00 to £393.99 per week – £8.25 £238.00 to £315.99 per week - £6.55 £183.00 to £237.00 per week - £3.30 £124.00 to £182.99 per week – £3.30 Under £124.00 – £3.30	On pass ported benefit - £0.00 On JSA C/ESAC - £3.30 Works less than 16 hours on maternity, paternity, adoption or sick leave - £3.30 Earnings less than £100 - £5.00 Earnings between £100 and £150 - £10.00 Earnings above £150 - £20.00

APPEALS

There will be no joint HB/CTR appeals – they will be heard separately by different bodies. First Tier Tribunals will hear the Housing Benefit appeals (as now) and the Valuation Tribunals Service will hear Council Tax Support appeals.

The legislation is contained within the Local Government Finance Act. Appeals against the local Council Tax Support Scheme will be covered by Regulation 16(b).

Process:

- The customer firstly needs to write to the Council saying they disagree with the decision. There is no time limit to do this. They can request this at any time.
- If we do not alter our original decision the customer has the right to appeal to the Valuation Tribunal.
- To appeal to the Valuation Tribunal the customer will need to do this on line at www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk
- The customer must complete the on line appeal application within two months of the date of the decision notice sent by ourselves upholding the original decision

As local schemes are not legislation, but are locally defined schemes, the Valuation Tribunal will not consider an appeal against a billing authority's actual scheme, as that is beyond their jurisdiction. However, the Valuation Tribunal will advise dissatisfied claimants of their right to apply to the billing authority for a discretionary discount under section 13 (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. They will also hear appeals where the authority refuses to exercise this discretion.

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Committee and Date

Council

19th December 2019

Item

Public

County Wide Street Lighting LED Lantern Replacement Project. (Carbon Reduction Programme).

Responsible Officer Mark Barrow – Executive Director Place
e-mail: Mark. Barrow @shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 258916

1. Summary

- 1.1 Shropshire Council (SC) wishes to invest within its remaining 16,253 street lights that are located across the county, to replace the traditional street lighting bulbs with LED replacement, and where required replace the street lighting columns. This will allow the following opportunities:
 - Replacement of bulbs to LED, will save future electricity costs and contribute significantly to the Council's Climate and Environment Strategy.
 - Reduced maintenance costs via lower cyclical maintenance frequencies
 - Future revenue savings will be achieved to support the Highways Service Revenue Budget.
- 1.2 Council will also be aware of the Climate Emergency and the current national debate regarding the environment. The LED Conversion Programme will contribute significantly to reduced energy consumption and will be intrinsic to the delivery of the council's environment agenda, by reducing the consumption of electric by 56% over the working period.
- 1.3 The Council currently spends approximately £1.0 million each year on energy for street lighting. Recent projections indicate energy costs for street lighting will rise by between 5% and 14% over the next 10 years which could mean the annual cost increasing to nearly £3.7 million in that time and as high as £13.7 million in 20 years if prices rose by 14% each year. This forecast is clearly unsustainable, and a change in the approach is required.
- 1.4 By investing approximately £6.83 million over 3 years to convert the Council's 16,253 street lights to LED, it would reduce their consumption by 56% saving approximately £506,533 per year (at today's prices) in energy and a reduction in maintenance costs of an estimated £390,899 per year.

- 1.5 The intention of this initiative is to change all existing street lighting over the programme period to new lanterns operating with LED Technology along with pre-programmable photo-electric cells (PECU's) complete with NFC driver which is a user interface to give the Council the flexibility to over-ride the pre-dimming/switch-offs of the lanterns on-street.
- 1.6 In order to achieve the above intention, Full Council is asked to approve that Shropshire Council applies to SALIX (a government agency) for an interest free loan, supported with identified and approved SC finance to deliver a total budget of £6,824,011 for the three years of the programme to deliver the improvements and changes.
- 1.7 The programme of works, subject to approval by Council via an interest free loan being granted by Salix, would be a three year programme beginning in April 2020.
- 1.8 A press and social media campaign would be developed, supported by additional information on the Councils web site, typically this would support the FAQ's document attached in (Appendix 1), which sets out the key information and criteria for wider information.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Council:

- 1. Approve a funding application to Salix is made requesting £3,034,979 of Capital for the conversion of 16,253 life expired lanterns to energy efficient LED lighting with the funding to be repaid from revenue savings.**
- 2. Approve the draw-down and phased repayment of a £3.03 million interest free loan from Salix for qualifying carbon reduction benefits to reduce the interest charges associated with the capital borrowing requirement**
- 3. Approve the addition of £3,789,032 to the Capital Programme Budget funded by Shropshire Council as the remaining budget requirement to deliver the project.**
- 4. Delegate to the Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Finance and Governance to enter into an agreement with Salix for the works, once all negotiations have concluded.**
- 5. Delegate to the Director of Place to agree, implement and conclude the most efficient procurement route to facilitate the physical works being undertaken over the works period.**

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 Shropshire Council has reviewed the implications of an investment in the energy efficiency of its street lighting stock and the need for change within its street lighting service is driven by:
- The condition of the existing network and the public and current environmental expectations in relation to street lighting standards and carbon reduction.
 - The requirement to contribute to the Council's carbon reduction plan and Carbon reduction programme.
 - Meeting its strategic objectives in relation to a sustainable, attractive and safe environment.
 - The significant revenue budgetary pressures facing the Council along with ongoing and anticipated energy price increases.
 - The need to secure energy efficiencies, to reduce carbon emissions and to set an example to others in this area.
- 3.2 The Council's specific objectives for any investment in its street lighting include:
- Reducing carbon emissions.
 - Reducing the future burden of energy bills and other associated costs.
 - Meeting current commitments and demands relating to embedding of sustainable practices and the Council's Environment Strategy.
 - Being better prepared for future regulatory requirements.
 - Setting an example to encourage partners and the wider community to make similar changes.
 - Raising the environmental profile of the Council.
 - Improving the stock, outcomes and modernising of the street lighting stock and contribution within our communities.
- 3.3 The selection of the LED lanterns will need to be carefully considered to ensure that Shropshire Council gets best value for money, a reliable unit and the most energy efficient solution.
- 3.4 Replacing approximately 16,253 lights is a major construction project. There will be localised operational disruption as lights are changed and this could include lane closures to safely carry out the work. However, the work involved does not require any excavation or major road works – in most cases the replacement can be fully carried out in 15-30 minutes to each lantern.
- 3.5 Inefficient lamps could be subject to European Regulation, requiring a change to the type of lamp to be considered. The risk is therefore of Shropshire Council not conforming to future regulations, this is a key risk and driver of this initiative.
- 3.6 Shropshire Council has, thus far, not pursued a large-scale transition to LED lighting due to the price of LEDs. The cost of LED lighting units has now fallen notably so the risk is that pursuing the transition now may precede a further decrease in price over time of LEDs. If this was the case, less capital investment

would be required but, for whatever the intervening period might be, SC would continue to have to meet energy costs that are significantly greater than it would be exposed to by converting to LED lighting.

- 3.7 An existing programme of replacement is currently underway which is not considered to impact significantly in negative terms against people with Protected Characteristics.
- 3.8 Screening indicates that the impact in equality terms of this approach towards street light replacements is neutral or positive for protected characteristic groupings in the population. It is assessed as having a positive impact for the groupings of Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, and Social Inclusion.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 LED Lantern with Pre-programmable PECU with NFC drivers Project Costs

The total project cost for the works and expenditure timeframe is demonstrated below:

PROJECT COST	6,824,011				
SALIX FUNDING	3,034,979	44%			
SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL	3,789,032	56%			
COLUMN REPLACEMENT	0				
	<u>6,824,011</u>				
PROJECT COST PROFILE					
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	TOTAL
PROJECT PROFILE		2,730,000	2,047,000	2,047,010	6,824,010
PROJECT FINANCING TIMEFRAME:					
SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL		1,515,000	1,137,000	1,137,033	3,789,033
SALIX LOAN		1,214,979	910,000	910,000	3,034,979
		2,274,670	2,274,670	2,274,670	6,824,011

- 4.2 The Shropshire Council contribution of £3,789,032, over a three-year time period, will be funded from a combination of grants and reserves where possible, in order to mitigate the cost of borrowing and ensure realisation of the revenue saving at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 4.3 Subject to Council approval, an application for the Salix funding of £3,034,979 will be submitted and terms agreed by the Director of Finance and Director of Place.

4.4 Forecast net annual revenue savings have been calculated and are shown in the table below.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Salix Loan 1		0.243	0.243	0.243	0.243	0.243			
Salix Loan 2			0.182	0.182	0.182	0.182	0.182		
Salix Loan 3				0.182	0.182	0.182	0.182	0.182	
Energy Savings	-0.127	-0.253	-0.380	-0.507	-0.507	-0.507	-0.507	-0.507	-0.507
Maintenance Savings	-0.098	-0.195	-0.293	-0.391	-0.391	-0.391	-0.391	-0.391	0.391
Net Revenue	-0.225	-0.205	-0.248	-0.291	-0.291	-0.291	-0.534	-0.716	-0.898

4.5 The table above demonstrates the net effect of the project on revenue budgets, including the repayment of the Salix Loan. Installation will commence April 2020 and partial savings realised in the same financial year of £0.225m. Savings will increase year on year during the installation phase resulting in full year effect of savings by 2023/2024.

4.6 During this period the payback of the Salix Loan will commence, starting in 2021/2022 and ending 2027/28. The Loan is on phased three-year drawdown in line with project implementation and is to be paid back over a five-year time frame. Only on full payback of the Salix Loan will the Council benefit from the full annual saving forecast of £0.9m per annum starting in year 2028/29.

4.7 Full Council is asked to delegate to the Director of Place and Director of Finance and Governance to enter into agreement with Salix for the works once all negotiations have concluded.

4.8 **Energy Savings:**

Anticipated financial savings from reduced energy costs are as follows:

2020/2021 = £126.6k (25%) – savings will follow the inventory being updated, submitted and approved by the energy supplier so this needs to be considered and the frequency considered,

2022/23 = £253.3k (50%)

2023/24 = £379.9k (75%)

2024/25 = £506,553 (100%) – full year savings after full implementation of project

Estimated energy savings = £506,553 per annum.

4.10 **Additional Savings:**

Cyclic Maintenance Bulk lamp change & clean = £298,399 per annum

Annual fault repair = £92,500 pa

Anticipated financial savings from reduced maintenance costs are as follows:

2020/2021 = £97.7k (25%)

2022/2023 = £195.5k (50%)

2023/2024 = £293.2k (75%)

2024/2025 = £390,899 (100%) – full year savings after full implementation of project

Estimated future maintenance savings - £390,899 per annum

5. Background

- 5.1 Shropshire Council owns and operates 19,596 street lights across its network of which 3,343 lights have already been converted to LED equipment. The remaining lights use various light technologies such as high-pressure sodium (SON) or lower pressure sodium (SOX) and this Project aims to convert these lamps to energy efficient LED technology over a period of 3 years.
- 5.2 Shropshire Council has already introduced part-night lighting across its lighting stock where possible but the provision of LED lighting will enable us to meet our commitments in terms of energy, both usage and levels of carbon reduction as well as financial efficiencies, which will support the Councils wider environment agenda
- 5.3 During 2019 the production of SOX lamps will cease and given that Shropshire currently uses some 8,336 lamps of varying wattages, or 42.5% of its stock, this will mean that as these lamps fail over the next three years or so the Authority will be forced to replace these lanterns completely on an ad-hoc basis if it wishes to continue to light its streets.
- 5.4 The Council is committed to reducing costs and its impact on the environment. This project meets these objectives by the implementation of a LED conversion programme which will give the opportunity to deliver the following improvements:
- By changing the Authorities light profile to use LED technology, it will reduce its energy consumption by some 56% on completion of the Project, which in turn will impact on its Carbon Footprint and reducing that by 794.5 tonnes of CO₂ per annum contributing towards Carbon emission saving targets.
 - Reduction in the frequency of maintenance, which will reduce the number of visits and traffic management required. This will have a direct effect on the amount of disruption to the highway network and will reduce the monthly revenue spend.
 - The reduction in upward light emissions, to support a darker sky initiative.
 - The provision of pre-programmable PECUs complete with NFC drivers which is a user interface to give the Council the flexibility to over-ride the pre-dimming/switch-offs of the lanterns on-street
- 5.5 A number of energy-saving options have already been introduced in the County to offset previous increases in the energy costs associated with the street lighting service.

5.6 These include:

- Switching the street lighting off where lights were no longer necessary or over provided for.
- Part-night lighting between the hours of midnight and 05:30 on risk assessed routes.
- Dimming on LED lanterns replaced in the last 5 years on the County's lighting units between the hours of 22:00 and 05:30 on main roads in areas where Part-night lighting does not apply.
- Trimming all lighting switch on and off times to minimise burning hours reducing energy usage.
- Changing approximately 3,300 lanterns to LED lighting as part of the column replacement programme.

5.7 Despite the significant amount of energy efficiency work carried out over the past five years on the network, there remains a significant proportion (77%) of the inventory made up of the conventional sodium units SON and SOX lamps.

5.8 The preferred option going forward would be to replace all the remaining lanterns with modern and energy efficient LED lanterns. The design and reliability of LED lanterns has improved greatly over the last decade, with the latest technology producing a clearer white light, providing higher lumen output from a much lower wattage, thereby using less energy, and producing lower carbon emissions than the current lanterns. The cost of these lanterns has also fallen significantly in recent years as demand for new and more energy efficient solutions has grown.

5.9 The new and more energy efficient LED lanterns can provide energy savings of up to 73% (depending on light output) when compared to the existing units however, despite the reducing purchase costs, a large initial capital investment is still required to procure the new units.

5.10 In order to assist and improve public information a FAQ's paper has been developed (Appendix 1) to update on the possible questions and provide a rationale and technical guidance on what the programme is, how it will be managed and rolled out. The intention is the council's web site will be updated and a press and social media campaign would be developed to ensure that information is disseminated in advance of the programme being rolled out.

5.11 Typically questions revolve around the "shade" of light, is it safe? And if existing older lamps fail, will they be replaced if included in a programme? All of which are included in the FAQ's.

6. Procurement

6.1 In order to facilitate the works, the Council's existing Term Maintenance Contractor could provide works to an agreed competitive budget and performance regime, or the works could be tendered to direct competition subject to approval and assessment of the most efficient and value for money method being assessed, and full Council to delegate authority to the Director of Place to implement the most efficient method.

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

Well Maintained Highways / Well Lit highways code of practice

<http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/en/utilities/document-summary.cfm?docid=220C1896-5D20-4A54-B010156913910E69>

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Steve Davenport

Local Member

Countywide project

Appendices

Appendix 1 - FAQ briefing note for public information

Appendix 2 - Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

APPENDIX 1

Street lighting LED lantern replacement programme – Frequently Asked Questions

Please see below some Frequently Asked Questions about the new LED lights and the programme.

1. Why are you spending all this money to replace the Street lights?
2. How much will it cost?
3. When will this be happening in my area?
4. How many street lights are there in Shropshire, of different types?
5. Will every Street light be replaced with an LED type lantern?
6. Will the Street lighting columns be replaced as part of this programme?
7. Will the streets lit with LEDs look any different?
8. Are there any other advantages to LED street lights?
9. How long do LED's typically last?
10. What is the cost per street light of replacing with LED?
11. How quickly can you install these LEDs once you start?
12. What will you do with the old lanterns that are removed?
13. How did you choose which areas to do first?
14. Will you still keep repairing faulty (sodium) all-night lanterns when they fail?
15. Will the current Part-night lit Street lights be converted to All night lighting?
16. Why does the new Street light not switch on and off at the times specified?
17. Will or can the new LED street lights be dimmed?
18. What is the colour temperature, in degrees kelvin, of the LEDs to be used?
19. Are LED Street lights considered environmentally friendly?
20. How safe are LED street lights?

Please see below some Frequently Asked Questions about the new LED lights and the programme.

1. Why are you spending all this money to replace the Street lights?

A: Shropshire Councils (SC) Street lights are of aging stock, energy inefficient and becoming unreliable requiring considerable maintenance investment. By replacing 15,700 (80%) of the older conventional lanterns to the newer LED type, SC will save approximately £500k a year in energy, £390k in maintenance costs and enable us to meet our obligations under the government's Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Policy.

Electricity consumption on the affected lighting stock is estimated to reduce by 56% as a result of the LED conversion project, with energy prices forecast to rise we are taking this opportunity to replace the existing street lighting network with more efficient LED equipment. This will allow us to continue to provide a quality street lighting service at an affordable price and will mitigate any future rises in electricity costs.

2. How much will it cost?

A: SC is investing £6.8m into the project, £3.1m of which will be forward funded by an interest-free Government loan. Once all Street lights are replaced with LED lanterns, SC will save approximately £900k a year in future revenue savings which will support the Highways Service Revenue Budget.

It is expected that the LED replacement project will deliver financial payback over six years.

3. When will this be happening in my area?

A: The lantern replacement programme will be over 3 years commencing in April 2020 with completion in March 2024. As we are at pre-project start, no commitment can be given over which areas will be upgraded when, this will change as the project develops and the programme updated.

4. How many street lights are there in Shropshire, of different types?

A: There are approximately 19,500 units of various types owned by SC, of which 3,339 have already been upgraded to LED technology.

A total of 8,336 lanterns or 42.5% of the stock use the older SOX lamps of varying wattages which are no longer manufactured soon requiring full lantern replacement on lamp failure.

5. Will every Street light be replaced with an LED type lantern?

A: All SC owned street lighting will be converted to LED as part of the three-year lantern replacement programme. Firstly, we will focus on the replacement of standard lanterns, although decorative and heritage lighting will be addressed at some point.

It is not our intention to replace heritage style equipment with modern LED lanterns. Our proposal is to fit LED equipment into existing heritage lanterns wherever possible so the only noticeable change will be the switch from yellow light to a white light.

6. Will the Street lighting columns be replaced as part of this programme?

In almost all cases the new LED lantern will simply replace the existing lantern on any given Street lighting column.

In a very small number of cases a Street lighting column will be replaced if it is found to be in poor condition however it is unlikely that the position of the street light will be changed. In these circumstances a single sodium light may be left in situ for a short period of time until the lighting column can be replaced.

We do have a separate street lighting column replacement programme which targets the oldest, most decrepit equipment around the county. This programme will continue to operate concurrent with the proposed LED scheme and will take advantage of the new efficient lanterns.

7. Will the streets lit with LEDs look any different?

A: Each area where the new LED lanterns are to be installed will be designed in accordance with the British Standard. Visibility for drivers and other road users will be better in all cases. Residents will notice a difference to the light, which may take some time to adjust to.

8. Are there any other advantages to LED street lights?

A: Yes, particularly because they last much longer than conventional sodium lights, other benefits include: -

- Greater energy savings – up to 73% in comparison to the conventional sodium units SON and SOX lamps.
- Better colour rendering, making colours more natural
- Longer life – up to 100,000 hours, resulting in less maintenance
- Uniform, high quality white light. LED lighting provides better facial recognition for security and CCTV cameras and therefore helps to make areas safer.
- LEDs can be dimmed when light is not needed, resulting in additional energy and carbon savings.

9. How long do LED's typically last?

The life span of a quality LED Street light is typically designed to operate for around 100,000 hours, which is significantly (around 6 times) longer than that of most incandescent, fluorescent or High Intensity Discharge (traditional street lighting) lamp sources.

Street Lights switch on when the ambient light falls to a certain level, typically 35 lux and will operate for shorter hours in the summer months and longer during the winter months, to reflect the changes in the seasons.

Therefore, over a typical year a street lighting unit operating in these conditions will be switched-on for around 4,100 hours. Based on these annual hours of operation, the LED street lights are expected to operate between 20-25 years

10. What is the cost per street light of replacing with LED?

A: The average cost should work out at just over £250 per unit. The cost includes the price of the LED lantern itself, the installation cost, any traffic management and the design work and other project management costs. Because the council is buying large numbers of similar units, they will achieve significant bulk discount from the manufacturers.

11. How quickly can you install these LEDs once you start?

A: It is estimated that where there are no major issues, such as prolonged inclement weather, we would envisage around 100 lanterns to be installed per week. The target is to install approximately 6,400 (40%) LEDs lanterns in year 1, with the first year ending in March 2021. Year 2 will look to replace 4,800 lanterns, similar numbers in year 3 with all upgrades completed by March 2024.

12. What will you do with the old lanterns that are removed?

A: These will be properly disposed of with materials being re-used where possible.

13. How did you choose which areas to do first?

A: The higher wattage lanterns which require more energy to light (main roads) will be converted first to maximise both energy and carbon savings in the first year, followed by the lower wattage Street lights such as those on residential estates.

14. Will you still keep repairing faulty (sodium) all-night lanterns when they fail?

A: We will try to be as financially efficient as possible, where safety is not at risk, so if a light is out and economically repairable we will do so. If the cost to repair exceeds its economical worth, consideration will be given to replacement with a new LED lantern.

15. Will the current Part-night lit Street lights be converted to All night lighting?

A: No, The LED lantern replacement project will not change the current Part-night lighting policy. Where Part-night lighting has been introduced into a Street light, the switch on and off times will be unchanged in line with the Part-night lighting risk assessment criteria. Although LED lanterns will provide significant savings, Part-night lighting will contribute to the overall energy savings and enable us to meet our obligations under the government's Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Policy.

16. Why does the new Street light not switch on and off at the times specified?

A: When fitted, each Part-night photocell requires nine to 14 days to calibrate properly. The longer they are in situ the more accurate they become. The calibration process can be interrupted by a number of variables, including adverse weather conditions, local power disruptions and the switch between BST and GMT.

The streetlights work on the available light (via their photocell) and do not have an inbuilt clock.

When everything is working perfectly there is still a +/- 15min variation possible in the switching times. However, only a very small proportion of lights would be affected to this extent. Of more than 12,000 units installed to date only a handful have experienced these timing issues over an extended period.

Any timing issues will resolve themselves as the photo cells continue the calibration process without manual intervention. However, if the issue persists (outside the +/- 15min) for longer than the 14-day calibration period we will consider replacing them.

If lights continue to operate outside of this 15 minute window, please report a streetlight fault and we will investigate.

17. Will or can the new LED street lights be dimmed?

A: Yes, there is some existing dimming of LED's, which is dependent upon location and an individual risk assessment.

18. What is the colour temperature, in degrees kelvin, of the LEDs to be used?

A: The colour temperature will vary depending on its location, running from 2700k for residential estates to 4000k on main roads and areas of conflict (pedestrian crossings, major junctions etc) which is a neutral white light source not a high CCT.

19. Are LED Street lights considered environmentally friendly?

Yes, LED's are considered to be environmentally friendly in a number of ways.

Firstly, they are designed to have a long-life span which can offer around 20 years of near maintenance-free service. Unlike conventional street lighting units, there is no lamp to change which means no waste.

Assuming a conventional street light is re-lamped every three years, that's over six re-lamping cycles over a 20-year period. As such, there is: -

- reduced disposal of old lamps containing harmful mercury;
- reduced fuel used and the accompanying pollution to service those fixtures;
- reduced potential for congestion on the highway network through lane closures or road works;
- less natural resources and energy used to produce the replacement lamps;
- less fuel used to transport the lamps from the factory (most likely overseas), to the distributor, to the contractor, to the job site

20. How safe are LED street lights?

A: The street lights we will be installing are designed for the exact local environment they are placed in to ensure the right luminance (light) on the road whilst minimising glare.

Expert reports show:

Public Health England - Public Health England's report concluded that to damage your eyesight you would need to be less than 2 metres away with steady fixation for 2.5 hours!

European Commission Report - SCHEER (scientific committee on Health, Environment and emerging risks) The Committee concluded that there is no evidence of direct adverse health effects from LEDs emission in normal use (lamps and displays) by the general healthy population.

The Lighting Research Centre paper concludes that LEDs present no special concerns for the blue-light hazard over some other common sources in typical use cases because photophobic responses limit exposure to bright sources.

All the above reports show that street lighting should not have an adverse effect on the circadian (daily sleeping and waking) rhythm. It might be noted that office and home lighting and the use of laptops and mobile phones is more likely to have an effect.

End

Appendix 2

Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) Part One Screening Record

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change <i>Please use this box for the full formal name of the proposed service change, whether it is a policy, a procedure, a function, a project, an update of a strategy, etc. The term "service change" is used in this form as shorthand for whatever form the changes may take.</i>
County Wide Street Lighting LED Lantern Replacement Project. (Carbon Reduction Programme)

Name of lead officer carrying out the screening
Steve Brown

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	yes x	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		no

If completion of a Part One assessment is an appropriate and proportionate action at this stage, please use the boxes below and sign off as indicated. If a Part Two report is required, please move on to separate full report stage.

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations
<p>An existing programme of replacement is currently underway which is not considered to impact significantly in negative terms against people with Protected Characteristics. Screening indicates that the impact in equality terms of this approach towards street light replacements is neutral or positive for protected characteristic groupings in the population. It is assessed as having a positive impact for the groupings of Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, and Social Inclusion.</p> <p>A press and social media campaign would be developed, supported by additional information on the Councils web site. This will draw upon an FAQs document, which sets out the key information and criteria for wider information for the community as a whole</p>

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations
<p>From an ongoing engagement angle, the Highways service consults via the annual National Highways and Transport Survey in which residents of Shropshire participate, as well as further internal customer liaison via Shropshire Council on line surveys, customer complaints, liaison with Local Joint Committees (LJCs) and Town and Parish Councils, and other forums where opportunities for engagement may arise.</p>

From an outcomes angle for communities, engagement with all Members as community leaders, and through Cabinet and Portfolio Holder, will help the service and therefore the Council to ensure that information, feedback and concerns are raised with Highways and that actions may then be identified as necessary to mitigate any negative impacts.

Associated ESIIAs

2019 ESIIAs in relation to highways management:

- Winter Maintenance: Operational Plan and Preparedness for the Winter Service Season of 2019/2020 for Shropshire Highways
- Adoption of an improved approach to manage risk on the highways


Actions to mitigate negative impact, enhance positive impact, and review and monitor overall impacts in terms of any other considerations

In the report to Council for 19th December, Councillors are reminded that they will be aware of the Climate Emergency and the current national debate regarding the environment. The LED Conversion Programme will contribute significantly to reduced energy consumption and will be intrinsic to the delivery of the council's environment agenda, by reducing the consumption of electric by 56% over the working period.S

Shropshire Council's (SC) Street lights are of aging stock, energy inefficient and becoming unreliable requiring considerable maintenance investment. By replacing 15,700 (80%) of the older conventional lanterns to the newer LED type, SC will save approximately £500k a year in energy, £390k in maintenance costs and enable us to meet our obligations under the government's Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Policy.

Electricity consumption on the affected lighting stock is estimated to reduce by 56% as a result of the LED conversion project, with energy prices forecast to rise we are taking this opportunity to replace the existing street lighting network with more efficient LED equipment. This will allow us to continue to provide a quality street lighting service at an affordable price and will mitigate any future rises in electricity costs.

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i>	S Brown	2/12/2019
<i>Any internal support*</i>		
<i>Any external support**</i> Mrs Lois Dale		3 rd December 2019

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

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

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer's name</i>	S Brown	2/12/2019
<i>Accountable officer's name*</i>		

**This may either be the Head of Service or the lead officer*

B. Detailed Screening Assessment

Aims of the service change and description
<p>Shropshire's highway network comprises more than 5,100 km. It is an extensive and diverse network comprising busy urban roads to lightly trafficked rural lanes which form the majority off the network. Section 41 of the Highways Act (1980) places a duty on the authority to maintain the highway.</p> <p>As part of that responsibly the requirement to maintain street lighting is included in the highways act. The council already undertakes this work and has a current LED replacement programme that has converted 3,339 (as referenced with this report) so this activity is current in place and being delivered. The approval of the SALIX loan will low the work / activity to be expedited and the programme completed at a faster pace. The work and activity are the same.</p> <p>All SC owned street lighting will be converted to LED as part of the three-year lantern replacement programme. Firstly, we will focus on the replacement of standard lanterns, although decorative and heritage lighting will be addressed at some point.</p> <p>It is not an intention to replace heritage style equipment with modern LED lanterns. Our proposal is to fit LED equipment into existing heritage lanterns wherever possible so the only noticeable change will be the switch from yellow light to a white light.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the work will enhance and improve the current stock of street lights, thus there is no detrimental impact to the wider public</p>

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change
<p>All who live in, work in and visit Shropshire, and therefore make use of the road networks in order to access facilities, services, education and employment, leisure opportunities including night time economy, etc., and who therefore need to do so in safety.</p>

Evidence used for screening of the service change

The service change is proposed as a proactive measure in response to the need to follow respond to climate considerations and possible economic factors, which are evidenced in the Council's various recorded commitments to acting on climate change.

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

Whilst a specific programme of consultation is not envisaged, beyond wider ongoing engagement with the community, currently a conversion programme is in place, this programme will expedite that programme and enhance, improve and make safe older street lights. Publicity will be arranged accordingly, through which additional feedback may usefully be sought.

Initial assessment for each group

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

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)		X		
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)		X		
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)		X		
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)				X

Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				X
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)		X		
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				X
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)		X		

Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations

Replacement of bulbs to LED, will save future electricity costs and contribute significantly to the Council's Climate and Environment Strategy.

There will be reduced maintenance costs via lower cyclical maintenance frequencies

Future revenue savings will be achieved to support the Highways Service Revenue Budget.

Council will also be aware of the Climate Emergency and the current national debate regarding the environment. The LED Conversion Programme will contribute significantly to reduced energy consumption and will be intrinsic to the delivery of the council's environment agenda, by reducing the consumption of electric by 56% over the working period.

The Council currently spends approximately £1.0 million each year on energy for street lighting. Recent projections indicate energy costs for street lighting will rise by between 5% and 14% over the next 10 years which could mean the annual cost increasing to nearly £3.7 million in that time and as high as £13.7 million in 20 years if prices rose by 14% each year. This forecast is unsustainable, and a change in the approach is required.

By investing approximately £6.83 million over 3 years to convert the Council's 16,253 street lights to LED, it would reduce their consumption by 56% saving approximately £506,533 per year (at today's prices) in energy and a reduction in maintenance costs of an estimated £390,899 per year.

Guidance Notes

1. Corporate and Service Area Policy and Practice on Equality and Social Inclusion

This involves taking an equality and social inclusion approach in planning changes to services, policies or procedures, including those that may be required by Government.

The decisions that you make when you are planning a service change need to be recorded, to demonstrate that you have thought about the possible equality impacts on communities and to show openness and transparency in your decision making processes.

This is where Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessments (ESIAs) come in. Where you carry out an ESIA in your service area, this provides an opportunity to show:

- What evidence you have drawn upon to help you to recommend a strategy or policy or a course of action to Cabinet;
- What target groups and audiences you have worked with to date;
- What actions you will take in order to mitigate any likely negative impact upon a group or groupings, and enhance any positive effects for a group or groupings; and
- What actions you are planning to review the impact of your planned service change.

The formal template is there not only to help the service area but also to act as a stand alone for a member of the public to read. The approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people we may describe as vulnerable, for example due to low income or to safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, eg Age.

We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging or delivering services.

When you are not carrying out an ESIA, you still need to demonstrate that you have considered equality in your decision-making processes. It is up to you what format you choose. You could use a checklist, an explanatory note, or a document setting out our expectations of standards of behaviour, for contractors to read and sign. It may well not be something that is in the public domain like an ESIA, but you should still be ready for it to be made available.

Both the approaches sit with a manager, and the manager has to make the call, and record the decision made on behalf of the Council. Help and guidance is also available via the Commissioning Support Team, either for data, or for policy advice from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist. Here are some examples to get you thinking.

Carry out an ESIIA:

- If you are building or reconfiguring a building;
- If you are planning to reduce or remove a service;
- If you are consulting on a policy or a strategy;
- If you are bringing in a change to a process or procedure that involves other stakeholders and the wider community as well as particular groupings

For example, there may be a planned change to a leisure facility. This gives you the chance to look at things like flexible changing room provision, which will maximise positive impacts for everyone. A specific grouping that would benefit would be people undergoing gender reassignment

Carry out an equality and social inclusion approach:

- If you are setting out how you expect a contractor to behave with regard to equality, where you are commissioning a service or product from them;
- If you are setting out the standards of behaviour we expect from people who work with vulnerable groupings, such as taxi drivers that we license;
- If you are planning consultation and engagement activity, where we need to collect equality data in ways that will be proportionate and non-intrusive as well as meaningful for the purposes of the consultation itself;
- If you are looking at services provided by others that help the community, where we need to demonstrate a community leadership approach

For example, you may be involved in commissioning a production to tour schools or appear at a local venue, whether a community hall or somewhere like Theatre Severn. The production company should be made aware of our equality policies and our expectation that they will seek to avoid promotion of potentially negative stereotypes.

Specific groupings that could be affected include: Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. There is positive impact to be gained from positive portrayals and use of appropriate and respectful language in regard to these groupings in particular.

2. Legal Context

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

Service areas would ordinarily carry out a screening assessment, or Part One equality impact assessment. This enables energies to be focussed on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection about the positive or negative impacts of a service change upon groupings in the community, and for any adjustments to be considered and made accordingly.

If the screening indicates that there are likely to be significant negative impacts for groupings within the community, the service area would need to carry out a full report, or Part Two assessment. This will enable more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion. Please contact the equality policy lead within the Council for more advice and guidance in this regard, as per details below.

For further information on the use of ESIIAs: please contact your head of service or contact Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist and Council policy support on equality, via telephone 01743 258528, or email lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk.



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
19 December 2019
10.00 am

<u>Item</u>
Public

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 101
PROPOSED DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER TO UPGRADE FOOTPATH 18,
18Y & 18Z TO BRIDLEWAY STATUS AND THE ADDITION OF THREE BRIDLEWAYS
IN THE PARISH OF WROXETER AND UPPINGTON.
DELEGATION TO TELFORD AND WREKIN COUNCIL TO INVESTIGATE AND MAKE
THE ORDER ON OUR BEHALF**

Responsible Officer Mark Barrow, Director of Place & Enterprise
e-mail: Mark.barrow@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 258919

1. Summary

An application to add and upgrade public rights of way on the definitive map affects routes which run within both Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Council areas. Telford and Wrekin Council has agreed to investigate the whole claim and authority is sought to delegate the power to investigate and make a legal order to Telford and Wrekin Council under the Local Government Act 1972, Section 101.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that Shropshire Council delegates the authority to Telford and Wrekin to publish the legal order for the connecting routes in Shropshire at the same time as those that are in Telford and Wrekin.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

Human Rights Act 1998

The investigating authority will apply proportionality by weighing up the evidence both for and against the application and consider whether a proposal to make an order is the most expedient method of complying with the relevant statutory duties whilst at the same time complying with the duties under the Human Rights legislation by acting in the interests of the public generally without restricting individuals disproportionately or unnecessarily.

The investigating authority will be under the same obligation as this Council to balance its statutory duty under Section 53 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to keep the Definitive

Map and statement up to date whilst considering the Human Rights implications of doing so.

4. Financial Implications

The Council has a statutory duty to keep the Definitive map under review and undertake the making of legal orders when required. Reasonable costs will be met by Telford and Wrekin Council. Shropshire may be asked to contribute to advertising costs should orders be published and provide officer support should any resulting orders require a public inquiry.

5. Background

In 2004 a formal application under the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 was submitted to upgrade footpath 18 Wroxeter and Uppington to bridleway status and add a bridleway on the south western end of the Wrekin in Shropshire. At the same time a corresponding application for the linking sections in Telford & Wrekin was also submitted. Reference was also made to an earlier application dated 1999. In 2018 an additional application was made for routes across the Wrekin, but which also included those already listed under the earlier claims. Discussions between Officers at both authorities resulted in Telford and Wrekin offering to investigate all of the routes included in the applications across The Wrekin.

Officers are therefore recommending that the Council delegates the power to carry out the investigation, and subsequent making of any legal order/s, to Telford and Wrekin Council. This is considered to be the most practicable and efficient way of determining these cross border claims on the Wrekin

Under Article 11 of Shropshire Council's Constitution, *The Council or Cabinet, in order to promote the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area, may:*

(a) enter into arrangements or agreements with any person or body;

(b) co-operate with, or facilitate or co-ordinate the activities of, any person or body; and

(c) exercise on behalf of that person or body any functions of that person or body.

The power to delegate non-Cabinet functions (which these are) is reserved to Council under article 11.4.

This report is to delegate to Telford and Wrekin Council the investigation and determination of the claims affecting the Wrekin, in the interests of expediency, so that any orders, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 can be progressed. It is considered that progressing with the order/s will promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

6. Conclusion

The most expedient way to progress a formal application which affects two adjacent authorities is for one i.e. Telford and Wrekin Council to undertake the full procedure.

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Meeting, date: Report heading

Cllr Lezley Picton

Local Member

Cllr Claire Wild

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Plan showing claimed routes across The Wrekin

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THE APPLICATION ROUTE

7. The application route is shown marked on the plan below:

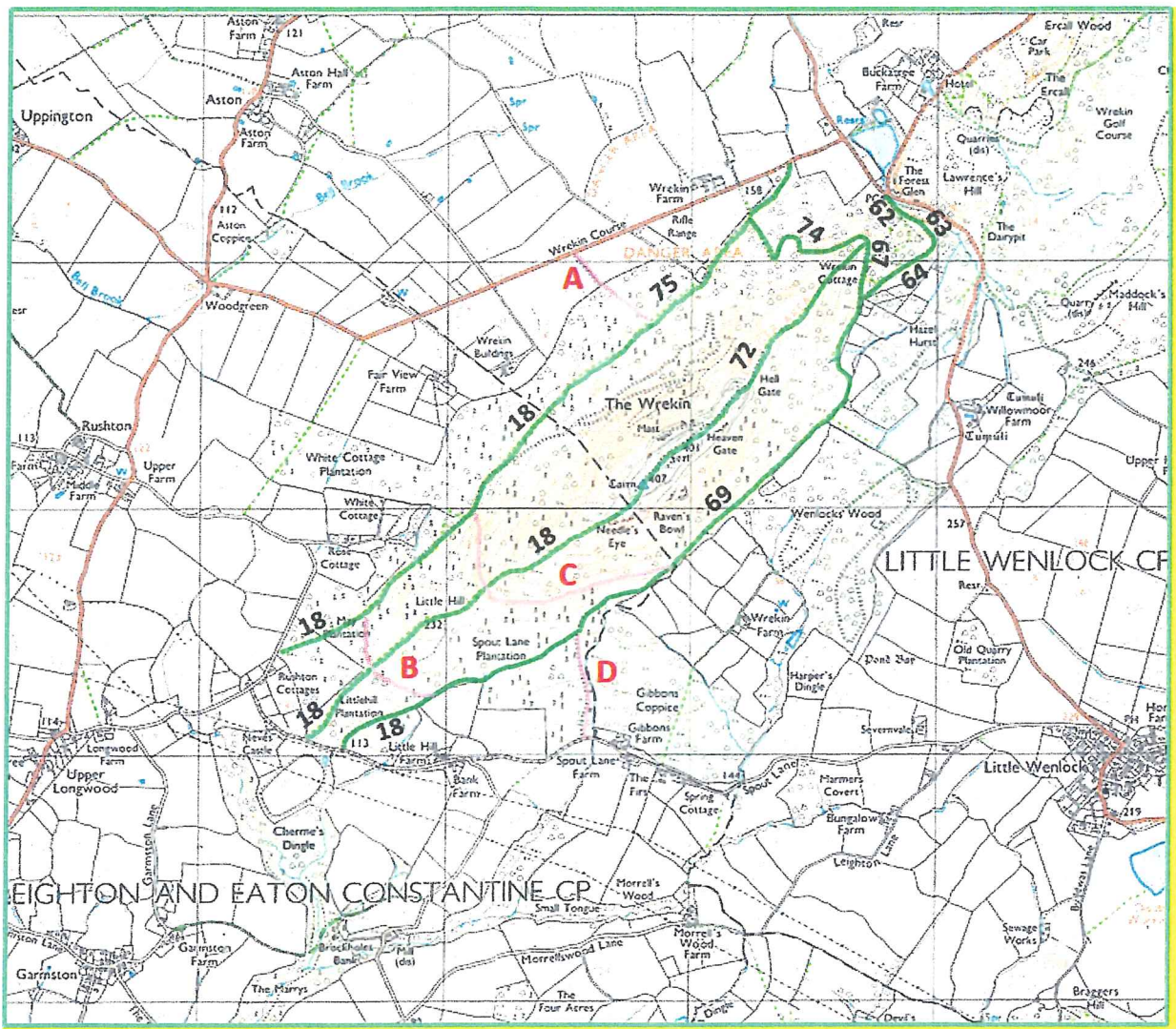


Figure 1: Ordnance Survey 1:25000 scale map extract showing application routes

FP18 mainly passes through Shropshire Council land but also crosses into Telford and Wrekin Council area and a previous request to upgrade this footpath to the status of bridleway was submitted.

The status of paths 62, 63 and 64 should be confirmed as bridleways although this is not shown to be the case on all maps.

Bridleway 64 leads into footpaths 69 and 67 – any earlier application for FP69 to be upgraded to bridleway was submitted in 2004.

Footpath 67 connects with FP72, and with FP74 which itself joins with FP75. There is no obvious end point nor turning point where bridleway 64 joins FP67 and FP69 and so the evidence points to continued use as a bridleway.

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<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
19 December 2019

<u>Item</u>
Public

PROPOSED REMOVAL OF LICENSING ACT HEARING PROCEDURE FROM THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

Responsible Officer: Rachel Robinson, Director of Public Health
e-mail: rachel.robinson@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 252003

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's approval to remove, from the Council's Constitution, the procedure for the holding of hearings in respect of licensing matters under the Licensing Act Sub-Committee Procedure Rules ('the Licensing Act Hearing Procedure') in order to facilitate a more flexible process that better represents the intentions of the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Council agrees to remove, from the Council's Constitution, the procedure for the holding of hearings in respect of licensing matters as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution under Annex A (D58 to D60) of the Licensing Act Sub-Committee Procedure Rules with immediate effect.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Human Rights Act Appraisal

- 3.1 Licensing Act hearings do not occur on a very frequent basis; however, they do occur and, when required, are resource and time intensive for all parties involved. It is, therefore, critical that the Licensing Act Hearing Procedure is as efficient as is pragmatically possible.

- 3.2 The Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005 ('the Regulations') state that hearings should take the form of a discussion led by the authority, allowing for some flexibility in proceedings and interaction between the involved parties. This approach means that hearings can be managed according to the specific application being considered, without the imposition of a rigid process, which could potentially limit the usefulness of the discussions held. The intention of this approach is to provide the Licensing Act Sub-Committee with a well-rounded view of the issues surrounding an application before the application is determined.
- 3.3 The Chair of a Licensing Act hearing retains the discretion to determine the process of each individual hearing; however, having a framework to follow makes the process more transparent and less daunting for all parties involved. It also assists the Chair to direct the order of business and to ensure that hearings focus on the licensing objectives that have given rise to the representations that have made the hearing necessary, that they do not stray into undisputed areas, that the principles of natural justice are applied, and that each party has an opportunity to be fairly heard.
- 3.4 Recent Licensing Act hearings have highlighted that the current Licensing Act Hearing Procedure set out in the Council's Constitution for conducting hearings does not meet the objectives referred to in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 above. It is not as streamlined as it could be and does not facilitate a timely or logical process that is comprehensible for all parties involved.
- 3.5 It is not clear at what point or for what reason the Licensing Act Hearing Procedure became part of the Council's Constitution as there is no requirement in the Licensing Act 2003 or the relevant Regulations for the procedure to form part of the Constitution.
- 3.6 Procedurally there are no specific benefits, either to the Licensing Act Sub-Committee or to the parties involved in the hearing, to having the Licensing Act Hearing Procedure form part of the Constitution. In fact, it overly

formalises a process that is clearly intended, by the Regulations, to be flexible and responsive according to the needs of each specific application being considered. The inclusion of the Licensing Act Hearing Procedure in the Constitution also makes it less reactive to change, for example, when the Statement of Licensing Policy is reviewed.

3.7 Conversely, if the Licensing Act Hearing Procedure were to become part of the ordinary business for the Strategic Licensing Committee, this will enable the hearing process to be reviewed and amended more readily to ensure the Council is able to react to change and respond to procedural issues as and when they arise.

3.8 The Strategic Licensing Committee is made up of members who have practical experience of conducting Licensing Act Sub-Committees and are, therefore, in a good position to determine a proportionate, pragmatic and fair procedure that benefits all parties.

3.9 As a result, the Strategic Licensing Committee recommends to the Council that the current Licensing Act Hearing Procedure is removed from the Constitution. The relevant report that was considered by the Committee is available on the Council's website at <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=3986&Ver=4>.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report; however, by ensuring the Licensing Act Hearing Procedure is as effective as possible, it is anticipated that this will assist the most efficient use of resources to operate the hearing process.

5. Background

5.1 Hearings under the Licensing Act 2003 ('Licensing Act') are convened by the Council and conducted by three members of the Strategic Licensing

Committee who sit as the Licensing Act Sub-Committee. A hearing, although similar to, is not intended to replicate a court setting and the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005 determine that it is for Licensing Authorities to decide the process their hearings will follow.

- 5.2 Hearings are required where there have been relevant representations received to a licence application or notice which cannot be resolved within the given consultation period for the particular type of application or notice.
- 5.3 In the financial year 2018/19 seven hearings were held; one was for a new premises licence application, four were for full variations to premises licences and two were for reviews of premises licences. In the current financial year there have, to date, been three hearings, all of which were reviews of premises licences.

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

Licensing Act 2003

Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005

‘The Section 182 Guidance’ - Revised guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 (April 2018)

Report to Strategic Licensing Committee on 2 October 2019 entitled “Licensing Act Sub-Committee – Licensing Act Hearing Procedure”

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ielistdocuments.aspx?CId=166&MId=3986&Ver=4>

Cabinet Member: Councillor Gwilym Butler Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services

Local Member: Cover all areas of Shropshire

Appendices: None



<u>Committee and date</u> Council 19 th December 2019
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<u>Item No</u>

Report of the Portfolio Holder Finance & Corporate Support

Contact: David Minnery
 Email: David.minnery@shropshire.gov.uk

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This document identifies some of the work undertaken within the Finance Portfolio since September 2018 and details some of the aims and objectives for the future.

2.0 Finance

2.1 Financial Strategy

2.1.1 The Financial Strategy approved by Council on 28th February 2019 identified and proposed a combination of approaches to close the projected funding gap for 2019/20. These included raising more Council Tax as a result of new freedoms, putting forward further and extensive savings plans and the continued use of one off grants and reserves. These proposals for savings and council tax income were rolled into the projected expenditure and resources position.

2.1.2 In addition, changes to the value of the funding gap arose as a result of improved information including establishing final taxbase figures and collection fund outturns as well as changes brought about by the Final Local Government Finance Settlement which was announced on 29th January 2019.

2.1.3 Despite the use of one off grant to reduce the funding gap, a residual gap remained which was addressed through the use of earmarked reserves to deliver a balanced budget for 2019/20.

2.1.4 The financial strategy approved by Council did highlight the potential funding gap for future years, but given the uncertainty surrounding the funding levels for local government with the planned Fair Funding Implementation and reforms to Business Rates Retention, it is not possible to predict with any confidence the potential funding gap to be addressed.

2.1.5 The Financial Strategy for 2020/21 is to be considered by Cabinet on 16 December. This reflects announcements from the Government regarding the one off Spending Round announced in September 2019 and the impact of increasing growth in costs of Adult and Children’s Social Care. This has resulted in further savings being identified to reduce the funding gap and the need to go again use one off grants and balances to deliver a balanced budget for 2020/21. These proposals will now be the subject of the budget consultation and will be refined further over the winter months as more clarity is released with the Provision and Final Local Government Finance Settlements for 2020/21.

2.2 Financial Oversight

2.2.1 Over the financial year it is important to ensure that an oversight of the Council’s financial position is reported through to Cabinet. This is delivered by financial monitoring reports covering the revenue account, the capital programme and the cash position via treasury management updates. An overspend position was initially highlighted at Quarter 2 of 2018/19, and management action was employed including a spending freeze to bring the outturn position for the Council to an underspend of £0.167m.

2.2.2 The capital programme is being delivered and extended through a substantial number of additional, commercially focused schemes linked to the Financial Strategy. Details of these schemes will be reported over the coming months and progress monitored through quarterly reporting. One area that the Council is progressing well with is the delivery of the Digital Transformation Programme which will be substantially delivered within 2018/19. This programme is a major investment for the Council and it is pleasing that progress is being made well within the identified budget with the potential to deliver savings through increased efficiency running into the many millions.

2.2.3 The Treasury Management approach adopted by the Council continues to deliver above benchmark returns, providing additional much needed cash without undertaking unnecessary risk on the capital employed.

2.2.4 The Council’s current year revenue position is under strain as a result of pressures particularly within Adult Services and Children’s services. A spending freeze has again been implemented across the Council and we are looking at other initiatives to bring the projected overspend into balance before the end of the year.

2.3 Finance Services within the Portfolio

2.3.1 A number of initiatives have been or are being implemented by services directly within the Finance Portfolio.

- 2.3.2 Following the securing of a government grant worth £1.308m in 2017/18 a local discretionary business scheme was created during 2017 and this funding was allocated to almost 1,000 business across Shropshire. The scheme has continued to award reduced grant funding worth £262,000 to over 800 businesses across Shropshire for year 3 of the scheme. These funds help businesses cover the transitional costs of business rates revaluation from April 2017 and is an important boost to Shropshire's business economy.
- 2.3.3 Changes to the Councils business rate discretionary rate relief policy, that was reviewed during 2018 with some amendments, have been applied to affected businesses with effect from 1 April 2019.
- 2.3.4 Revenues and Benefits have continued to implement an ambitious program of transformation in the way it interacts with council taxpayers, business and benefit claimants. We currently have 16,500 council tax accounts set up for e-billing (11% of accounts) and 2,500 businesses set up for e-billing (20% of accounts). We have recently introduced e-notifications for housing benefits and just under 500 claimants have already signed up for this (4% of housing benefit caseload). From April 2019 to October 2019 there have been over 8,000 customer updates on the Revenues online customer portal, including just under 3,000 direct debits. For the same period 1,130 new benefit applications have been received on the Benefits online customer portal, which equates to 45% of all new claims received in the period.
- 2.3.5 For the 2018-19 financial year the Revenues and Benefits Service achieved a 98.2% collection rate for council tax collection which is the 8th highest out of 56 Unitary Authorities. This was achieved despite it being the first year that we had implemented the 20% minimum payment to our council tax support scheme. The team also achieved a 98.8% collection rate for business rates collection which is the 14th highest out of 56 Unitary Authorities.
- 2.3.6 The Revenues and Benefits Service ensured that for 2018/19 £452k was spent in discretionary housing payment against total grant funding of £483k (93.5%).
- 2.3.7 For the 2018-19 financial year the Revenues and Benefits Service achieved average speed of processing for new housing benefit claims of 28 days, and average speed of processing for housing benefit changes in circumstances of 6 days, against a national average of 21 days and 6 days respectively.
- 2.3.8 The Council's Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement was completed in line with the early closedown timetable for 2018/19 and published on the 1st August 2019 once the Council's external auditors, Grant

Thornton, had issued an unqualified opinion on the accounts and an unqualified Value for Money Opinion.

- 2.3.9 The Council went live with the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system which involved the Finance function on 1 April 2019. The volume of transactions to be processed initially was more than anticipated as the new system centralises the processing of invoices and this initially caused delays in payments to suppliers as users of the system both within Finance and across the Council adjusted to the new system. The Finance team worked with service areas and suppliers to ensure payment was received as soon as possible and additional resources were brought into the team to help clear the backlog of transactions. Since these initial delays, the system has been working well and further guidance and training continues to be rolled out to service areas across the Council who may not have grasped the new processes as quickly as anticipated. As part of the ERP solution, the Finance team have also rolled out responsibility for budget monitoring to budget holders. This has been received well within service areas and Finance Business Partners have been supporting budget holders with the transition.
- 2.3.10 The Treasury team have outperformed their investment benchmark by 0.29% in 2018/19 and performance for the last three years is 0.29% per annum above the benchmark. Treasury activities during the year have been within approved prudential and treasury indicators set and have complied with the Treasury Strategy.
- 2.3.11 The Commissioning Development & Procurement service have, as well as providing support to the rest of the Council on a variety of tendering and recommissioning projects, continued to develop with senior officers a more consistent and efficient approach from commissioning and contracting. Work this year has focused on the delivery of negotiation training, key risk contract assurance and monitoring, savings from contract negotiations and contract management of key corporate expenditure including that on agency staff and office supplies. The corporate e-tendering system has been further developed with increased use of the Dynamic Purchasing System module used by Passenger Transport, Public Health and Property Services Group. Current work is focused on the contract savings through recommissioning, tendering and negotiations along with a Commissioning Improvement Programme.
- 2.3.12 In addition to the quarterly strategic risk update a risk workshop has taken place with Directors where all of the 16 strategic risks were challenged by Directors. All risk definitions, risk scores and target scores were discussed together with a discussion regarding the risk appetite of the authority. The latter confirmed that Directors felt the risk appetite for the authority is represented correctly in the Opportunity Risk Management Strategy. This position is then considered and reviewed by Cabinet Members.

2.3.13 The Risk and Insurance Team have carried out a tender exercise in respect of the insurance provision for the authority. The tender exercise has resulted in the change of provider for property insurance and has seen some savings on the premium charged. A five year Long Term Agreement has been entered into which will hopefully secure beneficial rates for five years in what is becoming a hardening market.

2.3.14 Following a restructure within Public Health following the departure of the Director of Public Health at the beginning of the year, responsibility for Emergency Planning has now passed to the Risk & Insurance Manager and the team are now known as the Risk, Insurance & Resilience Team.

2.3.15 Finally, it has been agreed that a full review of the base budget should be carried out. It is important that we address the budget framework alongside the Digital Transformation work so that the budget estimates for 2019/20 more closely reflect the future shape of the Council and the funding we have available. I am particularly keen to address the impact of change and to test the belief that the projected savings can be realised.

3.0 Legal and Democratic Services

3.1 Legal Services continues to support the corporate governance of the Council and the specific needs of the service areas. Various lawyers have been involved since the last update in advising and assisting with the numerous projects that are ongoing to deliver both the Commercial and Economic Growth Strategies and in the setting up of the Council's Housing Company. We continue to provide a strategic view on proposals we are asked to advise on and endeavour to identify any cross cutting issues or themes between different service areas. We champion mobile and agile working and many of the team spend at least as much of their working week away from the office as in it.

3.2 All service areas within legal are facing increased demands but for the third year running it is necessary to highlight the ongoing pressures in child care cases which have intensified yet further. Cases are becoming more complex and demanding and this has led to a sharp increase in the costs and measures are being formulated to address this.

3.3 The Elections team has had another busy year with two major unexpected elections, the European in June and the Parliamentary in December this year. There have been ongoing parish elections which are now resulting in nearly monthly by elections. The hard work that takes place annually on the electoral register is a continuing process. My sincere appreciation goes to this team for the sterling work they do. My appreciation also goes to the committee team, who work diligently and quietly to make sure all council meetings continue to run smoothly and in compliance with the law in the dynamic society we now live in.

4.0 Human Resources

4.1 Occupational Health, Safety and ICT Approvals

4.1.1 The Occupational Health, Safety and ICT Approvals teams have been focusing on improving our offer and support to customers through the following:

- Working with service areas to produce and implement H&S management systems including policies, procedures and arrangements.
- Development of our commercial officer to external customers, including Academies and external organisations.
- To fulfil contractual monitoring and support to Academies and external customers.
- To engage with service areas to ensure that health and safety compliance is in place through site visits, inspections, investigations and to review the existing Self-Monitoring Checklist to roll out to Premise and Team Managers.
- Raise awareness of workstation assessments for agile working in line with the Agile and Working Strategy.
- Support ‘Leap into Learning’ development for e-learning health and safety awareness courses across service areas.
- Support the implementation of Business World for the management of accident data, training bookings and course management and case management arrangements for occupational health.
- To continue to implement the Wellbeing Plan and facilitate three themes of Be Active, Be Mindful and Be Informed.
- Continued response to requests for support after notification of accidents and incidents.

4.1.2 Continued work to improve employee health and wellbeing has occurred as follows:

- The three themes to promote engagement with employees to support their own health and wellbeing has focused on ‘Be Active’, Be Mindful’ and Be Informed’
- A ‘Step Challenge’ was arranged in April/May to encourage employees to increase their physical activity by walking meetings, lunchtime walks and comparing their step achievement with colleagues.
- A six-week session was facilitated by external qualified teachers on Mindfulness to support employees to engage with self-help support in physical and mental health activities.
- Yoga sessions have been commissioned and offered to employees who purchase the sessions and can access the sessions after work.
- A podcast was developed and added to our Wellbeing Intranet pages on a Brief Guide to Mindfulness.

- Several mental health initiatives were developed and implemented:
 - A Mental Health Policy has been implemented.
 - Seventeen Mental Health First Aiders were trained and have been utilised around the organisation to signpost to services and support.
 - The 'Time to Pledge' (Led by MIND) Action Plan was founded and submitted for assessment.
- A Wellbeing Event was undertaken and well attended by employees in October to offer information to employees on health and wellbeing via stalls from benefit providers, counselling information, physiotherapy clinic for aches and pains, access to a range of therapies.
- Targeted support for musculoskeletal conditions from Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust for fast track access for employees to Physiotherapy Services.
- Currently delivering the 2019 programme of seasonal influenza vaccination programme to employees who provide front line care and support business continuity arrangements.
- Work continues to reduce overall cost of ICT systems and storage through our governance arrangements of reviewing requests for any new ICT procurements, ICT upgrades, or significant changes to existing ICT systems or software.

4.1.3 Health, safety and workplace health is reported regularly to the Health, Safety and Welfare group and the group continues to monitor progress against work plans, incidents including accidents, statutory compliance and approves all new health and safety guidance.

4.1.4 The focus for the coming year will be to continue to support initiatives regarding workplace wellbeing, reducing sickness absence, building our framework for workplace compliance and to continue developing our commercial approach of the teams.

4.2 HR Admin & Payroll (Recruitment and Payroll)

4.2.1 Phase 1 of the integrated HR, Pay and Finance system, Business World, went live on 1 April 2019. The system is used to pay corporate and maintained schools staff as well as expenses for Members. This is a huge change in the administration of payroll as it is based on a self service approach which has automated approval workflows rather than administration heavy procedures.

4.2.2 Members of the HR Admin and Payroll team have been supporting corporate and school staff with the system processes and have also been suggesting further improvements to the system which have been implemented. It is

important to note that the system will continue to be developed to ensure that Business World remains a system fit for our needs.

- 4.2.3 Payroll processes have been reviewed and continue to be reviewed to realise efficiencies which currently has resulted in less printing, reduced paperwork and reduction in postage costs. Further efficiencies will be realised once all customers are on the new system.
- 4.2.4 Academies and External contractors remain on Resourcelink as it was deemed appropriate to separate out these clients into phase 2 due to the different requirements these customers have. This phase is due to start in January 2021 and members of the HR Admin and Payroll team will assist with the development and testing of the system prior to implementation.
- 4.2.5 HR Admin and Payroll staff continue to work with Academies in streamlining the submission of information in Resourcelink, especially with MATs who have many schools under one umbrella, which has resulted in stronger working relationships.
- 4.2.6 A skills audit for the HR Admin and Payroll team is underway with initial findings prioritising the need to develop IT skills, customer service approach and payroll apprenticeships going forward. There is also an imminent need for Resourcelink support following a change in personnel within the team.
- 4.2.7 The first online recruitment portal has been successfully launched with a large MAT. The portal was developed in collaboration with the MAT and this model will now be used to take forward with other MATs/Academies.
- 4.2.8 There continues to be an eye on commercial activity with another two external contracts coming on line in the new year. However, it is a planned cautious approach to commercial activity due to the resource demands of running two systems.

4.3 HR Advice and Organisation Development

4.3.1 Upskill Shropshire (Apprenticeships)

The number of apprentices continues to increase utilising the funds from the apprenticeship levy. At the end of June 2019, over 200 applications were received from staff and 110 have converted into active apprenticeship starts, ranging from 12 months to 4 years in duration. An event took place on 12th November celebrating the successes for those who have completed their apprenticeship in the last 12 months, with the Apprentices of the Year Award being handed out for exceptional commitment, contribution and application of learning for the future

4.3.2 Leadership Programme

Over 100 leaders have now been through the programme, with a further 35 set to graduate from our third programme in April 2020. The programme content covers the key drivers of change: Digital Transformation, Commercialism, Agile and Mobile Working and Customer Experience taking account of external influences around national/local politics and enhancing Economic Growth for the county. Following the successful Leadership Conference in September 2019 (see below) plans are in place to create a Leadership Programme for Shropshire businesses (public and private) in 2020.

4.3.3 Commercial Opportunities

Shropshire HR is driving the authority's commercial agenda forward. In 2019, Shropshire HR has continued to attract income from an increasingly diverse external customer base. Forecasts for the current financial year (2019/20) suggest that Shropshire HR could generate a revenue as large as £1million.

In addition to providing annual and bespoke support services to organisations across the county, Shropshire HR has also developed and successfully delivered a large-scale leadership conference for business leaders across the county. The inaugural conference on the 19th September attracted over 190 delegates, world class speakers, and generated in excess of £25k income. Plans for The Leadership Conference 2020 are already in place, with the event promising to be 'bigger and better' in the new year.

Shropshire HR continues to review its business development plan, and will be continually adopting ambitious growth targets as part of its continued commitment to commercial excellence.

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

Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2023/24 – Cabinet 13 February 2019, Council 28 February 2019

Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2024/25 – Cabinet 16 December 2019

Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2018/19 – Cabinet 28 November 2018

Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2018/19– Cabinet 13 February 2019

Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2019/20 – Cabinet 4th September 2019

Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2019/20 – Cabinet 18th November 2019

Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves – Cabinet 13 February 2019

<p>Fees and Charges 2019/20 – Cabinet 13 February 2019, Council 28 February 2019</p> <p>Estimated Collection Fund Outturn 2018/19 – Cabinet 13 February 2019</p> <p>Council Tax Resolution 2018/19 – Council 28 February 2019</p> <p>Financial Outturn 2018/19 – Cabinet 22 May 2019, Council 25 July 2019</p> <p>Statement of Accounts 2018/19 – Council 25 July 2019</p> <p>Treasury Strategy 2019/20 – Cabinet 13th February 2019, Council 28th February 2019</p> <p>Treasury Management Update Quarter 2 2018/19 – Cabinet 12th December 2018</p> <p>Treasury Management Update Quarter 3 2018/19 – Cabinet 13th February 2019</p> <p>Treasury Management Update Quarter 4 2018/19 – Cabinet 13th July 2019</p> <p>Treasury Management Update Quarter 1 2019/20 – Cabinet 4th September 2019</p> <p>Review of Non Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief and Council Tax Discretionary Discounts – Cabinet 4 July 2018</p>
<p>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) David Minnery</p>
<p>Local Member All</p>
<p>Appendices None.</p>



<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>Item</u>
Council 19 th December 2019	Public

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018 PLACE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

1.0 Summary

1.1 The annual statement of the Place Overview Committee provides a brief review of the committee's work during the previous year, as well as an overview of its work for the year ahead.

2.0 Place Overview Committee

2.1 During 2018 and 2019 the Place Overview Committee has looked at topics from across its remit. The following have been the main areas of focus:

- **Balancing housing and economic growth**
The committee looked several times at housing policy, in particular its role in supporting economic growth. As well as housing growth in urban areas, it also looked at how the council's planning policy maintained or enhanced the vitality of those communities. This work led to setting up a task and finish group that scrutinised and supported the council's proposals to set up its own housing development corporation.
- **North West Relief Road**
The committee scrutinised proposals for the proposed North West Relief Road. As well as looking at the business case for the road, it heard from people and members who were opposed to the proposed road. Although the committee gave its support to the proposals, it agreed that it would track the road's development.
- **Planning policy**
Throughout the year, the committee heard representations from community groups about their concerns with the ongoing development of the council's Local Development Framework. Committee members expressed concerns about how the council had calculated the services available in small settlements, but accepted that any decision on the soundness of the framework was a matter for the Planning Inspectorate.
- **Apprenticeships and skills training**
Throughout the year the committee scrutinised skills training in Shropshire. It received assurances from the council that it was effectively using its own Apprenticeship Levy. It also heard from Shrewsbury Colleges Group about

how it worked with businesses to ensure that it provided training that was relevant to business needs.

- **Town centre development**

The committee scrutinised the council's plan for Shrewsbury town, and was broadly supportive of proposals. It sought and received assurances that officers were supporting other market towns to draft plans for their town centres.

- **Shrewsbury shopping centres**

Members expressed concern at the size of the investment that the council had made in Shrewsbury's three shopping centres. Officers told the committee that the centres continued to provide a reasonable return on its investments. They also explained that the investment gave the council long-term control over the future of Shrewsbury town centre.

- **Supporting small and medium enterprises**

The committee sought to understand how the local authority supported small and medium enterprises. The appointment of a new officer to oversee this work had resulted in a new focus in this area. Officers explained that they would continue to work individually with key businesses, while providing more general support for other enterprises looking to set up or move to Shropshire.

- **Accessible green space**

As part of its work to look at how the council supports communities, it looked at how the council provides accessible green space to residents. Officers explained it was often rural communities with the poorest access to open space, even when there are useable open space nearby. Members were satisfied that the council used its budget effectively in improving accessibility.

- **Climate change**

The committee heard from officers about plans to respond to the Council-declared climate emergency. It agreed to create a task and finish group to look in depth at the council's proposed strategy, which will report to the People Overview Committee shortly.

- **Street works and street furniture**

Over the course of the year the committee considered a number of street works issues, including:

- A boards and banners
- Christmas decorations
- Housing development signs
- Pavement permits

It agreed to consider all of these issues in a single task and finish group meeting, which will report back to the Place Overview Committee in 2020.

- **Highways partners' annual reports**

The committee receives annual reports from the council's highways partners, WSP and Kier. Members raised numerous concerns about the existing contract with Kier. However officers were able to provide reassurance that service delivery and budget control were operating as planned.

3.0 2019-2020 onwards

3.1 Significant topics emerging for the coming year include:

- WSP annual report
- Street works task and finish group
- Shrewsbury town centre strategy
- North West Relief Road
- Communicating road works and street works
- Night-time economy
- Local housing company
- Biodiversity
- Climate change

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
None
Human Rights Act Appraisal
The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights act 1998
Environmental Appraisal
There are no environmental issues relating to this report.
Risk Management Appraisal
There are no risks associated with this report.
Community / Consultations Appraisal
Consultation is a component of Scrutiny work to collect information to support the development of conclusions and recommendations.

Cabinet Members

Cllr Gwilym Butler

Cllr Steve Davenport

Cllr Robert Macey

Local Member/s

All

Appendices

None



	<u>Item</u>
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ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1.0 Summary

1.1 The annual statement of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee provides a brief review of the committee's work during the previous year, as well as an overview of its work for the year ahead.

2.0 Communities Overview Committee

2.1 During 2018 and 2019 the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee has looked at topics from across its remit. The following have been the main areas of focus:

- **Parking strategy**
Throughout the year, the committee looked first at the council's proposed parking strategy, then later at the impact of the strategy following consultation.
- **Digital Transformation**
The committee continued to receive updates on the ongoing digital transformation of council services. Members challenged the timescales for the work, and questioned the savings that transformation would achieve. Officers assured members that despite the inevitable difficulties of implementing complex, IT systems, the work continued largely as planned. The committee will continue to track these crucial projects.
- **Business World**
The council's new business management software, Business World, had resulted in the disruption of some payments to schools, businesses and contractors. The committee looked into these issues, seeking assurance that the problems had been acknowledged and would be resolved.
- **Budget and Performance Management**
The committee scrutinised the council's budget planning and management, and quarterly corporate performance management reporting, in its role as Shropshire Council's general scrutiny committee.
- **Financial Strategy**
A task and finish group looked in-depth at the council's financial strategy, in particular its core proposals to innovate, raise income, focus resources and use reserves strategically.
- **Annual customer feedback**
The committee looked at the reasons why people complained about council

services, and how the council had responded to those complaints. In a later meeting, it focussed on complaints that had taken longer than 50 days to resolve.

- **Meeting housing need**

The committee heard that despite council efforts, housing construction and development in Shropshire failed to meet the needs of Shropshire people. Following this, the committee set up a task and finish group to look at proposals for a local authority housing development corporation. The committee recommended to council that it proceed with the proposals.

- **Asset Management Strategy**

The committee scrutinised a draft asset management strategy, which sought to put into place a framework that would ensure the council made optimal use of its property and land.

- **Community Infrastructure Levy**

The committee continued its scrutiny of the existing scheme for using Community Infrastructure Levy funds. It made a number of recommendations that it believed would result in the existing funds being used more efficiently and in a more timely manner.

3.0 2019-2020 onwards

3.1 Significant topics emerging for the coming year include:

- Corporate Peer Challenge Report and Action Plan
- Budget and Investment and Income
- Quarterly performance reporting

<p>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</p>
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<p>None</p>

<p>Human Rights Act Appraisal</p>
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<p>The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights act 1998</p>

<p>Environmental Appraisal</p>

<p>There are no environmental issues relating to this report.</p>

<p>Risk Management Appraisal</p>

<p>There are no risks associated with this report.</p>
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<p>Community / Consultations Appraisal</p>

Consultation is a component of Scrutiny work to collect information to support the development of conclusions and recommendations.

Cabinet Members

All

Local Member/s

All

Appendices

None

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COUNCIL 19th DECEMBER 2019

MEMBER QUESTIONS REPORT

1. Question from Councillor Hannah Fraser

Schools are required to pay funds from their budget towards the Apprenticeship Levy. It was intended that schools would benefit from being able to apply into the resulting fund to train staff via apprenticeships. However, schools are reporting that applying to the fund has hidden costs and the process is time consuming and difficult to navigate. Could Council please confirm how much money schools have paid into the apprenticeship Levy since it started, how many apprenticeships have been set up in schools, and how many of these are for teacher training?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

COUNCILLOR ED BIRD, PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Question: How much money have schools paid into the Apprenticeship Levy?

The table below shows the money which schools have paid into the apprenticeship levy (April 17 - November 19).

The total is £589,949. The breakdown is:

	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 Year to date £	Total £
Primary Schools	176,398	162,311	85,254	423,964
Secondary Schools	75,106	64,145	26,734	165,985
TOTAL (Schools)	251,504	226,457	111,988	589,949

Question: How many apprenticeships have been set up in schools?

Since the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in 2017, Upskill Shropshire has received **109 applications** for apprenticeships from maintained schools.

Number of Applications from Primary Schools	106
Number of Applications from Secondary Schools	3

Number of applications received by year:

Year	Number of applications
2017	25
2018	39
2019	45
Total	109

Application spilt for School Apprentices – new recruits/professional development:

Apprentices - new recruits	53
Apprentices – professional development	56

38 (43%) schools have engaged with Upskill Shropshire to start apprentices within their organisation. Table 1 below outlines apprenticeships in Shropshire maintained schools, the amount of money committed (before any withdrawals) from Shropshire Council’s Apprenticeship Levy pot.

As of 5/12/2019, there have been 56 apprenticeship starts within Shropshire Maintained Schools.

Question: How many of these are for teacher training?

Starts/Completed/Withdrawn on Teaching/Education related apprenticeships:

Table 1 below maps starts/completed/withdrawn apprentices across the various education apprenticeships.

Table 1

Type of Apprenticeship	Level	Number of Learners Applications	Completed	Started	Waiting to start	Withdrawn
Children and Young People’s Workforce	2	1		1		
Children and Young People’s Workforce: Early Years Educator	3	4	1	2	1	
Early Years Educator	3	2			2	
Learning Mentor	3	1			1	
Supporting Teaching and Learning	2	28	4	16	3	5
Supporting Teaching and Learning	3	21		12		9
Supporting Teaching and Learning: School Sport and Physical Education	3	4		4		
Teacher	6	4		1		3
Teaching Assistant	3	11		7	2	2
Total		76	5	43	11	17

Teacher Level 6 Apprenticeship

There has been a lack of information and guidance nationally regarding the Teacher Level 6, and several issues have been faced by Shropshire Council regarding this apprenticeship; these issues have been reported via the Council's Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Account Manager. In late November 2019, Apprenticeship Levy guidance for schools was issued and this provides guidance regarding Teacher Level 6.

Since the introduction of the degree level apprenticeship, 4 people have applied for the Teacher Level 6 apprenticeship and all have been eligible. Of these:

1 learner has nearly completed their Teacher Level 6 apprenticeship.

1 learner has postponed due to external factors.

2 learners have withdrawn. For one learner, the withdrawal was because the apprenticeship training provider's delivery model was unsuitable for them due to personal circumstances. For the second learner, the model of delivery was too onerous and was unfeasible for the school as they would need to ensure that there was cover.

If a school has a learner taking up the Teacher Level apprenticeship, they are able to access Schools Direct Funding. This is additional grant funding to support schools who have a learner taking up the postgraduate teacher apprenticeship.

In 2020, Upskill Shropshire will be hosting a number of information sessions to support schools who are looking to start new recruits and current staff on Teacher level 6, Teaching Assistant Level 3, Learning Mentor Level 3 and Early Years Educator Level 3.

Further information:

Upskill Board

The Upskill Shropshire Board meets on a quarterly basis. The Board is attended by representatives from across the different service areas of the Council (Children's, Adults, HR, Communications, Economic Growth, Finance) so there is a wide-ranging strategic approach to apprenticeships within Shropshire Council. Union and Schools representatives are both invited to attend the Board Meetings and have a seat around the table. The Upskill Board is a platform to discuss any barriers and issues, national and local developments, communications, performance monitoring and financial analysis, risks and opportunities.

Upskill Application Process:

Guidance regarding the application process and downloadable application forms and business case forms are available on the Shropshire Learning Gateway.

The process for an application for apprenticeship training is as follows:

1. Skills need or need for new recruitment identified. Appropriate apprenticeship (relevant to their role) via SLG or Institute for Apprenticeships website.
2. A learner seeking professional development would gain approval from their Manager/Head and complete the Upskill Application and return to upskill@shropshire.gov.uk If new recruitment or professional development,

Head/Manager completes the Upskill Business Case to upskill@shropshire.gov.uk.

3. Upskill Shropshire will review the Business Case and if all information is included they will send to the Schools HR Business Partner to review and approve. If all the information isn't provided, the business case/application form will be returned to the school to provide additional details.
4. Once the Business Case is approved and the applicant is deemed eligible for the apprenticeship training, Upskill Shropshire procure a provider from their Framework of Apprenticeship Training Providers. Schools are advised to allow up to 12 weeks (max) to complete this process.
5. When an Apprenticeship Training Provider is found, the Head will be informed of successful procurement. Learner details are passed to the provider for enrolment and they will contact the learner to start.

There are two options for new recruits, depending on whether the school would like support from the provider, with the recruitment activity. For schools it is recommended that a business case is submitted and, when approved and a provider has been identified, that the school and provider discuss the recruitment and the provider takes a lead on this. The school may want to undertake the final interviews either with or without the provider; all apprenticeship recruitment services are tailored to the employer. The school /service area is still responsible for all recruitment checks.

- There are 87 maintained schools within the Local Authority area. 43% of Shropshire maintained schools have engaged with the Apprenticeship Levy. Those schools that have engaged have either employed apprentices into roles or have used the Levy for professional development of current staff.

Table 2 below shows the apprenticeships which applications have been received from Shropshire schools.

Table 2

Type of Apprenticeship	Level	Number of Learners Applications	Cost Per Apprenticeship (£)	Total cost for Apprenticeships (£)
Accounting	2	1	2,000	2,000
Business Administration	2	11	2,000	22,000
Business Administrator Standard	3	3	5,000	15,000
Business and Administration	3	2	2,500	5,000
Children and Young People's Workforce	2	1	2,000	2,000
Children and Young People's Workforce: Early Years Educator	3	4	2,500	10,000
Early Years Educator	3	2	6,000	12,000
Infrastructure Technician	3	1	15,000	15,000
IT, Software, Web and	2	2	4,000	8,000

Telecoms Professional				
Learning Mentor	3	1	5,000	5,000
Schools Business Professional	4	4	6,000	24,000
Supporting Teaching and Learning	2	28	2,000	56,000
Supporting Teaching and Learning	3	21	2,500	52,500
Supporting Teaching and Learning: School Sport and Physical Education	3	4	2,500	10,000
Teacher	6	4	9,000	36,000
Teaching Assistant	3	11	5,000	55,000
	Total amount committed for apprenticeships from the Levy.			329,500*

****This total is subject to learners withdrawing from apprenticeships/schools not recruiting to apprenticeship vacancies.***

- 4 applications were withdrawn at application stage prior to recruitment of new apprentices
- 11 apprentices are waiting to start their apprenticeships (some of these are new recruitment applications so may not have been appointed yet).
- 9 learners have completed their apprenticeships
- 56 learners have started their apprenticeships.

Over the past 12 months officers have attended the Headteacher Forums and offered individual face to face opportunities to discuss apprenticeships. Officers have informed schools of the processes, the benefits and the wide range of apprenticeships which schools can access within education, IT, catering, site and facilities management, school business manager and degree level apprenticeships including Management degrees.

The government have very recently issued guidance for Schools:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843991/Guide_to_apprenticeships_for_schools.pdf

This guidance states the various apprenticeships available for schools and matches them to job roles.

Hidden costs

Schools have mentioned hidden costs which they might incur when employing an apprentice.

Schools would need to pay the wages of any apprentice which they may employ. There are restrictions, as stated in the ESFA Apprenticeship Levy Funding Rules around what can or cannot be funded by the apprenticeship levy.

If an apprentice needs to travel to their place of learning they will either need to fund the cost of this themselves or the school may decide to support them with these

costs. This is likely to happen with Teacher Level 6 or other degree level apprenticeships as these are delivered at University campuses. This would be discussed with the school prior to the learner starting the apprenticeship.

If an apprentice is out of the classroom in face to face training, a school may need to ensure that there is suitable supervision within the classroom which could incur costs for paying supply staff. The school could work with their training providers to ensure that apprentices working within the same classroom are not out of the school environment on the same day.

2. Question from Councillor Hannah Fraser

A development of 650 houses at the top of Preston Street was given planning approval by this Planning Authority in early 2018, and construction is now going ahead. Despite the assurances of the developers during the planning process, residents are suffering with site working and site deliveries by heavy goods vehicles at unsociable hours, and mud on the roads. The developers appear to be in contravention of very clear planning conditions. Meetings have been held between residents, developers and the Council and more assurances have been given, yet problems for residents continue. Can the Council please explain why no enforcement action has been taken against the developer to ensure that the conditions of the planning permission, including adherence to a Construction Environment Management Plan, are fulfilled? Can the Council also confirm how many stop notices have been issued against housing developers in Shropshire in the last 2 years?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services

COUNCILLOR GWILYM BUTLER, PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Following the grant of planning permission for the construction of 650 houses on this site allocated for development in the Local Plan, the developers have taken part in a series of meetings with Council officers and local residents' representatives. This has provided a forum for issues associated with the construction to be raised.

A formal planning enforcement query has been received recently and this will be considered in accordance with the Council's Planning Enforcement Protocol. It is the receipt of this planning enforcement query that is the trigger for formal action to be considered. As part of this process the developer will be advised of any breaches of the planning permission and appropriate action by the Local Planning Authority to secure compliance in accordance with the protocol.

Within the last two years one stop notice has been issued.

3. Question from Councillor David Turner

At the July Council meeting I advanced questions asking about the chronic neglect of basic work in Much Wenlock, undertakings as to completion dates, and the contraction of the highways budget. I referred to a meeting on this topic in March with the Leader and senior officers

The answers I received July, inasmuch as they answered the questions I asked, indicated that during a road closure to replace a gas main it was intended that a dangerous footpath would be resurfaced, improvements to gullies undertaken, road markings refreshed, and a bollard replaced. Further, a longstanding traffic scheme, where the Traffic Regulation Order had run out of time, would be undertaken, and a timeline will be confirmed "asap". Suffice to say that neither of these have taken place and there is no indication, five months later, as to when these works, or a number of others listed in that question, will be undertaken.

Meanwhile, the B4378 is littered with dangerous potholes, filled from time to time with a dollop of tar; many other roads are in the same condition.

Only after relentless pressure by me are highways gullies in Much Wenlock being cleared and thus far this work has been limited to estate roads, whilst many of those in vulnerable streets around the town culvert remain blocked solid.

My questions are:

1. When will the work listed in my July Question, and other works on an item by item basis, realistically be completed?
2. As the "demand on the network assets is higher than the available resources and required work has to be constantly re-prioritised", what are the criteria and where is the visibility in order that Members can see what revenue and capital works are taking precedence over that in their Divisions?
3. If there is no realistic chance of keeping some well-used routes safe, has any consideration been given to simply closing them?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport

COUNCILLOR STEVE DAVENPORT, PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

1. A dedicated gulley crew spent a full day on the Gulley drainage network in Much Wenlock on Sunday 8th December 2019.

The Wilmore Street resurfacing and bollard scheme will be completed in the current financial year 2019/20 and is permitted for Sunday 16th February 2020.

The removal of matting from the trash screen was completed on the 6th December 2019. Tourism signage will be completed on Sheinton Street before Christmas 2019.

2. The criteria for Highway investment prioritisation is set out in the Highways Asset Management plan which is a publicly available document which may broadly be summarised as follows;

“We consider the condition of all our roads within our Highways Asset Management strategy. We undertake carriageway condition assessments used a machine-based survey for classified roads and for minor roads, a coarse visual inspection is used. This approach is consistent with industry best practice for the local road network in England and provides the authority with a network-level view of the condition of these assets. The condition data is used to prioritise further scheme-level investigation so that we use our limited resources most effectively and the outcome of the investigation is used to form a forward programme of investment. It is recognised that this system provides a sufficiently robust process for managing the asset however, it is also recognised local concerns that need be considered alongside those identified from the main process. We are currently in the process of reviewing data and local information in order to inform our programme for 2020”.

The Highways capital programme for 2020/21 will be published prior to the commencement of the new financial year

3. Shropshire continues to make the best of the resources and funding it has and furthermore has successfully bid for additional Highways funding currently in excess of £90Million. We will continue to take strategic asset management decisions based upon agreed criteria whilst sensitising investment locally wherever possible. No consideration has been given to closing well used routes.

4. Question from Councillor Andy Boddington

- 1) What percentage of the power consumed in Shirehall is generated by fossil fuels?
- 2) What policies does the council have to ensure that the Shropshire County Pension Fund disinvests from fossil fuel investments and on what timetable will that happen?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services and Climate Change

COUNCILLOR DEAN CARROLL, PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

- 1)
 - Shirehall used 4,810,156 kWh of energy last year. Of this 41% was zero carbon electricity and 59% was mains gas;
 - In all, Shirehall used 1,966,303 kWh electricity last year, mostly for ICT and lighting. Of this, 1,879,495 kWh was supplied from the network on a zero carbon tariff (West Midlands Energy green tariff). In addition to this, 86,808 kWh of electricity has been generated on site from the Shirehall solar PV

array so far in 2019. This energy is used onsite to meet daytime lighting and ICT demand and to offset the remaining electricity consumption;

- Shirehall also used 2,843,853 kWh mains gas for space heating and hot water last year. This fuel has a relatively low carbon factor which generated a footprint of 523 tonnes CO₂e.

- 2) The Council has no policies in place to ensure the Shropshire County Pension Fund disinvests from fossil fuel companies. The Pension Fund takes Responsible Investment and ESG issues seriously, policies on this can be found within the annual report on www.shropshirecountypensionfund.co.uk and this subject has been covered in detail at Pension Fund AGM meetings over the years all of which can be found on the website.

5. Question from Councillor Roger Evans

- 1) Concerning payments made by Shropshire Council to contractors

How are payments to Kier and WSP authorised and are all payments linked to work completed and how is completion proven. Does this include checks to ensure that payments are properly authorised and have all payments requested by Kier been paid in full, or have some deductions been made; including any Low Service Delivery Deductions and any efficiency savings on the Kier Contract identified; have there been any months when the amount paid to Kier been abnormally high.

Since the start of the contract some 15 months ago have any advance payments in respect of Fixed Overheads been paid to Kier and conversely have any payments to Kier been authorised for work carried out many months later?

Do you have any concerns about the quality of work and the payments made to either Kier or WSP.

- 2) It has been reported that costs on the WSP contract are running well above the initial estimates. If this is correct how much in excess is this, and what is being done to bring this overspending down; when WSP issue their monthly Application for Payment, is a report prepared recommending payment? Have these reports highlighted the issue of increasing costs and made recommendations to bring these down? Regarding performance targets which WSP are supposed to achieve – how often is WSP's performance assessed against these targets?

Finally, In recent adverts WSP state that their office in Shrewsbury is "integrated with the Client due to our longstanding relationship and collaborative working practices." Do you consider this suggests that the relationship is too close?

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport

STEVE DAVENPORT, PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

- 1) All current payments to KIER and WSP should be initiated and evidenced through Shropshire Council's financial administration software system (CONFIRM), which then should be summarised and ratified by Shropshire Council's Service Manager.

All of our supervisors, managers and staff now initiate work through the CONFIRM system and, following a series of stages in the system, finally authorise payment upon receipt of evidence of completion. The evidence required varies, but may include photographs, site visits, joint site visits, time sheets, goods received notes, variation sheets, as built drawings and subcontractor invoices. Previously evidence to substantiate completed work was not all placed or available within the CONFIRM system, as identified in an audit report earlier this year, but as part of the ongoing improvement programme has received considerable and ongoing focus working towards full compliance. Deductions have been made based upon performance issues and sums have been withheld subject to receipt of the required evidence. Both low service deductions and efficiencies have been identified.

Monthly payments to Kier vary depending on work completed.

We do have concerns over the quality of some work undertaken by Kier and we are working with them to address this.

I am advised that management are addressing issues of payments to Kier.

- 2) Costs have increased in line with inflation on the WSP contract. Volume or turnover through the contract has increased in line with the increase in Government support funding for projects such as the £72 million, NWWWR Project & the £3.4 million A529 Project alongside successful DFT funding such as our successful £7 million Challenge Fund bid, all of which led to greater investment in Shropshire. There are agreed contract and commercial processes in place for all payments made to WSP. There is a contractual requirement for WSP to provide monthly performance information and this has been received without exception.

The relationship between WSP and the Council is contractual and so the Council's robust approach to contract management should be applied.

The Chief Executive of the Council has asked for the audit of WSP to be brought forward and this should be completed early in the New Year.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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