



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

Date: Tuesday, 17 March 2020

**Committee:  
Cabinet**

**Date: Wednesday, 25 March 2020**

**Time: 11.00 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)

**Members of Cabinet**

Peter Nutting (Leader)  
Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader)  
Gwilym Butler  
Dean Carroll  
Lee Chapman  
Steve Davenport  
Robert Macey  
David Minnery  
Lezley Picton  
Ed Potter

Your Committee Officer is:

**Amanda Holyoak**

Tel: 01743 257714

Email: [amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk)

# AGENDA

**1 Apologies for Absence**

**2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

**3 Minutes** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2020 as a correct record, attached

**4 Scrutiny Items**

**5 West Midlands Design Charter** (Pages 5 - 10)

Lead Member – Councillor Gwilym Butler – Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services

Report of Director of Place attached

Contact: Mark Barrow 01743 258916

**6 Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership** (Pages 11 - 18)

Lead Member – Councillor Ed Potter – Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services

Report of the Director of Children’s Services attached

Contact: Karen Bradshaw 01743 254201

**7 Housing Strategy** (Pages 19 - 62)

Lead Member – Councillor Robert Macey – Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning

Report of Director of Place attached

Contact: Mark Barrow 01743 258916

**8 West Mercia Energy - Treatment of WMS Pension Liability** (Pages 63 - 80)

Lead Member – Councillor Peter Nutting – Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy

Report of Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance attached

Contact: James Walton 01743 258915



## Committee and Date

Cabinet

25 March 2020

## **CABINET**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2020**

**In the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND**

**11.00 am - 12.02 pm**

**Responsible Officer:** Amanda Holyoak

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

### **Present**

Councillor Peter Nutting (Chairman)

Councillors Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader), Dean Carroll, Lee Chapman, Steve Davenport, David Minnery, Lezley Picton and Ed Potter

### **64 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Gwilym Butler and Robert Macey.

### **65 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

None were declared.

### **66 Minutes**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

### **67 Public Question Time**

A public question relating to speed of traffic in Radbrook was received from Mr C Lemon.

A public question relating to climate and environmental impacts of the proposed North West Relief Road was received from Ms J Blackman.

The full questions and responses provided are attached to the signed minutes and the webpage for the meeting.

### **68 Member Question Time**

Member questions relating to Youth Service Provision and the post of Chief Executive were received from Councillor Roger Evans. The full questions and responses provided are attached to the signed minutes and the webpage for the meeting.

## 69 Scrutiny Items

There were no scrutiny items.

## 70 Local Economic Growth Strategies

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration presented the report and referred to the significant amount of work undertaken with town and parish councils and other stakeholders in bringing the local economic growth strategies together.

The strategies reflected the geography of Shropshire and the key sectors, growth and ambitions for each of the market towns. The Leader added that the quality rather than quantity of jobs available was a significant issue for Shropshire and he hoped that people would get involved and participate in the consultation.

### **RESOLVED:**

To note the progress with development of the draft Local Economic Growth Strategies to date and note their importance to the delivery of the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy at market town level .

To approve the draft Local Economic Growth Strategies as set out in Appendix 1 for public consultation.

That the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration be given delegated authority to consider the outcomes of the consultation, implement any changes within the final documents and publish the Local Economic Growth Strategies

## 71 Transit Site Provision In Shropshire - Identification of Temporary Site

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration, introduced the report. He explained that provision of transit sites for the travelling community was identified in national legislation and was an undertaking made following the adoption of the SAMDEV.

In response to questions, the Deputy Leader explained that:

- the consultation period would be shorter than some in order to keep up with the timeline for the Local Plan adoption process;
- The consultation would be publicised through libraries, local drop in sessions, leaflet drops as well as being available on line;
- Failure to provide a site could potentially invalidate the whole Local Plan process.

Councillor Ioan Jones, Local Member for Harlescott, addressed Cabinet and said that he had no opposition to this type of development but questioned the safety of the proposed location. He understood that government guidance stated that temporary stopping places

should be located in a safe and convenient place for the road network. As this site was within the fork of two busy roads and adjacent to arable land he was concerned about potential safety issues with movement of caravans and slow vehicles, and the likelihood of the presence of young children close to fast traffic, tractors and heavy vehicles. He also referred to the potential North West Relief Road, proximity of two car dealerships, a hotel and previous concerns about anti-social behaviour.

The Leader encouraged Councillor Jones to participate fully in the consultation.

**RESOLVED:**

To agree to consult on the location identified on land identified at Battlefield, Shrewsbury for use as a temporary gypsy and traveller transit site.

**72 Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2019/20**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support outlined the report and explained in detail how management action worked on a daily and monthly basis, with Directors expected to account for and discuss with Portfolio Holders any variations before feeding them back to the finance team and he and the Director of Finance Governance and Assurance to consider

The full year revenue forecast at Quarter 3 was a potential overspend of £1.532m, an improved position from Quarter 2 of £4.455m.

He drew attention to the key issues in the report set out at 1.7, and the decisions Cabinet had made following consultation which had resulted in removal of approximately £1.3m savings.

The Leader reported that extensive lobbying of MPs and Ministers with regard to funding continued.

**RESOLVED:**

To note that at the end of Quarter 3 (31<sup>st</sup> December 2019), the full year revenue forecast is a potential overspend of £1.532m, which is an improved position from Quarter 2 of £4.455m;

To consider the impact of this on the Council's General Fund balance

**73 Corporate Performance Report Quarter 3 2019 - 2020**

The Portfolio Holder for Organisational Transformation and Digital Infrastructure presented the report. He drew particular attention to ongoing success for Theatre Severn with a 4.8% increase in visits with 32% of ticket sales made to people outside of the county and the number of visitors to the Old Market Hall increasing to a record annual attendance. 88% of Shropshire schools were either good or outstanding, significantly better than neighbours.

He also referred to pressures on the health and social care economy from additional winter pressures and congratulated hospital discharge and adult social care teams for the significant improvement in rates. Performance to date remained on target and within the top quartile of performers.

Members asked questions about the number of affordable homes, delayed transfers of care attributable to the NHS, and renewable energy. The Portfolio Holder encouraged all members to access the Performance Portal from <https://shropshireperformance.inphase.com>

**RESOLVED:**

To consider the emerging issues in this report

To review the performance portal and identify any performance areas to consider in greater detail or refer to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**74 Rural Youth Facilities**

The Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services presented the report which set out a request for officers to explore the viability of a range of options for the provision of mobile youth facilities in rural areas, including exploring in more detail best practice nationally in relation to such mobile facilities. A number of members recalled use of converted vehicles in the past to provide mobile youth facilities

The Portfolio Holder said the aim of the work was to identify what would be most flexible and best meet needs of young people today.

**RESOLVED**

That Cabinet request officers to explore the viability of a range of options for the provision of mobile youth facilities in rural areas, including exploring in more detail best practise nationally in relation to such mobile facilities.

That a further paper be brought back to Cabinet following completion of the exploration of Viability and consultation.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....



Cabinet 25<sup>th</sup> March

Item

Public

## West Midlands Design Charter

### Responsible Officer

e-mail: [lan.kilby@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:lan.kilby@shropshire.gov.uk)

[Tel:01743 258718](tel:01743258718)

### 1. Summary

This report seeks to endorse the West Midlands Combined Authority Design Charter which was launched in Birmingham on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020, to be used to inform planning decisions and policy development, notably the review of the Local Plan. The purpose of the Design Charter is to improve design quality and place-making across the West Midlands region by supplementing existing Local Planning Authority documents, and not to supersede or replace them.

### 2. Recommendations

**That Cabinet endorses the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Design Charter, attached at Appendix 1, and acknowledges that this can be taken into account as a material consideration to inform planning decisions and to inform policy development, notably the review of the Local Plan**

### REPORT

### 3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

#### Analysis of the effects on equality

The Charter takes into account key accessibility design principles to ensure inclusivity is achieved for a wide range of groups.

#### Data protection

There are no data protection implications arising from the recommendation of this report

#### Human Rights

No issues identified

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

No issues identified

#### **5. Background**

- 5.1 Design Quality for new development is becoming increasingly important in planning decisions. The Government has recognised this by publishing a National Design Guide in October 2019 and locally work is underway to capture what we mean by “good design”, a point raised in work emerging through the development of the Big Town Plan where the concept of a “Shrewsbury Test” was launched.
- 5.2 In addition the Council is now highlighting and promoting design quality through its award scheme and furthermore working to respond to the climate emergency challenges which inevitably will impact on building design and place making.
- 5.3 The WMCA Housing and Land Delivery Board resolved to develop a new regional design guide to align Local Authority and WMCA aspirations to and to raise the standard of design quality generally in new developments.
- 5.4 The Board agreed that the Charter would be non-statutory, concise and would seek to supplement and complement, not supersede, the existing documents of Local Planning Authorities.
- 5.5 The Charter’s purpose is not to set local design policies but seeks to provide a clear and consistent understanding of the West Midlands’ place-making expectations and create a level playing field for developers across the region. An additional purpose of the Charter is to enable the WMCA to define ‘good design quality’ when this is included as a funding condition in its investment decisions and in its commercial negotiations.
- 5.6 Since May 2019 the WMCA has been working with local authorities across the region to develop the charter and a number of officer meetings and workshops have taken place to consider the scope, principles and format. Officers from Shropshire Council have attended meetings and supported this process contributing to the development of the Charter. Comments from Council officers have been taken on board in finalising the Charter.
- 5.7 The Charter is consistent with the Council’s Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan but goes further in some areas, notably Theme 3 ‘future readiness’ in relation to Principle 6 (Delivering Low Carbon Development) and Principle 7 (Technological Resilience). This is however timely insofar as Shropshire Councils decision to create a task force to deliver a climate change strategy.



5.8 The Charter was received by the WMCA Housing and Land Delivery Board meeting on 30 September 2019 and was formally launched in Birmingham on 23rd January 2020.

5.9 The WMCA Regional Design Charter consists of 12 principles based around the following six themes:

**Character**

- Principle 1: Regional Ambition
- Principle 2: Local Distinctiveness

**Connectivity and Mobility**

- Principle 3: Regional Network
- Principle 4: Modal Shift

**Future-readiness**

- Principle 5: Climate Resilience
- Principle 6: Delivering Low Carbon Development
- Principle 7: Technological Resilience

**Health and Wellbeing**

- Principle 8: Building Active Communities
- Principle 9: Promoting Wellbeing

**Engagement and Stewardship**

- Principle 10: Engagement
- Principle 11: Stewardship

**Delivery**

- Principle 12: Securing Social Value.

5.10 The Charter is capable of being a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications although the weight that can be attached to it will depend on individual circumstances.

5.11 The Charter is intended to be published in hard copy and digital formats, and is envisaged as being a living document to be reviewed on a biannual basis. It will include:

- A two-page printed format, including the principles only; and
- A longer, web-based version, including principles, supporting information and case studies.

5.12 The WMCA has committed to carrying out monitoring and evaluation of the autumn 2019 Charter to test its impact in practice on specific development schemes, with the expectation that it will be reviewed on a biannual basis.

5.13 A copy of the short form charter is set out within Appendix 1 of this report.

## **6.0 Climate Change Appraisal**

6.1 The Charter is focused on improving quality of life for all residents of the West Midlands region through better place-making and design. It includes 12 principles organised around six key themes. Principles 5 to 7 focus on how developments should address matters of climate resilience, delivering low

carbon development and harness technological innovation under a broad theme of future readiness.

## 7.0 Conclusions

The Regional Design Charter aims to provide a clear understanding of the West Midlands' place-making expectations, providing a level playing field and baseline of design quality across the region and is presented to Cabinet for endorsement. Shropshire Council officers have played an active role in its development and it aligns with a number of the Council's priorities for place making and climate change. The Charter does not replace or supersede any existing locally set design policies within Shropshire, rather its intention is to complement them and be a consideration to improve design quality outcomes for planning decisions and to inform policy development as part of the review of the Local Plan.

<b>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</b>
None
<b>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)</b> Councillor Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder - Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services
<b>Local Member</b> All Members
<b>Appendices</b> Appendix 1 – The West Midlands Design Charter



# WEST MIDLANDS DESIGN CHARTER

IS INTENDED TO PROMOTE,  
INSPIRE AND ENCOURAGE  
GREAT DESIGN INITIATIVES  
AND QUALITY PLACE-MAKING  
ACROSS OUR REGION.

The West Midlands Design Charter is built on 12 principles that fall into 6 themes.

West Midlands Design Charter is part of our region's ambition to encourage creative design and innovation to flourish, as we build a future that delivers inclusive growth for all of our communities.

## THIS IS THE WEST MIDLANDS. THE UK'S GROWTH CAPITAL.

Take the next step  
and find out more.

[wmca.org.uk](http://wmca.org.uk)



West Midlands  
Combined Authority



# WEST MIDLANDS DESIGN CHARTER

Shaping the Future



# 1 CHARACTER

PRINCIPLE 1

## Regional Ambition

Developers will be expected to produce unique, innovative proposals that are grounded in a sound understanding of the local context and acknowledge the diversity of the West Midlands' communities and geography.

PRINCIPLE 2

## Local Distinctiveness

New development should respond to the qualities that characterise the locality's 'spirit of place' for residents, businesses and visitors. Schemes should contribute to the creative and cultural identity of the local environment and benefit local communities.

# 2 CONNECTIVITY & MOBILITY

PRINCIPLE 3

## Regional Network

New development must contribute to enhancing regional connectivity by integrating effectively to existing and planned transport networks, thinking beyond both site and administrative boundaries.

PRINCIPLE 4

## Modal Shift

Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the changing face of transport and movement patterns across the West Midlands; promoting walking, cycling and public transport use.

# 3 FUTURE-READINESS

PRINCIPLE 5

## Climate Resilience

Developments should incorporate climate adaptation measures that respond to the short and long term impacts of climate change and address the environmental impact of the proposal across its lifecycle.

PRINCIPLE 6

## Delivering Low Carbon Development

Development proposals should seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by making clear, specific commitments to carbon reduction. The potential for new schemes to meet zero net carbon should be considered from the outset.

PRINCIPLE 7

## Technological Resilience

New development should harness technological innovation from the outset, to deliver adaptable buildings that respond to the rapidly changing digital, communication and infrastructure requirements of our businesses and communities.



# 4 HEALTH & WELLBEING

PRINCIPLE 8

## Building Active Communities

Development proposals should support healthy living environments and address health inequalities by providing access to nature and spaces for physical activity.

PRINCIPLE 9

## Promoting Wellbeing

New development should promote wellbeing and good mental health by fostering community, identifying opportunities to reduce social isolation and minimise loneliness.



# 5 ENGAGEMENT & STEWARDSHIP

PRINCIPLE 10

## Engagement

Consultation should reflect local social, economic and geographic diversity and enable key stakeholders to shape design solutions from an early stage.

PRINCIPLE 11

## Stewardship

Public spaces and facilities should be designed to encourage long term civic pride in local places. Developers must give early consideration to management and stewardship of places and put long term sustainable solutions in place.



# 6 DELIVERY

PRINCIPLE 12

## Securing Social Value

WMCA expects developers to promote social value throughout the development process and will seek to align all housing and regeneration investment decisions with its inclusive growth objectives through its Single Commissioning Framework.





<u>Committee and Date</u>
Cabinet
25 March 2020 v7

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

## Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership

### Responsible Officers

Email: karen.bradshaw@shropshire.gov.uk      Tel: 01743 254201  
andy.begley@shropshire.gov.uk              Tel: 01743 258911

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 Since the Safeguarding Boards review in 2017, it has been an aspiration of senior leaders to build closer links between the Adult and Children's Safeguarding Boards.
- 1.2 In terms of the Community Safety Partnership, administration and officer support has historically been provided by Public Health until recent budget pressures in this area. This presents Shropshire Council with an opportunity to review all of these statutory functions with a view to aligning our arrangements. The benefits of doing this would be:
  - To improve the well-being of children and adults with care and support needs and the safety of the population of Shropshire
  - Reducing silo working between key safeguarding partnerships
  - Ensure Business Unit support
  - Introduce a consistent approach to the wider safeguarding agenda with an Independent Chair
  - Work proactively as a joint Partnership on key issues such as:
    - Domestic Abuse
    - Exploitation
- 1.3 In September 2019, Shropshire Safeguarding Children's Board became Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership in response to Working Together 2018 and the Wood Review 2016.
- 1.4 We are now seeking Cabinet approval to extend these arrangements to include the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Community Safety Partnership.

## 2. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Amalgamate our partnership arrangements and the respective Boards for Community Safety, Children and Adult Safeguarding
- 2.2 That Cabinet grants approval for Shropshire Council to become the accountable body on behalf of the newly formed Partnership.

## REPORT

### 3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

(NB This will include the following: Impact on Children and Vulnerable Adults, Risk Management, Human Rights, Equalities, Community and other Consultation)

- 3.1 Working in a joined-up way between our key Safeguarding Partnerships offers opportunities to:
  - Understand risk for individuals, families and communities from an all age, family and community perspective
  - Embed the concept that keeping our communities, adults with care and support needs and children, is everyone's responsibility.
  - Plan our response to risk more efficiently and reduce duplication
  - Share risk across the system
- 3.2 It is possible that in bringing these areas together some focus may be lost, however, the opportunities this presents outweighs this risk. Whilst it is recognised that the legislative framework for Adults and Children and Community Safety are different, there is a need to strengthen joint working particularly when the following factors are apparent:
  - Adult's and Children's services work with the same families or a person is moving from Children's to Adult Services
  - The presence of Mental Health issues
  - Alcohol and/or drug use
- 3.3 If we do not provide business support for Community Safety work, there is a risk we will not fulfil our statutory duties (see section 6 below) in this area. This presents a risk not only to the individuals and communities of Shropshire but it could be a reputational risk for the council.

## 4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Where the Council is involved in delivering services jointly with other groups or partnerships, either the Council or one of the partner members (if it is a legal

entity) can act on behalf of the partnership as the accountable body. The Council is currently the accountable body for a number of partnerships, including Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership. Shropshire Council both receives and distributes money on behalf of its partners. Proper systems of financial administration and control are in place for administering and accounting for any funds received and distributed as part of this work.

The current budget available for the safeguarding board for 20/21 is as follows:

	<i>Adults Safeguarding Board</i>	<i>Childrens Safeguarding Board</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Gross Expenditure Budget</i>	£228,720	£240,140	£468,860
<i>Partners Contributions</i>	(£55,000)	(£123,860)	(£178,860)
<i>Net Expenditure Budget</i>	£173,720	£116,280	£290,000

## 5. Climate Change Appraisal

5.1 The amalgamation of the three partnerships offers an opportunity to reduce the number of meetings held in relation to these areas of work. Meetings will also be set up with the ability to attend by Skype and/or conference call. This approach will reduce travel and will benefit partners further away, thus contributing positively on our commitment to Climate Change.

## 6. Background

6.1 Our Community Safety statutory duties are to:

- To formulate and implement:
  - a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment)
  - a strategy for combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area
  - a strategy for the reduction of re-offending in the area
- To have regard to the police and crime objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan
- To undertake Domestic Homicide Reviews

6.2 The statutory duties of the Children's Partnership are to:

- Publish arrangements for agencies to work together to explain how they are safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Set out arrangements for scrutiny by an independent person
- Publish an annual report
- Conduct Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

6.3 Our Safeguarding Adult Board statutory duties are to:

- Publish a strategic plan each financial year

- Publish an annual report
  - Conduct Safeguarding Adult Reviews
- 6.4 The local authority has two further related statutory duties which are to:
- To agree risk and co-ordinate Prevent activity
  - Establish a Safeguarding Adults Board
- 6.5 In 2017 following the “Review of the role and functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards”, the Government Response and in anticipation of the changes to legislation (Children and Social Work Act 2017), Shropshire Council and its partners commissioned a review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and its relationship with other partnership boards.
- 6.6 The review considered:
- The function and effectiveness of the Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB).
  - The function of all the partnership boards within Shropshire. This took into account cross cutting issues, shared understanding, and the opportunities for improved efficiency through joined up and complimentary working and business and administrative support.
- 6.7 The review led to the proposal of the establishment of the Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) which would have strategic oversight of the safeguarding arrangements for adults and children. This has been considered and approved by both the Children’s and Adults Boards. Since that time, the proposal has been considered and approved by the Community Safety Partnership.
- 6.8 The ‘Safeguarding Partners’ are defined by the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) as the Local Authority, the CCG and a Chief Officer of Police, each having ‘joint and equal responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements’.
- 6.9 The Care Act (2014) requires each local authority to set up a Safeguarding Adults Board, the main objective being to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults with care and support needs experiencing or at risk of abuse.
- 6.10 The Care Act Statutory includes the following paragraph
- “Guidance Strategies for the prevention of abuse and neglect is a core responsibility of a Safeguarding Adults Board and it should have an overview of how this is taking place in the area and how this work ties in with the Health and Wellbeing Boards, Quality Surveillance Groups, Community Safety Partnerships and CQC’s stated approach and practice.”*
- 6.11 The statutory safeguarding partners for both Adults and Children are:
1. Shropshire Council
  2. Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group



### 3. West Mercia Police

6.12 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires each Local Authority in England and Wales to formulate and implement a strategy to reduce crime and disorder in their area. The Act also requires the local authority to work with every police authority, probation authority, Strategic health authority (now Clinical Commissioning Group), social landlords, the voluntary sector, and local residents and businesses.

6.13 To amalgamate these arrangements and ensure all statutory partners were represented, the following organisations would also be required to attend partnership meetings:

4. Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service
5. West Mercia Probation Service

6.14 What is currently called the Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership would act as and carry out the functions of the:

- Children's Partnership
- Community Safety Partnership
- Safeguarding Adults Board

## 7. Additional Information

7.1 This proposal includes the use of an independent chair for the three areas of work; Adult and Children's safeguarding and Community Safety. Not only does this provide a consistent approach across this agenda, the role also:

- Helps to develop an environment of robust scrutiny and effective challenge.
- Represents the partnership at other meetings and events locally, regionally and nationally.
- Speaks with authority on safeguarding including representing the partnership with the media.
- Act as the decision maker in relation to whether statutory reviews are carried out.
- Ensures appropriate working relationships with key partnerships.
- Engages with the Local Authority Scrutiny Committees and Health and Well-Being Board
- Works with the Statutory Safeguarding Business Partner to ensure the Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership fulfils its statutory duties.

7.2 A successful strategy and priority setting day was held with partners on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and the following priorities were identified for the next three years:

- Joint priorities are Domestic Abuse, Exploitation and Transitional Safeguarding.
- Adult priorities are Self-Neglect and Personal Resilience.
- The Children's priority is Neglect.

7.3 The governance of the partnership will consist of a number of groups with clearly identified functions including:

- Networks that are made up of a wide range of partners.
- Groups that will develop business plans to deliver the strategic (as agreed above) and “business as usual” priorities of the partnership.
- Executive group that will keep a track of actions from statutory case reviews and approve guidance, training strategies and monitor the implementation of the business plans.
- Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership who is responsible to for assurance and challenge between all partners.

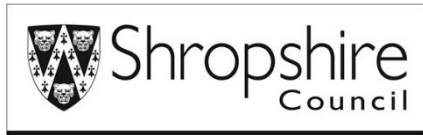
## 8. Conclusions

8.1 Progressing with the amalgamation described above will further strengthen the ability of Shropshire Council to fulfil its strategic, statutory responsibilities in relation to the safety of those living in Shropshire.

<p><b>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</b></p>
<p>The Wood Report – Review of the Role and Functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards April 2016: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wood-review-of-local-safeguarding-children-boards">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wood-review-of-local-safeguarding-children-boards</a></p>
<p>HM Government Report: Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018 <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)</b></p>
<p>Dean Carroll (Adults, Social Services and Climate Change) Edward Potter (Children’s Services)</p>
<p><b>Local Member</b></p>
<p>All Members</p>
<p><b>Appendices</b></p>



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Committee and date

Cabinet  
25<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Item

Public

## DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY CONSULTATION REPORT

**Responsible Officer** Mark Barrow, Executive Director Place  
Email: [mark.barrow@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:mark.barrow@shropshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01743 258919

### 1. Summary

1.1 This report sets out the Council's proposed vision and objectives for Shropshire's new Draft Housing Strategy 2020 – 2025 and seeks approval to issue the draft strategy for public consultation for a period of 6 weeks.

1.2 Although there is no statutory obligation to produce a housing strategy, the importance of housing nationally and relevance locally has never been more recognised or acutely felt by the Council and residents of Shropshire, particularly with regard to:

1. Affordability – inability of households with median gross household incomes to purchase a home; for example, in Shrewsbury there is a multiplier of 6.7 to purchase a median house price home. In Oswestry the figure is 5.4. The generally accepted mortgage multiplier is 4 times household income
2. Rise in homelessness – rise of 24.5% in the previous 2 years
3. Aging profile – by 2041 over a third of residents will be above 65 years of age. 35% of the population live in rural area and 61% of these residents are between 65 – 79 age group. High cost of housing challenges the ability for essential workers to be able to support older people.
4. Ensuring that young, skilled, essential workers and families can find an affordable home in Shropshire, which supports the economic growth priorities
5. There are 1,731 long term empty properties in the County
6. Climate change impacts and opportunities and new technology including advanced methods of construction

1.3 It is therefore important that in considering and addressing these fundamental difficulties, we articulate through a strategy our objectives and develop the necessary framework on how the Council will engage and work with our many stakeholders and partners to deliver housing and housing related services.

1.4 Shropshire's Housing Strategy 2020 – 25 will benefit all our residents, our focus is not only addressing housing need, but on the role that housing can play in meeting

the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the County, which is why it is important to widely consult on our priorities and how we intend to deliver them.

1.5 Shropshire Council has faced an 80% reduction in revenue cuts to their budgets since 2013, this in combination with other public sector restrictions and welfare changes has resulted in increased demand for public services and housing provision. This strategy recognises the high priority that housing has within our communities and acknowledges that with reduced budgets we have to do more with less and acknowledge that in order to address these pressures, we identify the increasing role that innovation in services in combination with the private and voluntary sector has to play in delivering our housing priorities.

1.6 Only by hearing the range of views from all and reflecting on those in the final document, can we hope to deliver our housing ambitions.

## **2. Recommendations**

### **Cabinet is asked to;**

1. Acknowledge the work to date on developing the draft Housing Strategy and endorse the proposed vision and objectives.
2. Approve the draft Housing Strategy at Appendix 1 for public consultation for a period of six weeks
3. Agree that a final version of the Housing Strategy, having considered any relevant consultation responses, will be brought back to Cabinet later in the summer for approval.

## **REPORT**

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

3.1 There is no statutory obligation to produce a housing strategy in England, although as a strategic housing authority there is a duty to periodically assess and review the housing condition and needs in their area. Latterly, such is the local and national importance, and prominence given to housing and in particular the Governments attempts and ambition to fix the “broken housing market”, that most Councils have housing as a strategic priority and produce a housing strategy to articulate their ambition, vision and objectives.

3.2 The proposed Housing Strategy will demonstrate how the Council will:

- Target housing solutions within the Council area.
- Broaden the housing range for residents.
- Highlight to tenants and residents the forthcoming challenges which both the Council and they themselves will face.

- Structure the Council's approach to housing, as relevant to the Local Development Plan.
- Meet its housing legal requirements.

3.3 An initial screening Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment has been undertaken to support the Shropshire Housing Strategy and is appended to this report. Following the consultation on the Strategy any identified impacts in equality terms, whether negative or positive will be considered further by completing a follow up ESIIA and amendments made depending on the feedback received. We would expect at least a low to medium positive impact across the Protected Characteristic groupings, with positive impacts being sought for the groupings of Age and Disability and for people at risk of social exclusion, these groupings in the community include: low income households; households in fuel poverty; people at risk of homelessness; and people living in rural areas.

3.4 We will continue to engage with all Members as community leaders, and through Cabinet and our Portfolio Holder, which will help the service area and therefore the Council to ensure that information, feedback and concerns are raised through a variety of channels and that actions may then be identified as necessary to seek to mitigate any negative impacts for any Protected Characteristic groupings within the community, and to enhance positive impacts across communities and across our rural county as a whole

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

4.1 An innovative and robust Housing Strategy seeks to advise potential investors in Shropshire's housing services and development what is required and where it is needed.

4.2 The costs of developing this high-level strategy and the expected costs of consultation can be met from existing budgets.

#### **5. Climate Change Appraisal**

5.1 **Energy and fuel consumption:** Positive effect. One of the key priorities of the Housing Strategy is to minimise the environmental impact of existing housing stock and to positively influence the design of future housing development to maximise resource efficiencies and to ensure optimum use of sustainable construction techniques. Maximising energy efficiency in new and existing housing will also contribute positively by reducing energy costs for occupiers, particularly those on limited incomes;

5.2 **Renewable energy generation:** Positive effect. The Housing Strategy will provide opportunities to foster the generation and storage of renewable energy as part of the refurbishment of existing housing stock and the design of new housing;

5.3 **Carbon offsetting or mitigation:** Positive effect. The Housing Strategy will provide opportunities to foster the capture and storage of carbon emissions as part of the design of sustainable urban drainage and open space integral to the design of new housing schemes;

**5.4 Climate Change resilience and adaptation:** Positive effect. The Housing Strategy will provide positive opportunities to ensure that the foster the refurbishment of existing housing stock and the design of new housing deliver accommodation which is resilient to more extreme weather events and enables occupiers to adapt to the changing climate;

## **6 Background**

6.1 The Council's "current" housing strategy (2012 – 15) was jointly formulated and adopted by Herefordshire and Shropshire with the wider regional intention of eventually converging timelines and developing a further joint strategy to include Telford and Wrekin Council. Given the changing nature of local government funding and housing legislation over the past years, it became apparent there was a need to produce a Housing Strategy that concentrates on and best reflects Shropshire residents and local housing needs. For those same reasons, a strategy that covered a relatively short time span (5 yrs.), was appropriate.

6.2 The Council's Housing Strategy sets out the vision and objectives for housing in Shropshire and provides an action plan for achieving those objectives and opportunities and contribute towards delivery of the council's corporate plan.

6.3 The Housing Strategy reflects the council's role in discharging a range of statutory duties such as those relating to homelessness, private sector housing and the safeguarding of vulnerable children and adults. It will also contribute to meeting the council's priorities across a range of other priority policy areas including the Economic Growth and Climate Change Strategy. Finally, the Housing Strategy should also reflect national housing priorities and general direction of travel.

6.4 The Housing Strategy cannot be viewed in isolation and is central to delivering many of the objectives contained in the Council's Corporate Plan. Its purpose is to provide a framework and clear direction of travel influencing all housing related activities undertaken by the Council and its delivery partners across Shropshire and help focus our collective resources on achieving sustainable solutions that ensure the delivery of sufficient high-quality housing and housing support of the right types, in the right places, and at the right times, to best meet the current and future needs of our communities.

6.5 This is a wide-ranging strategy that impacts on the lives of all Shropshire residents in one way or another, be that directly through the provision of accommodation and services or indirectly through improvements in the public realm, environment and health. To this end, the Housing Strategy contributes to many of the council's corporate priorities in the current Corporate Plan.

6.6 The following vision, priorities and principles for Shropshire's new Housing Strategy have been developed by considering the council's corporate priorities together with a range of demographic and other data about housing need. They reflect the overarching need for more homes in Shropshire together with the council's ambition to build those new homes within neighbourhoods that residents identify with, where they are needed and where they can thrive.



6.7 The proposed vision is

**“All homes are well designed, high quality decent homes, which will protect Shropshire's unique urban and rural environments and ensure it is a great place to live. That all Shropshire residents have access to the ‘right home in the right place’ to support and promote their health and wellbeing throughout their lives”**

6.8 The 6 proposed priorities are:

1.To meet the overall current and future housing needs of Shropshire’s growing population by addressing the housing needs of particular groups within communities

2.To ensure people whose housing needs are not met through the local open market housing can access housing that meets their needs

3.Working to reduce and prevent households from becoming homeless and where this is not possible ensuring they have safe, secure and appropriate accommodation until they are able to resettle

4.To ensure people can access a mix of housing options within Shropshire’s urban and rural landscape, that best meets their needs in terms of tenure, safety, size, type, design and location of housing.

5.To minimise the environmental impact of existing housing stock and future housing development in the interest of climate change. To work with policy makers, developers and private and social landlords to maximise resource efficiencies and to ensure optimum use of sustainable construction techniques.

6.To support the drive for economic growth by ensuring that there is enough housing supply to enable businesses to attract and retain the local workforce that they need.

6.9 The Housing Strategy will be delivered through a series of action plans and sub strategies/policies that sit beneath the Strategy and cover areas such as homelessness, the private rented sector, housing investment and renewal. These plans will set out how the council and its partners will use the diminishing resources available to deliver the vision and meet the priorities contained within the overarching Strategy.

6.10 In moving forward we need to be realistic about what is achievable, and what is not, and who is best placed to deliver on key aspects of the strategy. The council will remain accountable for the delivery of the housing strategy even if services are delivered by other organisations.

## **7 Additional Information (Next steps)**

7.1 The consultation will be undertaken for a period of 6 weeks. Consultation documents will be made available on the Shropshire Council web-site, and paper copies will be provided at libraries and council offices in the main towns. A significant number of organisations and individuals will continue to be notified directly of the

publication of the consultation documents in accordance with the SCI. Electronic responses are encouraged to reduce printing and distribution costs and to reduce the time spent collating and analysing paper responses.

7.2 Following the consultation, a final draft of the Housing Strategy 2020-25 will be brought back to Cabinet with the outcome of that consultation for consideration and for approval.

## 8. Conclusions

8.1 By agreeing to consult on the draft Housing Strategy 2020 – 2025, the Council will be able to ensure a range of stakeholder and partner views help inform the future of housing and strategic direction aligning with other corporate priorities. It will also help to inform housing related services and make sure that these align with local need and demand, therefore supporting effective and efficient use of resources.

<b>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</b>
<b>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)</b> Cllr Rob Macey - Portfolio Holder for Planning and Strategic Planning
<b>Local Member</b> All members
<b>Appendices</b> Appendix 1 - Draft Housing Strategy 2020 – 2025 Appendix 2 – ESIIA

## **Foreword by Cllr Robert Macey**

Welcome to our Housing Strategy.

The right home in the right Place is an aspiration for the majority of us, but this realisation is harder to achieve for some people. We recognise that there are a multitude of reasons why this may be the case for some of our residents. Our aim is to address the barriers that prevent these residents from being able to access a suitable home.

Shropshire Council together with its Partners, both Private and Public are in a key position to address these challenges, whether that is through the development of specific policies, providing funding or by pulling human resources together.

We also recognise that there are often competing interests in providing the right home for all our residents. The challenge of limiting the impact of new development on the environment is particularly important, especially in the light of Shropshire Council declaring a climate emergency. We understand that communities wish to see their physical environments protected and the challenge this presents in supporting new development. We recognise to achieve economic growth, we need to facilitate the right homes to support growth and business development and to encourage and retain staff. It is also important to us, that residents that require a special type of home with specific support are helped in equal measure.

We are hugely ambitious and positive about the future and growth of housing in Shropshire and look forward to delivering this Strategy.

## **Why we need this strategy**

The need for a decent home in a location where the household can realise its potential is well documented. The issue is how the requirement is realised for all communities, both urban and rural. The high cost of housing and slower pace of earnings within the County has resulted in the cost of home ownership rising beyond the means of many individuals and families.

It is recognised that not all households will wish or indeed have the means to be home owners. All households should equally be provided for with public and private sector opportunities and that all households should also be able to live in a decent home.

There are those residents both old and young, who will require the assistance of the Council to secure the right home for them, whether that is through supported and assisted living or through residential care. There is a determination that by working together with the public and private sectors there can be creative solutions to the challenges. This strategy provides a focus for those interested and involved in supporting and influencing initiatives that provide the right home for all Shropshire residents.

## **What this strategy is for?**

This Strategy sets out immediate objectives, opportunities and an action plan with the aim of encouraging partners with resources and expertise to work together. It recognises that different age groups often need different housing solutions and that some will continually need the Council to be creative in identifying a solution.

Housing forms the basis of many work areas within the Council and pulls together the strands of each service provision.

This is within a context of reducing public sector budgets and dealing with higher demands, needing to protect and enhance the environment, deal with climate change and the need to protect finite resources and recognising a wide range of housing requirements.

## **Who it's for?**

This strategy is for the Council and its partners, both private and public sector as a mechanism to identify what is needed to achieve the vision and how this can be achieved. Working together in partnership is essential, including through the pooling of finances and expertise.

Employers – and employees; for businesses to grow and expand it is important that the workforce is appropriately housed in an accessible location and that housing should not become a barrier to growth.

## **The Housing Vision for Shropshire**

**All homes are well designed decent homes of high quality, which will protect Shropshire's unique urban and rural environments and ensure it is a great place to live.**

**That all Shropshire residents have access to the 'right home in the right place' to support and promote their health and wellbeing throughout their lives;**



## **Delivering the Strategy**

### **Key Objectives: -**

- 1.To meet the overall current and future housing needs of Shropshire's growing population by addressing the housing needs of particular groups within communities
- 2.To ensure people whose housing needs are not met through the local open market housing can access housing that meets their needs
- 3.Work to reduce and prevent households from becoming homeless and where this is not possible ensuring they have safe, secure and appropriate accommodation until they are able to resettle
- 4.To ensure people can access a mix of housing options within Shropshire's urban and rural landscape, that best meets their needs in terms of tenure, safety, size, type, design and location of housing.
- 5.To minimise the environmental impact of existing housing stock and future housing development in the interest of climate change. To work with policy makers, developers and private and social landlords to maximise resource efficiencies and to ensure optimum use of sustainable construction techniques.
- 6.To support the drive for economic growth by ensuring that there is enough housing supply to enable businesses to attract and retain the local workforce that they need.



## **Performance and monitoring**

An action plan sits alongside this strategy and will be set out as immediate, short, medium and long term. This action plan, along with the overall targets will be reviewed regularly and updated annually by Shropshire Council for the duration of this Strategy.

## **Shropshire in context**

### **Shropshire: its communities and places**

Shropshire is a fantastic place to live, work and visit. It is admired for its beautiful and attractive natural and historic environment as well as its impressive biodiversity. Covering a sizeable area of 319,730 hectares with 23% of this is designated as the South Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The county has a rich cultural heritage to discover and natural landscapes to explore, for residents and visitors alike. There are for example Roman and Iron Age sites; castles and historic buildings; theatres and museums; rivers and canals; walking and cycling routes including one of the largest Rights of Way networks in the country; geology and wildlife; and natural and industrial archaeology.

Shropshire communities look out for each other and their living environment. The whole County benefits from excellent schools, low crime rates, a growing local economy and many volunteers supporting local communities. The quality of life and wide-range of housing options continues to attract a rising number of people wishing to settle in the County. The current population is estimated at 320,300<sup>1</sup> people which is projected to reach 337,800 by 2041<sup>2</sup>.

Around 39% of Shropshire's population lives in villages, hamlets and dwellings dispersed throughout the countryside. The remainder live in one of the 17 market towns and key centres. Only Ludlow and Bridgnorth in the south, Oswestry, Whitchurch and Market Drayton in the north, and Shrewsbury, the central county town have population in excess of 10,000 people.

The County has a road network with approximately 5,100km<sup>3</sup> of carriageway and is easily accessible by road (including the A5/M54 motorway). Shropshire has a high level of car ownership, with 84.2% of households<sup>4</sup> having access to at least one car or van. Shrewsbury also acts as a rail hub with easy access to Wales, Cheshire, the West Midlands, and London and beyond. There are 16 rail stations and an extensive bus network that aims to provide accessible public transport to residents and visitors.

The 2019 Indices of Deprivation identified seven small urban areas in Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Ludlow with concentrations of population experiencing high levels of deprivation. Less identifiable are the small pockets of rural deprivation across Shropshire. Key to improving the health and wellbeing of Shropshire's more vulnerable residents is to ensure they can live in and access safe and suitable homes in good condition, built to a high quality and in the right location.

### **Shropshire: its businesses and sectors**

Business sectors include agriculture; the care sector; construction; forestry; quality foods via farm shops and food fairs; heritage and countryside related tourism including music and walking festivals; hospitality sector; advanced manufacturing and engineering; and significant numbers of home-based businesses including creative sector.

On skills, the University Centre Shrewsbury, which works closely with local businesses, is a joint venture between the Council and the University of Chester, whilst the Council also has close links with

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Harper Adams University and further education colleges, including the Shrewsbury Colleges group and North Shropshire College. Our large geography means that our economy operates and reaches in different directions.

Shropshire is primarily a small business economy, with more than nine out of ten enterprises having less than 10 employees. The value of small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) to the Shropshire economy is hugely important and significant, alongside a number of larger employers who have more than 250 employees including international companies working across a range of sectors.

### **How has the Strategy been informed?**

This Strategy is informed by a wealth of information and intelligence from a variety of organisations and sources including; Planning Policy and Information, Intelligence and Insight web pages; recently revised place plans and Homepoint monitoring reports; which provides an analysis of the housing waiting list. Notwithstanding statistics that are produced and prepared by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government and the Land Registry. In addition, stakeholder intelligence has been used to influence the objectives and opportunities identified in this Strategy.

**infographic/relationship mapping to other strategies**

## **‘Planning for the right homes in the right Place’**

### **National Planning Policy Context**

In February 2017, the Government published a Housing White Paper entitled “Fixing our Broken Housing Market”<sup>5</sup>. This set out the government’s plans to reform the housing market and boost the supply of new homes. This included the Government’s 2015 *“commitment to build a million new homes by 2020 and supply a further half a million by 2022.”*

This identified three challenges;

- Council’s lacking an up-to-date adopted Local Plan that reflected future population growth.
- The slow pace of new development.
- The structure of the current housing market making it harder to increase supply.

The White Paper outlined measures to ensure people’s housing needs and aspirations are met in the short and long-term:

- planning for the right homes in the right places,
- build homes faster,
- diversify the housing market, and
- helping people now.

These measures also address *“supporting people to buy or rent their own home, preventing homelessness, improving options for older people and protecting the most vulnerable.”*

The White Paper expresses the Government’s desire that local authorities should be ‘as ambitious and innovative as possible to get homes built in their area.’

A key measure from the Government’s White Paper has been to completely refresh and simplify the Planning Policy system.

In September 2017, the Government published a consultation document entitled “Planning for the right homes in the right places”<sup>6</sup> with a view to reforming the planning system to speed up the delivery of new homes. The new National Planning Policy Framework<sup>7</sup> was issued in July 2018 and subsequently up-dated in July 2019. This has prompted new National Planning Policy Guidance<sup>8</sup> for local authorities.

The Government has pledged to renew the Affordable Housing Programme, but the focus will be on new initiatives aimed at home ownership. The ‘First Homes’ initiative has launched its consultation on design and delivery of first homes in February 2020. It references the Government’s commitment to making home ownership a reality for everyone and recognising that it is out of reach for many. The consultation references that progress has been made, but further action was needed. It notes that the biggest barrier to home ownership is affordability given low interest rates and high rents have limited the ability for people to save.

Homes England’s Strategic Plan – (2018/19 – 2022/23) pledges that “over the next five years we’ll help more people in England to access better homes in the right places by: Providing expert support to priority locations, addressing the barriers facing smaller builders, supporting modern methods of



construction (MMC), Delivering home ownership products, such as Help to Buy, Unlocking and enabling land, providing investment products, including for major infrastructure and supporting the affordable market'

## **Local Planning Policy Context**

Shropshire has an adopted Local Plan covering the Plan Period 2006-2026. (Core Strategy adopted 2011 and SAMDev Adopted in December 2015.) The Council is currently at an advanced stage of reviewing the Local Plan which extends the Plan period to 2016-2038. This will provide clarity to all stakeholders within the Shropshire housing market area and enable the Council to respond flexibly to changing circumstances in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Council's Full Objective Assessment of Housing Need published in October 2017 identifies that Shropshire has an annual housing need of 1,270 dwellings per annum and an overall housing need of 25,400 dwellings during 2016-2036. This adopts the standard methodology for calculating housing need defined in the NPPG.

At the end of 2017, the Council sought views on "the preferred scale and distribution of development" in Shropshire for the period 2016-2036. The key housing proposal was 'High' housing growth of 28,750 dwellings, equivalent to an average of 1,430 dwellings per year for the whole of Shropshire.

## **Place Plan**

There are 18 Place Plan areas in Shropshire, usually (although not always) focussed on a market town and its surrounding rural communities. Each Place Plan looks at infrastructure needs with that specific Place Plan area. This Strategy uses Place Plan geography for its analysis.

## **Delivering the vision**

Shropshire Council is committed to growing and nurturing a healthy, functioning local housing market that provides high quality decent homes to support thriving Shropshire communities. The Council is working closely with developers, private landlords, communities and other participants in the sector to achieve the vision outlined in this Strategy.

Where people cannot afford to access homes through the open housing market, Shropshire Council is ambitious to work collaboratively with partners to find innovative solutions to removing affordability barriers and to growing the stock of affordable homes.

Shropshire Council is dedicated to ensuring people on low incomes, encompassing some of the most vulnerable members of Shropshire society, live or have access to safe, secure, high quality housing in places where the need is. This means working effectively with social landlords and other service providers.

The Council recognises the vital role the housing sector plays in supporting local economic growth. The Council is committed to ensuring the growing labour force has access to high quality homes in the right places to fully meet their health and wellbeing needs.

The Council is committed to ensuring future housing growth and improvements to existing housing stock are delivered in a manner sensitive to Shropshire's environment and local communities. Shropshire Council is working collaboratively to ensure that reducing the impact of climate change and ensuring homes meet 'decent home' standards are at the forefront of achieving this vision.

Shropshire Council is equipped with valuable tools, powers and innovative housing/planning professionals including;

- Planning policy and Planning Development Management,
- Economic Growth,
- Adult and Children's Services,
- Housing Options tackling homelessness, adaptations, revitalising housing stock.
- Estates and land ownership
- HomePoint and the arms-length STAR housing management enterprise,
- Public / environmental protection.

This places the Council in a pivotal position to positively influence and collaborate with others to achieve Shropshire's housing vision. Shropshire Council is also in the unique position of being democratically accountable to Shropshire residents who want the Council to continue to make Shropshire a wonderful place to live and work.

Achieving this vision will help public, community and voluntary service providers make more effective use of resources and services to support the health and wellbeing needs of Shropshire's population.

The importance of collaboration and partnership working in achieving this vision cannot be emphasised enough. The Council must engage with individuals, local communities, and private developers, private and social rented landlords, other public and voluntary sector organisations, Shropshire's business community and other parties active in Shropshire's local housing market.

## Key Objectives

### 1.To meet the overall current and future housing needs of Shropshire’s growing population by addressing the housing needs of particular groups within communities

National Planning Policy requires local authorities to assess overall housing need during the Local Plan period. In addition, NPPG also states that “*plan-making authorities’ need ‘to assess the need for housing of different groups and reflect this in planning policies’ particularly ‘having regard to deliverability.’*”<sup>9</sup> This work is forming part of the evidence base that is supporting current review of Shropshire’s Local Plan.

The following section in brief outlines the pressing current and future needs of these and other important communities. It lists some of the key opportunities Shropshire Council together with partners are pursuing to address housing need in Shropshire. Some of these are ground breaking and innovative and being driven by caring and enthusiastic professionals

## Young People and Students

There is a need to ensure the growing number of students attending higher education establishments in Shropshire have access to satisfactory student accommodation, whether it be communal halls of residence or self-contained dwellings. Provision is vital first to attract new students and then to support their welfare as the educational establishments nurture their knowledge and talents.

Many young adults leave Shropshire to further their education and pursue employment elsewhere in their late teens and early twenties. The development of the University Centre Shrewsbury will provide young people with an opportunity to further their education in Shropshire. These young people may be currently resident in the County or from elsewhere. If Shropshire can retain young people once they have completed their education, they will further strengthen the quality and diversity of Shropshire’s labour force. This aspiration is reflected as one of the 10 goals of the ‘Shrewsbury Big Town Plan’ to ‘retain more of our best young talent in the town and attract new talent from outside’. Attractive and accessible housing solutions are required to encourage retention of students and young people in Shropshire.

## Rural Housing

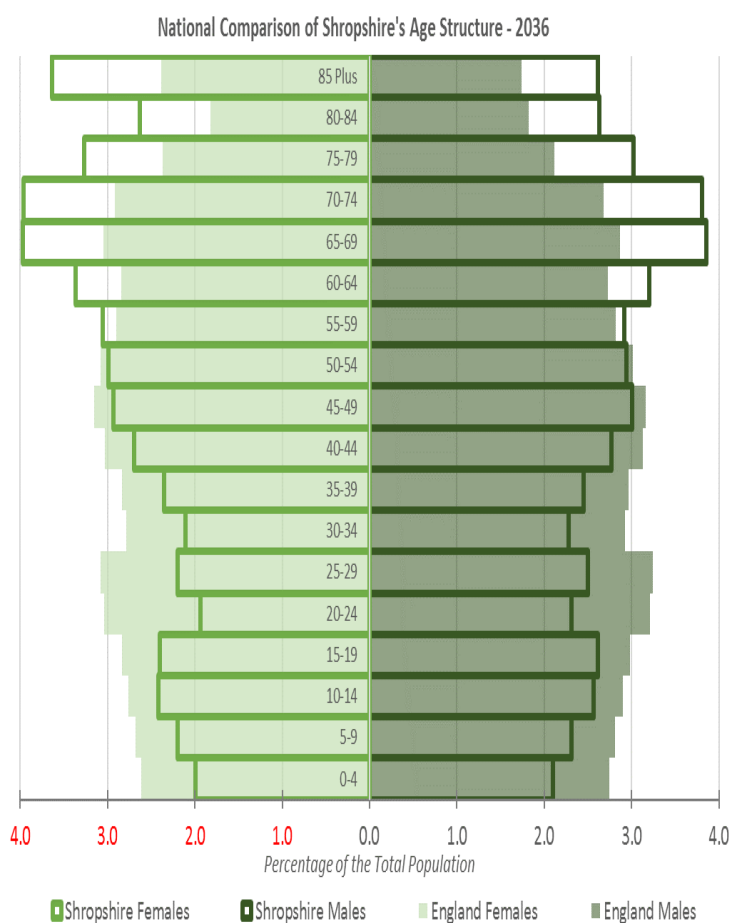
The challenges facing rural communities in respect to housing is nationally well documented, the challenges in Shropshire are no different and primarily relate to affordability. Approximately 39% of Shropshire’s population live in the countryside and rural settlements. The rural population comprises a high number of older people for example, 58% of 80 years of age and over within the County live in rural areas and 61% of the 65 – 79 age group. This will be in part attributed to the attractiveness of Shropshire as a place to retire.

There is a strong correlation between Shropshire’s aging communities and housing affordability ratios, for example Ludlow, Church Stretton and Bishops Castle in the South of the County have high ratios of 7, 8.2 and 7.4 respectively. These figures represent the multiplier used against the household

income to determine affordability. For example, median gross household income in Church Stretton would have to be multiplied by 8.2 to acquire an open market median house value home. As the mortgage multiplier is generally accepted as being four times the household income, the amount people can afford results in an imbalance of housing opportunities for those who have grown up, work or need to provide family support in those areas. With an aging rural population there are challenges regarding enabling older people to be able to live healthy, happy and supported lives into old age.

The largest challenge for essential rural workers, younger people and families is the affordability of housing, both social and market housing. The lack of appropriate housing can impact on service delivery and the ability of rural businesses to grow and flourish.

### Older People including those approaching retirement

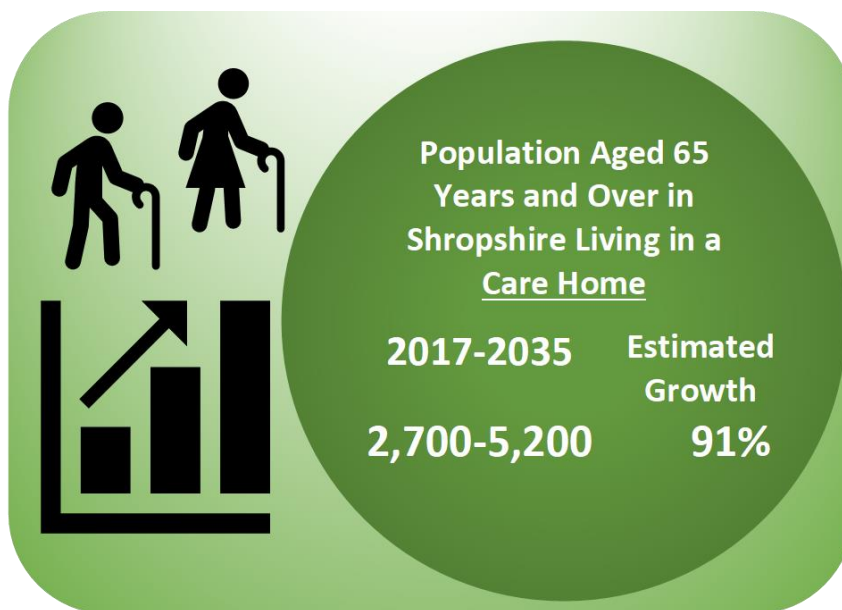


Migration and longer life expectancy are leading to a growing older population in Shropshire. At present it is estimated 77,800 older people live in Shropshire, projected to rise by 48% to 114,600 by 2041. By 2041, over a third of the population will be aged over 65 years compared to just below a quarter nationally. The above illustration clearly shows the projected aging profile of Shropshire.

The need to supply enough homes in the right places to meet the needs and aspirations of Shropshire's growing older population is vital. Older people from those approaching retirement to those more elderly and less mobile require a range of housing solutions that can promote their health and well-being, enable them to live where they wish to live and enable them to remain independent for longer

(avoiding the need for costly residential care.) National planning policy requires local authorities to consider the need for a range of housing solutions including; -

- Age restricted general market housing for people aged 55 and over and the active elderly with shared amenities
- Retirement living or sheltered housing – purpose-built homes with limited communal facilities but with a degree of support in the form of a warden or house manager
- Extra care housing with medium to high level of care available if required – in dependant living with varying degree of care as time progresses
- Residential care homes and nursing homes – high level of care, meeting all activities of daily living.



### Gypsy's and Travellers

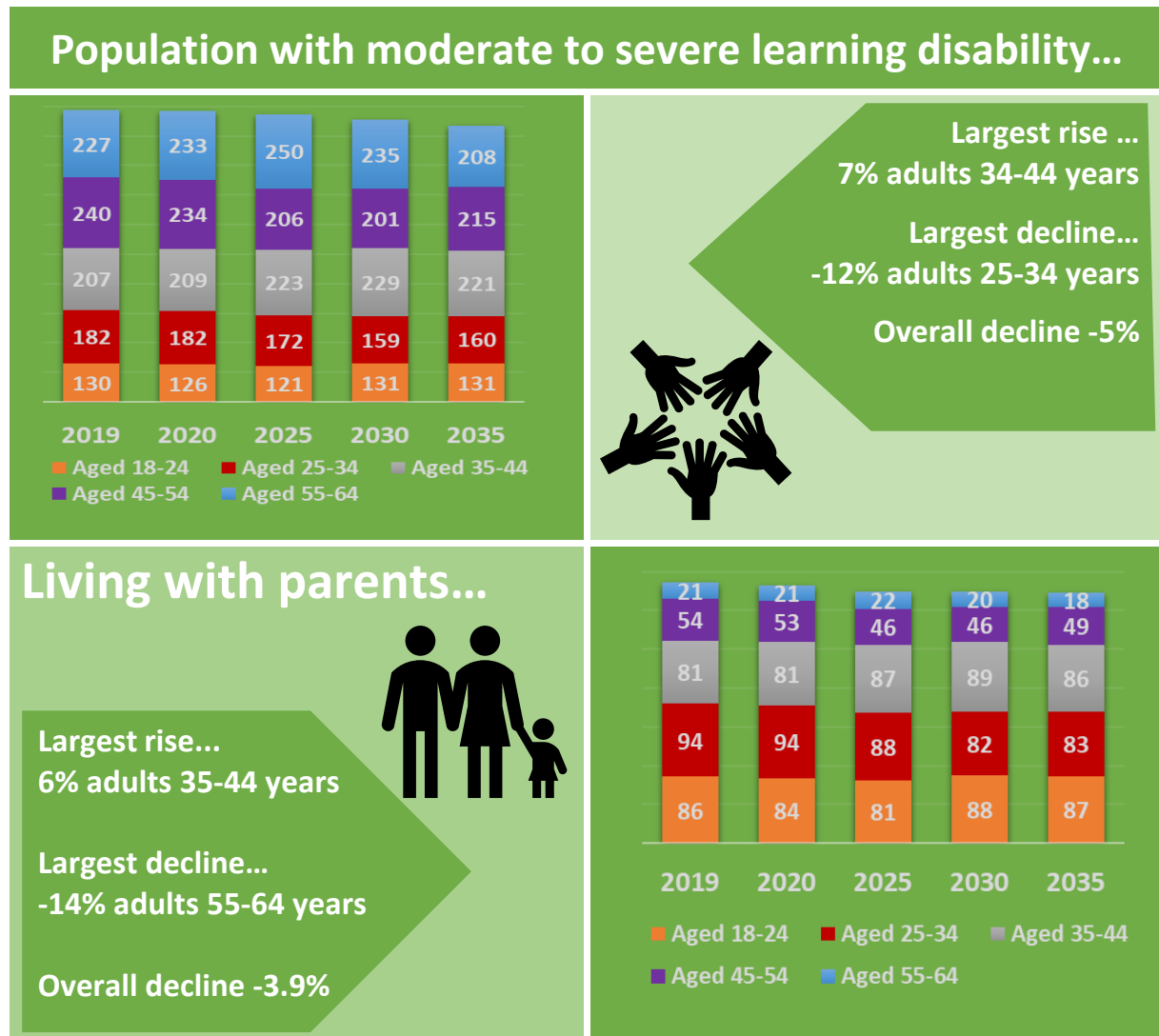
Shropshire Council is committed to *“the Government’s overarching aim to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.”* The Council also recognises the importance of taking into account the accommodation needs of all travellers, including those that are settled.

Shropshire Council undertook a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) <sup>[1]</sup> in 2017 which has been updated by a GTAA published in February 2020. The studies consider supply of plots and pitches and identify the likely accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to 2038. This evidence is being used to inform the now advanced review of Shropshire’s Local Plan and it’s approach to traveller site delivery.

It is recognised that new gypsy and traveller sites will be more sustainable if they are in appropriate locations, well managed and have good facilities. On this basis Shropshire Council has undertaken

improvements at a number of its sites. However, whilst Shropshire Council owns and manages four sites, a significant proportion of the pitch provision in Shropshire is on private sites of various sizes and Government policy encourages more private provision. Therefore, Shropshire’s Local Plan will set out criteria to guide the delivery of suitable sustainable new traveller sites regardless of the provider.

## People with disabilities



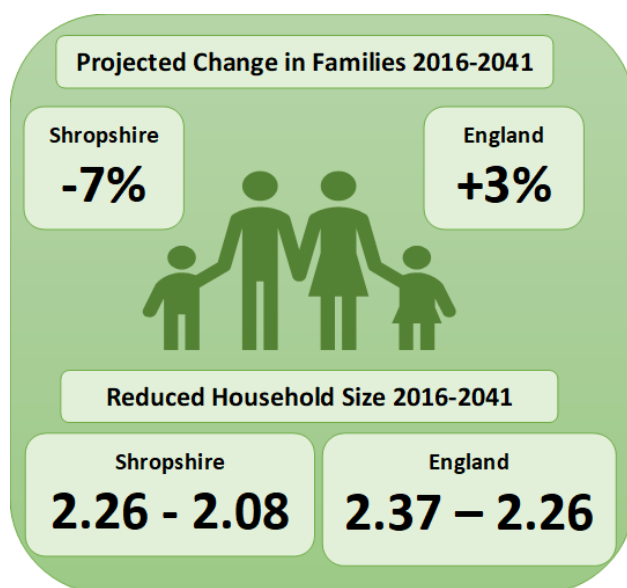
Shropshire Council has a strong focus on providing opportunities for people with disabilities to live independently and the commissioning of supported living accommodation aims to reduce the number of placements into residential care.

Individuals may have been at risk of going into residential care; they may be in temporary placement, they could be in a position of risk in the community or they could be coming out of educational

residential placements or hospital. Whatever the situation the Supported Living Team aims to build support around everyone's needs and strengths.

Shropshire Council continue to develop supported living opportunities for individuals regardless of their disability, most of our supported living arrangements are for individuals with a learning disability, with a few schemes commissioned for individuals with mental health needs.

## Families with children



Shropshire is projected to experience a decline in households in terms of numbers of dependent children (0 to 15 years), which is consistent with national trends in household formation. The most significant projected decline is likely to households containing 3 or more children which is expected to see a decline of -9.8%. Nationally, this group is the only group that is expected to decline.

Market Drayton, Oswestry, Whitchurch, Shrewsbury and Shifnal have the highest proportion of younger age population (25 – 49 years). These areas in central and northern Shropshire have a slightly younger age structure, suggesting the presence of more families and slightly more affordable housing. These areas include the County Town and three urban areas with more than 10,000 population, all serving as large employment centres in Shropshire.

## Opportunities

- Promote and explore housing solutions that encourage students, young people and essential workers to remain or relocate to Shropshire
- Work to ensure adequate and satisfactory student accommodation in Shropshire is available
- Recognise that a range of housing solutions are required to meet the housing needs of rural and urban communities

- Continue and enhance community capacity building initiatives such as Community Led Schemes
- To continue working collaboratively with housing providers and developers to bring forward more homes for vulnerable people that offer a range of housing options.
- Ensure there is a broad spectrum of housing solutions for Shropshire's aging population which minimise the need for costly residential and nursing care
- Maximise opportunities to adapt homes occupied by vulnerable older people, to enable them to lead independent and fulfilled lives.
- Support infrastructure which enables the development and use of new technology that enables people to live in their own home for longer.
- To provide Supported living to support those with physical and mental health problems
- To embrace opportunities presented by Cornovii (Local Housing Company) in the development of unique and community responsive housing solutions
- Increasing the housing choice in town centres and improving affordability by introducing a range of housing models and tenures.
- Quality children's homes and working in a collaborative way to provide suitable accommodation for Care Leavers
- Develop housing solutions for all Shropshire individuals and families within the Council's area
- To secure housing to meet the needs of vulnerable people when new developments are identified
- To ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to supported housing
- To invest in the development of bespoke accommodation for individuals with complex needs to enable to them to continue to live in Shropshire and be near their families
- Ensure all authorised Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites are well run by promoting good management and appropriate facilities
- Promote the development of further specialised housing with care schemes including housing with care suitable for adults with dementia and/ or mental health difficulties to widen housing and care options



## 2.To ensure people whose housing needs are not met through the local open market housing can access housing that meets their needs

### Understanding the level of need

The NPPF explains that “the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing.”<sup>10</sup>

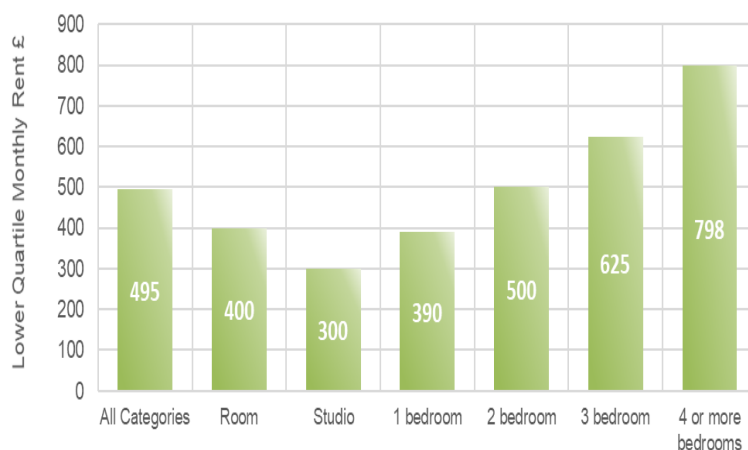
To calculate affordable housing need NPPG states that “Strategic policy-making authorities will need to estimate the current number of households and projected number of households who lack their own housing or who cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market.

The unmet (gross) need for affordable housing by assessing past trends and current estimates of:

- the number of homeless households;
- the number of those in priority need who are currently housed in temporary accommodation;
- the number of households in over-crowded housing;
- the number of concealed households;
- the number of existing affordable housing tenants in need (i.e. householders currently housed in unsuitable dwellings); and
- the number of households from other tenures in need and those that cannot afford their own homes, either to rent, or to own, where that is their aspiration.”

We acknowledge the substantial number of residents in current housing need within Shropshire, as they seek advice and support in terms of accessing affordable housing. There are more than 5000 households on the housing register requiring affordable housing. Affordable housing being defined by the NPPF as ‘housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market, including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or for essential local workers’. The number of new affordable homes over the last 5 years has averaged at 343 per year. This is significantly below the number of homes required. Understandably, households in the greatest need are housed in advance of those with a lower need in accordance with Shropshire Council’s Allocation Policy.

The need for affordable housing in Shropshire is growing, as fewer households can afford rising house prices or rising private monthly rents.



There is a growing disparity between house prices and household income which reinforces the need for a broader range of house types and tenures that can address this unmet housing need.

The 'unmet' housing need is further evidenced by affordability ratios. The ability or inability of households to afford and access suitable housing in a suitable location is a key market signal that may indicate higher levels of affordable housing need. Affordability ratios (Ars) are widely used as a measure of affordability of private market housing, as they compare housing costs against the ability of a household to pay. A high ratio indicates housing that is less affordable and that households on lower incomes are more likely to struggle to afford even the lowest priced accommodation.

Affordable Housing is defined as an umbrella term that covers a wide range of housing options for people who are unable to meet their housing needs on the open market. It can include both rented and low-cost home ownership options. The NPPF defines affordable tenures as follows: -

- a) affordable housing for rent (Social or Affordable Rent) or is at least 20% below local market rents
- b) Starter homes as specified in the Housing and Planning Act 2016
- c) Discounted market sales housing whereby a home is sold at least 20% below local market value
- d) Other affordable routes to home ownership which includes shared ownership, low cost homes for sale and rent to buy

The NPPF references the need for "planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs". Shropshire Council together with its Registered Provider partners continues to have an excellent track record of delivering exception site developments. The 'exception' being evidenced local housing need. Standard exception site delivery has been further enhanced by 'Community Led Housing', of which there are currently 15 schemes, delivered with direct support and input from the community. The NPPF could be viewed as providing a number of 'tools' for Local Authorities to use in addressing the provision of affordable housing. It references that consideration may be given to allowing some open market on site to facilitate the delivery of affordable homes.

### **Opportunities**

- Explore through the Local Plan Review opportunities to introduce a wider range of housing solutions that satisfy a broader range of community needs and aspirations.
- Review housing opportunities presented as a policy requirement on land allocated for housing development
- Continue to encourage self-build development opportunities on land allocated for housing
- To acknowledge that home ownership is not an aspiration or a realistic option for many households and to work with public and private sector partners to provide affordable housing options

- Acknowledge that Shropshire Council together with its Public and Private Sector partners are in a pivotal position to drive and support a range of housing solutions
- To continue to seek quality housing solutions

### 3. Working to reduce and prevent households from becoming homeless and where this is not possible ensuring they have safe, secure and appropriate accommodation until they are able to resettle

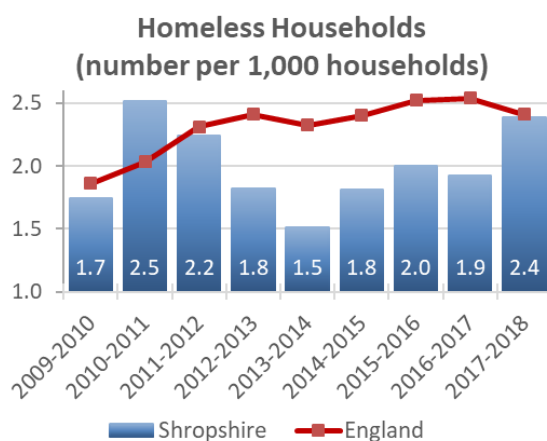
Ensuring there are household solutions for all residents of Shropshire including those that find themselves homeless or require supported housing opportunities within Shropshire.

The charity 'Crisis' defines homelessness in its broadest sense as "a problem faced by people who lack a place to live that is supportive, affordable, decent and secure"<sup>11</sup>. Rough sleepers are the most visible homeless people, but a high proportion of homeless people/households are accommodated in hostels, squats, bed and breakfasts (B&BS) or temporarily with friends and family.

#### Policy and Legislation

The primary homelessness legislation is in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and provides the statutory under-pinning for action to prevent homelessness and provide assistance to people threatened with or actually homeless. This was amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002. These extended the statutory duty that local authorities must provide accommodation to households accepted as being homeless and in priority need. Their duty also extends to supporting homelessness prevention and relief.

In 2017 new legislation entitled the "Homelessness Reduction Act" was adopted together with an updated version of the Homelessness Code of Guidance. This places a duty on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas. It also requires housing authorities to provide homelessness services to all those affected, not just those who have 'priority need'. This new legislation came into force on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018.

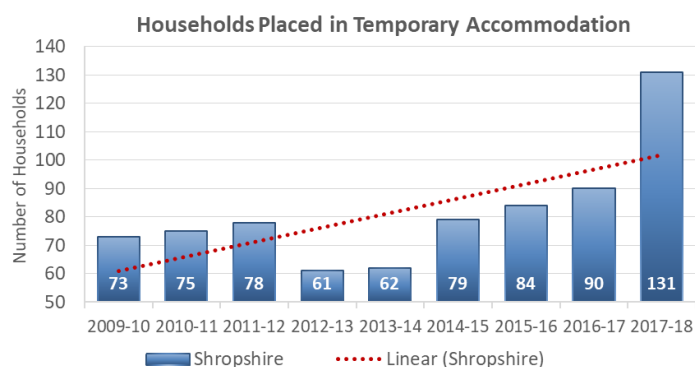


Unfortunately, since 2013-14 rates of homelessness have generally continued to increase in Shropshire, with a significant increase of 24.5% in the last two years. Rates remain below the level for 2010-11. This rise in the number of homeless households, parallels with rising house prices in Shropshire. With the exception of 2010-11, Shropshire rates have consistently remained below national levels.

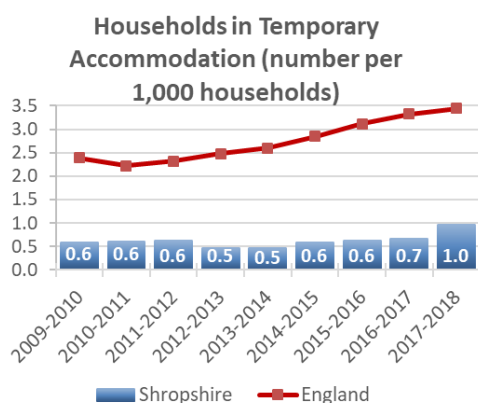
On average 81 (2009-2018) households a year occupy temporary accommodation in Shropshire. Since 2014-15, the number of households placed in temporary accommodation has risen year on year,

<sup>11</sup>Crisis, (2005), What is Homelessness

increasing most significantly in the last two years by 46%. This suggests finding suitable settled housing for the rising number households accepted as homeless and in priority need in Shropshire has become more challenging.



Nationally the number of households in priority need per 1,000 households has continued to rise year on year since 2010-2011, reaching 3.4 households per 1,000 in 2017-2018. Shropshire has not followed this trend. However, rates have risen slightly year on year since 2013-2014, encompassing significant rise during 2016-17 to 2017-2018 (0.66 to 0.96 households per 1,000 households.) This follows on from a similar rise in homelessness and runs parallel with rising housing costs in Shropshire.

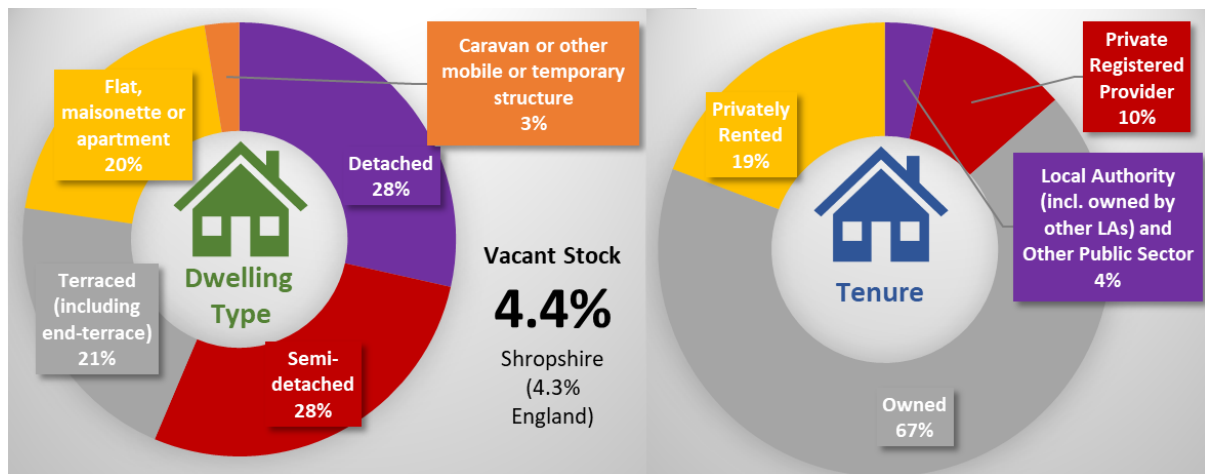


## Opportunities

- Work with private, public and voluntary stakeholders to understand the issues that result in homelessness
- Identify housing solutions that focus on those leaving care and initiatives that prevent a young person from becoming homeless
- Educate and dispell the myth of the type of household that is or may become homeless
- Recognise that the current situation of temporary accommodation is not in the interest of the health and wealth being of the household or the Council and identify improved solutions.
- Identify and implement opportunities that improve the 'temporary' experience of the household
- Identify temporary accommodation that seeks to improve on the health and well being of the household

- Identify and implement opportunities that reduce expenditure on temporary accommodation
- Identify opportunities that bridge the gap between temporary accommodation and longer-term housing opportunities

**4.To ensure people can access a mix of housing options within Shropshire’s urban and rural landscape, that best meets their needs in terms of tenure, safety, size, type, design and location of housing.**



Shropshire’s Housing Stock can be broken down in terms of tenure: - 67% owned, privately rent 19%, private registered provider 10%, Local Authority and other public sector 4% and 4.4% of vacant stock as illustrated above.

### Market Housing

Communities with a mix of housing type, tenures, and sizes will be more able to meet the changing needs and aspirations of its residents, through their changing life stages, household shapes and sizes or changes in income.

Wider housing choice increases the opportunities for households to remain within their communities and promotes social equality and inclusion by easing geographical constraints on the search for appropriate homes.

The Local Plan sets out the requirements for new residential developments by stating that they should maintain provision of and contribute to a mix of housing types, tenure and size to help support the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities. This includes meeting the needs of an ageing population, smaller properties, and opportunities for self-build.

### Private Rented

The private rented sector in Shropshire accounts for 16% of the housing stock and of these 43% are flats.

The private rented sector makes an important contribution to the housing offer and flexibility to directly support our continued job led growth for existing and incoming labour force. Traditionally, this sector has not been the tenure of choice, mainly due to concerns of security of tenure and property conditions. The most common hazards reported to the Council relate to; crowding and space, excess cold and damp and mould growth.

Within the private housing sector in Shropshire the lower quartile monthly rent (£495) is assumed to be the minimum cost a household would need to afford to access affordable private sector housing.

### **Affordable housing**

Affordable Housing is an umbrella term that covers a wide range of housing options for people who are unable to meet their housing needs on the open market. It can include both rented and low-cost home ownership options

Shropshire Council together with its partners have continued to be successful in attracting Homes England Funding, which Registered Providers have benefitted from £34,902,507 funding in the last 3 years.

STAR Housing was set up in 2013 to run Shropshire Council's Housing which has around 4200 homes. They work towards maintaining and improving the existing stock and have built 140 new properties.

For those whose housing needs cannot be met through market provision – affordable housing is: social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. The affordable tenures defined by the NPPF are set out under Objective 2. Affordable houses are currently delivered by either a developer as a policy requirement or as an exception site development, which also includes schemes delivered as 'Community Led', the latter directly responding to identified local need.

### **Opportunities**

- Make Private rented sector housing safe for tenants (this includes licensing of houses in multiple occupation HMO's)
- To ensure Empty properties are not detrimental to communities (in terms of risk/nuisance/wasted resources)
- seek to deliver the optimum amount and type of affordable homes on relevant development sites
- Challenge poor quality housing
- By working in partnership with the private sector to ensure that private rented sector housing stock is maintained and managed to a high standard and within the legislative framework and by working with owners of empty properties and where necessary utilise available enforcement powers.
- STAR Housing new homes build programme.
- Work with Registered Providers in Shropshire to provide a range of affordable housing options.
- Work with developers to provide a mix of well-designed, decent homes on new developments



## **5.To minimise the environmental impact of existing housing stock and future housing development in the interest of climate change. To work with policy makers, developers and private and social landlords to maximise resource efficiencies and to ensure optimum use of sustainable construction techniques.**

### **Climate Change**

One of the national Industrial Strategy “grand challenges” is Clean Growth, and this resonates in Shropshire, where we have the following opportunities in smart, flexible and clean energy technologies:

- University Centre Shrewsbury – Centre for Research into Environmental Science and Technology (CREST).
- Supporting development of low carbon innovations by SMEs through supporting the delivery of projects such as Built Environmental Climate Change Innovations.
- Supply chain activities including low carbon within housing.

Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in May 2019 and at the December Council meeting it approved a climate change strategy framework. There are 5 themes to the framework: - demand management, transport and travel, renewable energy generation and storage, sustainable land management, clean and inclusive growth, adaptation and resilience. These themes apply equally to the work of the Council and to areas where the Council can influence and direct change in practices and procedures. Shropshire Council is in a pivotal position to affect appropriate changes.

### **Using Existing resources**

Cold and damp homes threaten good health and reduce quality of life. Improving residential energy efficiency is particularly important in tackling fuel poverty. It is estimated that there are approximately 11% of Shropshire households are classed as being experiencing fuel poverty.

Households would be in fuel poverty if: -

- Fuel costs above average
- Once spent, the residual income would be below the official poverty line

Empty homes are a recognised as a wasted resource, depriving people of a home and contributing to the need for more housing. It is only when properties stay empty longer than six months without any obvious signs of renovation or rental that they become true empty homes. They are a blight on local communities and may prevent investment in the area.

It is estimated that there are more than 1,700 empty properties in Shropshire and of these, approximately 600 have been empty for at least 2 years

Housing adaptations enable disabled people and people with mobility impairments to continue to live independently in their own homes. Adaptations restore privacy, confidence and dignity to individuals and their families, and significantly improve people’s health and quality of life.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) are a vital source of housing, traditionally providing housing at more affordable and transient end of the housing market, but in recent years used by a wider cross section of economically active tenants. New guidance on extending the size and type of HMO to be mandatory licenced has resulted in 51 licensed HMOs.

### **Embracing change**

Homes England Strategic Plan references challenges facing the construction industry, particularly in terms of productivity, workforce, skills and materials. In response, Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) builds are a potential solution and could address labour and materials shortages. The additional advantages are improved energy efficiency. The industry is immature with limited production capacity and supply chains.

### **Opportunities**

- Protect and maximise the natural environment
- To explore opportunities and encourage the introduction of Modern Methods of Construction (MMO's) dwellings
- Encourage sustainable and resilient communities
- Encourage sustainable patterns of new housing developments
- Maximise the use of existing housing stock by reusing empty properties
- To explore opportunities for a closer physical relationship between home and employment

## 6.To support the drive for economic growth by ensuring that there is enough housing supply to enable businesses to attract and retain the local workforce that they need.

The delivery of economic growth is one of the key priorities for Shropshire Council, as laid out in its Corporate Plan. This plan seeks to improve the county as a place to do business and to deliver sustainable places and communities. Aspirations for improved economic prosperity for Shropshire are likewise set out in the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy which was officially launched in September 2017. This sets out to:

- Enable businesses to start up, grow and succeed
- Deliver infrastructure to support growth

Shropshire's economy is comparatively low value due to the predominance of less productive sectors such as tourism, agriculture and care. Workplace earnings are comparatively low in Shropshire (10% lower than the national average) and per capita GVA generation is a third lower than it is nationally. Naturally, this impacts on housing affordability rates for those who wish to live and work in Shropshire. Shropshire's economic potential is also somewhat constrained by the ageing population and declining population that is of traditional working age (16-64).

### Infographic

*Workplace Earnings Gross per week for Full-time April 2019:*

*Shropshire: £525.90*

*National: £586.50*

*GVA per Head of Population, 2018:*

*Shropshire: £19,334*

*National: £28,729*

Despite these challenges, the Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire has ambitions for strong economic growth, focused on increasing jobs, boosting GVA and ensuring an adequate supply of housing to support this. Sufficient housing of the right type and in the right place is vital to attract and retain a labour market that can drive economic prosperity, in our urban and rural areas.

Improved connectivity in urban and rural areas promotes community cohesion and underpins opportunities for economic growth.

Some employers struggle to attract the workforce they need because there is insufficient appropriate housing for prospective employees in the local area. Most businesses rely on a workforce from 'within 5 miles' of their business site. *According to the 2019 Shropshire Business Survey, on average, businesses said that 73.1% of their employees live less than 5 miles from their work location. Most of the rest come from 'between 5 – 25 miles away' (23.7%).* Consequently, if there is insufficient housing stock of an appropriate type, tenure and affordability within close proximity to the work base, there is a risk that businesses will not fulfil their growth ambitions or that they may relocate to where it is easier to attract the staff they need.

The need to retain and encourage younger skilled workers is a particular challenge for Shropshire, which is a location where out-migration of young adults has traditionally far out-weighted in-migration. UCS is making significant progress in attracting and retaining young people to pursue Higher Education in the County, but the provision of appropriate housing (along with attractive employment prospects and a strong cultural and entertainment offer) is key to attracting young people to the workplace.

Likewise, the need for appropriate housing provision for key workers needs to be addressed. These workers are intrinsic to the economic and social well-being of the county.

### **Opportunities**

- To reduce any barriers to businesses in attracting and retaining employees
- To work more closely with key employers to better understand the housing needs of their employees
- Encourage and support the provision of improved digital connectivity
- Promote initiatives for key worker and essential worker housing
- Promote housing opportunities that encourage skilled employees to live and work in Shropshire

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

**A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions**

<b>Name of proposed service change</b>
Shropshire Housing Strategy 2020-2025 Draft Documentation

<b>Name of lead officer carrying out the screening</b>
Maria Howell Enabling and Development Officer
Carol Clarke Enabling and Development Officer

**Decision, review and monitoring**

<b>Decision</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Part One ESIIA Only?	X	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		X

*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**

The Planning Policy team is currently working on draft Housing Strategy, the proposed vision is;

**“All homes are well designed, high quality decent homes, which will protect Shropshire's unique urban and rural environments and ensure it is a great place to live. That all Shropshire residents have access to the ‘right home in the right place’ to support and promote their health and wellbeing throughout their lives”**

Based on the information available at this time, the draft Housing Strategy is likely to have a positive impact on Shropshire communities as a whole and groupings within the community.

Due to the national and local importance of housing, Shropshire Council is required to produce a strategy which will outline our housing priorities for the coming years, show how we are going to meet our objectives and how we are going to deliver the housing and housing related services over the next 5 years. The strategy will have regard to issues such as affordability, Homelessness, an aging profile, the retention of young skilled and essential workers, empty properties and climate change.

It is hoped therefore that the strategy will have a positive effect on both young and older residents, those that require some additional support and all those residents who are finding it

difficult to afford a decent home in the right location. It should also have a positive impact on wider issues such as economic growth with the provision of homes for workers and the reuse of empty properties.

As the Strategy will be published for full public consultation, the aspiration is that all residents and stakeholders can comment on the document before a final report is brought back to Cabinet for approval. At this stage we will review whether we have reached the required groupings and received a spread of responses, from across our large rural county and from groupings within the community, for example from young people, to assist in assessing the strategy proposals in terms of equality impacts whether negative or positive.

The service area is setting out to involve communities and partners during the consultation period on the Strategy. Subject to Cabinet approval, this will run for 6 weeks. Responses will be analysed, and changes made to the draft Strategy if required. This will have a positive impact on the residents and would be residents of Shropshire providing the Right Home in the Right Place. Using the opportunities outlined in the strategy the Council will be able to enhance the social impacts and impacts on health and wellbeing.

#### **Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations**

This first ESIIA will try to reach a range of people, with a focus on either end of the age spectrum, those in need of a home or an affordable home and on finding out about all needs across our rural county

We will continue to engage with all Members as community leaders, and through Cabinet and our Portfolio Holder, which will help the service area and therefore the Council to ensure that information, feedback and concerns are raised through a variety of channels and that actions may then be identified as necessary to seek to mitigate any negative impacts for any Protected Characteristic groupings within the community, and to enhance positive impacts across communities and across our rural county as a whole.

A further screening ESIIA is recommended to be carried out after the completion of the consultation process to identify if we have reached as many groupings as possible and taken on board their feedback in the development and production of the final Housing Strategy.

#### **Associated ESIIAs**


There are related ESIIAs which refer to the Local Plan Partial Review and the Council's Economic Growth Strategy. These screening assessments accompanied reports to Cabinet. Other relevant Strategies are for Temporary Accommodation, The London Road Self-build site, the Great Outdoors Strategy and the Climate Change Strategy.

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

There are positive impacts anticipated in terms of economic growth and in terms of efficient energy usage, whilst mitigating action will be taken to minimise the impact on the environment.

The Strategy in its final form should also have a positive impact on wider issues such as economic growth with the provision of homes for workers and the reuse of empty properties.

### **Scrutiny at Part One screening stage**

<b>People involved</b>	<b>Signatures</b>	<b>Date</b>
Lead officer carrying out the screening  Carol Clarke/ Maria Howell Housing Enabling and Development Officer		
Any internal support*		
Any external support** Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist		13 <sup>th</sup> March 2020

\*This refers to other officers within the service area

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

### **Sign off at Part One screening stage**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Signatures</b>	<b>Date</b>
Lead officer's name  Maria Howell/ Carol Clarke		
Accountable officer's name* Gemma Davies		

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

## **B. Detailed Screening Assessment**

### **Aims of the service change and description**

The Shropshire Council Planning Policy Team are proposing to adopt a new Housing Strategy, the proposed vision is;

**“All homes are well designed, high quality decent homes, which will protect Shropshire's unique urban and rural environments and ensure it is a great place to live. That all Shropshire residents have access to the ‘right home in the right place’ to**

## **support and promote their health and wellbeing throughout their lives”**

Producing a Housing Strategy for Shropshire will bring all the different housing functions and objectives together in one document that will highlight the issues and priorities for the Council to achieve its objectives over the coming years.

Although there is no statutory obligation to produce a housing strategy, the importance of housing nationally and relevance locally has never been more recognised or acutely felt by the Council and residents of Shropshire, particularly with regard to:

1. Affordability – inability of households with median gross household incomes to purchase a home; for example, in Shrewsbury there is a multiplier of 6.7 to purchase a median house price home. In Oswestry the figure is 5.4. The generally accepted mortgage multiplier is 4 times household income
2. Rise in homelessness – rise of 24.5% in the previous 2 years
3. Aging profile – by 2041 over a third of residents will be above 65 years of age. 35% of the population live in rural area and 61% of these residents are between 65 – 79 age group. High cost of housing challenges the ability for essential workers to be able to support older people.
4. Ensuring that young, skilled, essential workers and families can find an affordable home in Shropshire, which supports the economic growth priorities
5. There are 1,731 long term empty properties in the County
6. Climate change impacts and opportunities and new technology including advanced methods of construction

It is therefore important that in considering and addressing these fundamental difficulties, we articulate through a strategy our objectives and develop the necessary framework on how the Council will engage and work with our many stakeholders and partners to deliver housing and housing related services.

The aim is that Shropshire’s Housing Strategy 2020 – 25 will benefit all our residents, our focus is not only addressing housing need, but on the role that housing can play in meeting the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the County, which is why it is important to widely consult on our priorities and how we intend to deliver them.

The proposed Housing Strategy will demonstrate how the Council will:

- Target housing solutions within the Council area.
- Broaden the housing range for residents.
- Highlight to tenants and residents the forthcoming challenges which both the Council and they themselves will face.
- Structure the Council’s approach to housing, in particular as relevant to the Local Development Plan.
- Meet its housing legal requirements

## **The 6 proposed priorities are:**

1. To meet the overall current and future housing needs of Shropshire’s growing population by addressing the housing needs of particular groups within communities



2.To ensure people whose housing needs are not met through the local open market housing can access housing that meets their needs

3.Working to reduce and prevent households from becoming homeless and where this is not possible ensuring they have safe, secure and appropriate accommodation until they are able to resettle

4.To ensure people can access a mix of housing options within Shropshire's urban and rural landscape, that best meets their needs in terms of tenure, safety, size, type, design and location of housing.

5.To minimise the environmental impact of existing housing stock and future housing development in the interest of climate change. To work with policy makers, developers and private and social landlords to maximise resource efficiencies and to ensure optimum use of sustainable construction techniques.

6.To support the drive for economic growth by ensuring that there is enough housing supply to enable businesses to attract and retain the local workforce that they need.

### **Intended audiences and target groups for the service change**

The following target groups are important in the development and realisation of the Housing Strategy. The intended audience is everyone who lives in Shropshire or wants/needs to live in Shropshire. The list is not exhaustive or in any order of priority and can be added to at any time.

- Armed Forces
- Care leavers
- Central government departments and agencies
- Educational establishments
- Elected Members
- Homes England
- Housing Associations
- Householders or those currently living in Shropshire
- Landlords
- Local Authorities
- Local business involved in the house building sector
- Local Employers
- People requiring a home in Shropshire
- Shropshire MPs
- Strategic partnerships, including the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)
- Those who require additional care or support
- Town and Parish Councils

The draft strategy is being presented to Cabinet on the 25<sup>th</sup> March after which the public consultation shall begin.

### **Evidence used for screening of the service change**

National legislation and guidance and the Sub-regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment has shaped the way the strategy has evolved, the main evidence base has come from 3 main areas. The first from meetings, discussions and a workshop with other Shropshire Council Departments. This identified each sections priorities and objectives to be addressed in the Strategy. The second was data from National Statistics and Internal Intelligence who provided information on demographics, affordability etc. The third was data from our Homepoint register, Right Home Right Place survey results and the Shropshire Self-build Register which has given us the housing needs data for Shropshire. We also engaged with External stakeholders to test our priorities and objectives and the data we have used.

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

The internal consultation started with a workshop for all housing related departments which was followed up with individual meetings with any department that has a housing function. This was followed by meetings with Related businesses and External support agencies and organisations. This included educational institutes, Age UK and Agents and Developers. Separate meetings were held with Registered Housing Providers.

Once a first draft was established this was then presented at both Member briefings and Directors briefings and discussed with Economic Development and our Climate Change colleagues.

Efforts have focussed on ensuring that the Housing Strategy will be aligned to the Council's adopted planning policies and the statutory procedures and processes and that it is seen as an integral component of related polices around economic growth and around environmental sustainability. As such the document will be subject to a full consultation process for a period of 6 weeks, during which all, not only residents and community and voluntary sector groups, but also those with economic interests including partner organisations, developers and Housing Associations will be able to comment on the strategy, through a number of communication mechanisms including mailings to the Shropshire Community and Voluntary Sector Assembly and to all town and parish councils, and press releases on the Council website.

## Initial assessment for each group

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

The Housing Strategy will have an effect on the number and location of houses provided, this will have an impact on services, roads and have an environmental impact. All these will be assessed and mitigated through the planning process.

The Climate Change considerations, as identified in the report to Cabinet, are as follows:

### Climate Change Appraisal

- **Energy and fuel consumption:** Positive effect. One of the key priorities of the Housing Strategy is to minimise the environmental impact of existing housing stock and to positively influence the design of future housing development to maximise resource efficiencies and to ensure optimum use of sustainable construction techniques. Maximising energy efficiency in new and existing housing will also contribute positively by reducing energy costs for occupiers, particularly those on limited incomes;
- **Renewable energy generation:** Positive effect. The Housing Strategy will provide opportunities to foster the generation and storage of renewable energy as part of the refurbishment of existing housing stock and the design of new housing;
- **Carbon offsetting or mitigation:** Positive effect. The Housing Strategy will provide opportunities to foster the capture and storage of carbon emissions as part of the design of sustainable urban drainage and open space integral to the design of new housing schemes;
- **Climate Change resilience and adaptation:** Positive effect. The Housing Strategy will provide positive opportunities to ensure that the foster the refurbishment of existing housing stock and the design of new housing deliver accommodation which is resilient to more extreme weather events and enables occupiers to adapt to the changing climate;

## 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, e.g. 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](mailto:lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk).***

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<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Cabinet 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	<u>Public</u>

## **WEST MERCIA ENERGY – Treatment of WMS Pension Liability**

**Responsible Officer** James Walton

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### **1. Summary**

- 1.1. Shropshire Council, together with Worcestershire County Council, Telford & Wrekin Council and Herefordshire Council, is one of the member authorities (the ‘Owning Authorities’) of West Mercia Energy Joint Committee, formerly known as West Mercia Supplies. At the point of sale of the West Mercia Supplies stationery division (WMS) in 2012, the existing pension deficit relating to the former WMS staff was retained within the continuing West Mercia Energy business and is overseen by the West Mercia Energy Joint Committee. It is proposed to transfer this pension deficit directly to a new body ‘WMS Pension’ overseen by a new ‘WMS Pension Joint Committee’.
- 1.2. The West Mercia Energy Joint Committee formally approved a request to the Owning Authorities to take direct responsibility for this pension deficit liability on the 24th September 2019. Having undertaken discussions via their respective senior Finance Officers, the Owning Authorities are each seeking approval to take on this liability, which is proposed to be achieved by the transfer of this pension deficit to a newly created ‘employer body’ within the Shropshire County Pension Fund (‘WMS Pension’) managed and overseen by a new ‘WMS Pension Joint Committee’ comprising the same Owning Authorities.

### **2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that Cabinet, subject to the Executives of Worcestershire County Council, Telford & Wrekin Council and Herefordshire Council agreeing to the same recommendations, agrees:

- A. To remove the responsibility for the discharge of its function in relation to the pension deficit liability in relation to former WMS employees (including Compensatory Added Years Benefits) as identified in this report from the business of the WME Joint Committee with effect from 1 April 2020;

- B. To allocate the pension deficit liability identified in Recommendation A above to a new employer within the Shropshire County Pension Fund, called 'WMS Pension';
- C. To establish a joint committee pursuant to section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, with Worcestershire County Council, Telford & Wrekin Council and Herefordshire Council known as the WMS Pension Joint Committee and delegate responsibility with effect from 1 April 2020 to the WMS Pension Joint Committee to discharge the functions of Shropshire Council relating to the pension deficit liability from former WMS employees (including Compensatory Added Years Benefits) as set out in Section 5 below allocate to the WMS Pension employer within the Shropshire County Pension Fund;
- D. To approve the proposed governance arrangements set out in Appendix 1, and that the Council's appointed Executive Members to the WMS Pension Joint Committee shall be the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning, as the Council's current representatives on the West Mercia Energy Joint Committee;
- E. To delegate authority to the Director of Finance, Governance & Assurance (Section 151) to progress and agree the arrangements as set out in Section 5, including a relevant payment mechanism and finalise a Joint Agreement for the WMS Pension Joint Committee incorporating the terms set out in Appendix 1, in consultation with Section 151 Officers from the remaining Owing Authorities.
- F. To approve the treatment of the WME asset share to be fully funded with effect from 1 April 2020 using IAS19/FRS102 actuarial assumptions with the resulting additional cost of this funding option allocated to the WMS Pension employer within the Shropshire County Pension Fund.
- G. To delegate authority to the Director of Finance, Governance & Assurance (Section 151) to agree the final figures, of which estimates are set out in Section 6, and in consultation with the Section 151 Officers from the remaining Owing Authorities.

## REPORT

### 3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1. WME's Risk Register has identified a potential risk in bidding for future contracts while carrying the pension deficit liability for former WMS employees on its balance sheet as potential customers will consider the financial position (through the accounts) of WME in assessing their bid. In order to facilitate WME in bidding for future contracts, the aim is to put it in a position where, at least initially, it is not carrying a pension

deficit (and certainly not relating to former WMS employees) within the Shropshire County Pension Fund. To achieve this the liabilities relating to former WMS employees would need to be removed from the WME business and instead more clearly allocated to the Owing Authorities. In practice this proposed change would make very little difference to the liabilities of the Owing Authorities which are currently responsible for their share of the net liabilities of WME including the WMS pension liability.

- 3.2. To achieve implementation by April 2020, it is necessary for all four Owing Authorities to approve the proposal set out in this report. Failure of any Owing Authority to meet the necessary timescales or gain the approvals will result in the proposal not progressing and WME continuing to operate with and bid for contract opportunities showing a negative balance sheet each year, with net liabilities of around £5m each year due to the pension deficit liability.
- 3.3. There is still a technical (albeit unlikely) risk that the retained WME pension liability could, under unfavourable market and/or actuarial assumptions and circumstances still deliver a negative balance sheet position for WME in the future.
- 3.4. There are no direct environmental, climate change, privacy, equality and diversity and Public Health implications from this report.

#### **4. Options Consideration**

- 4.1. In developing the proposal recommended in section 5 below, the Owing Authorities have considered alternative options with their respective merits and disadvantages as follows:
  - a. Each authority could make a direct payment to Shropshire County Pension Fund to remove the pension deficit. This option was considered and discounted at the time of the sale of the WMS business due to the significant financial cost to the Owing Authorities. This opinion and position has not changed in the intervening years since the sale and is not considered value for money.
  - b. The WMS pension liabilities and assets could be separated from the WME business and allocated in equal shares to the four Owing Authorities via the transfer of the liabilities and assets to the respective Local Government Pension Schemes that each Owing Authority participates in. In principle, 50% of these WMS liabilities and assets would be transferred to the Worcestershire Pension Fund, to become the financial responsibility of Worcestershire Council and Herefordshire Council, with the remaining 50% being retained within the Shropshire County Pension Fund (but allocated to the employer's liabilities of

Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, rather than Shropshire on behalf of WME) and being the financial responsibility of Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council. An application (signed by the four Owing Authorities) to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for a “Direction” could allow the transfer of the relevant proportion of WMS assets and liabilities (being the responsibility of Worcestershire County and Herefordshire Councils) from the Shropshire Fund to the Worcestershire Fund with the balance remaining in the Shropshire Fund (being the responsibility of Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Councils). It should be noted that the original intention of these Directions was to allow the transfer between Funds of an employer’s entire pension assets and liabilities, so there was no guarantee that the Direction would be granted for a partial transfer such as this. Calculations by the Shropshire County Pension Fund actuaries would determine a subset of members which make up (as near as practically possible) four blocks of 25% of the WMS liabilities. Formal agreement by the Worcestershire Pension Fund actuaries to the figures and proposed allocation of membership between the two funds would be required before transfer of appropriate pensioner payroll, membership records and asset share from the Shropshire County Pension Fund to the Worcestershire Pension Fund, and splits to the relevant employers. This option would have resulted in one off costs of up to £80,000 and included the risk that the Secretary of State would not approve the necessary direction. On the basis of the discussions between officers of the four Owing Authorities it is not recommended that this option is pursued as it does not represent value for money.

## 5. Proposal

- 5.1. Discussions between the Owing Authorities have identified a viable and value for money proposition to remove the pension deficit liability from WME and allocate it jointly to the Owing Authorities by creating a second Joint Committee to manage the WMS pension liabilities.
- 5.2. It is proposed to introduce the above proposal from 1 April 2020. In doing so, the arrangements would be based upon the latest triennial actuarial valuation (as at 31 March 2019, and implemented across all employers from 1 April 2020) improving the quality of the information used at the agreed date of separation of the WME/WMS liabilities, and also removing the need for further actuary costs, as these are absorbed within the existing workload. Furthermore, the option to pay deficit contributions up to three years in advance (to deliver a saving), or other options would be available to be considered, forming part of the delegation outlined in recommendation E. The 1 April 2020 date also removes the practical difficulties of eradicating any existing or proposed pre-payment arrangements made by WME.

- 5.3. The overall proposal is that the WMS pension liabilities and assets will be separated from the allocation of the WME employer and allocated to a new employer (called WMS Pension) within the Shropshire County Pension Fund.
- 5.4. Given that the main issue in WME bidding for contracts is the appearance of its (and the WMS) pension deficit in its accounts, the recommendation is that the asset shares should be determined so that WME is initially fully funded (at the point that the position is crystallised), with the remaining assets (and the historic WMS liabilities) being allocated to the four Owing Authorities. This approach will transfer a slightly larger deficit to the Owing Authorities which will marginally increase their respective employer's liability calculation of the new WMS Pension employer. Furthermore, it is recommended that WME's pension liabilities should be fully funded on actuarial assumptions used for accounting purposes using IAS19/FRS102 actuarial assumptions. This would leave a larger deficit to the Owing Authorities which will further increase their respective employers liability calculation of the new WMS Pension employer. These implications are identified in the Financial Implications section of this report.
- 5.5. The proposal would result in the removal of the WMS Pension liability from WME's Balance Sheet by transferring the responsibility for the liability to the four Owing Authorities, to be managed through the establishment of a new employer, whilst retaining the assets and liabilities within the Shropshire County Pension Fund. This resulting new employer would manage the WMS pension assets and liabilities within Shropshire County Pension Fund via a Joint Committee.
- 5.6. The setting up of a new WMS Pension employer which is the responsibility of a new Joint Committee established by the Owing Authorities would enable any pension deficit to be separately identified, separately valued and monitored, and allocated to the new WMS Pension employer with the Shropshire Fund so that it remains the joint liability of the four Owing Authorities in a reasonably cost-effective way without the transfer of risk between any of the parties.
- 5.7. The proposal would require formal arrangements to be drawn up between the four Owing Authorities, for each authority to agree to establish a new Joint Committee and make appropriate delegations to the Committee for the management of its share of the WMS pension liability. To reduce administration, it would be proposed to replicate the membership and governance arrangements of the WME Joint Committee as far as possible for the WMS Pension Joint Committee so that the same Members sitting on WME Joint Committee could potentially also sit on a new WMS Pension Joint Committee and

meetings of the two Joint Committees could be diarised to take place at the same venue and running one after the other. Shropshire's member representatives are currently the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning. The WME Treasurer would take the role of Treasurer for WMS Pension Joint Committee.

- 5.8. The governance arrangements for a new WMS Pension Joint Committee would be based, as far as possible, on the existing WME Joint Agreement. The WMS Pension Joint Committee would have delegated authority from each Owing Authority to be responsible for any WMS Pension Liability, and historic WMS Compensatory Added Years Benefits. Appendix 1 contains the draft governance arrangements proposed for the WMS Pension Joint Committee.
- 5.9. The risks associated with retaining a pension liability for WMS remain with the Owing Authorities and are not influenced in any way by the removal of responsibility for the deficit from the WME Joint Committee and resulting change in accounting treatment.
- 5.10. Deficit contributions of the Owing Authorities would be subject to the same triennial valuations and treatment whether they are the responsibility of and accounted for within the WME Joint Committee or separately by the Owing Authorities under a new WMS Pension Joint Committee.
- 5.11. The pension liability arising from employees within WME (the WME Pension Liability) would continue to be shown within WME Accounts, with the expected IAS19/FRS102 calculations and (should this be necessary in the future) a deficit recovery plan drawn up and subject to the existing scrutiny and consideration by the business and the WME Joint Committee. The expectation is that these calculations would be significantly less impactful on the Balance Sheet, although the risk remains that an impact could be seen nonetheless.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1. Worcestershire County Council, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Councils have for many years been constituent members of a Joint Committee undertaking procurement activity. This business was originally called West Mercia Supplies, but following the sale of the stationery supplies business it has been renamed West Mercia Energy (WME).
- 6.2. At the point of sale of the WMS division (April 2012) the business had a pension fund deficit as identified in the actuarial valuation of the Shropshire County Pension Fund. The deficit related, in the main, to WMS employees whose employment was transferring as part of the

sale. To deal with this position, the Owing Authorities had the following options:

- a. Transfer the WMS pension deficit to the buyers of the WMS business.
  - b. Use the capital receipt from the sale, plus other Owing Authority funds (if necessary) to clear the WMS pension deficit retained by the Owing Authorities.
  - c. Allocate liability for the WMS pension deficit to the continuing WME business and continue to make deficit recovery payments from any WME profits delivered.
- 6.3. During the sale process it was identified that option (a) was unviable. Furthermore, the Owing Authorities concluded that they did not wish to forego a capital receipt from the sale of WMS as represented by option (b) which would also have necessitated a revenue payment from owning authorities to make up the shortfall between the value of the capital receipt and the larger pension deficit. As a result, the WMS pension fund deficit was retained by the Owing Authorities and the liability to meet that deficit was allocated to the continuing WME business. A deficit recovery plan was agreed with Shropshire County Pension Fund (SCPF) and revised every three years in line with the actuarial valuation. The latest valuation is being conducted at the time of writing, as at 31 March 2019, with contribution changes for all employers within the fund from 1 April 2020. In the 2019/20 Financial Year, the budget for WME deficit recovery payment is £161,726, plus £31,713 for Compensatory Added Years benefits (CAYs).
- 6.4. While the direct financial implications of this arrangement within the WME Profit and Loss Account currently are affordable, the impact on the business balance sheet is significant. The pension liability is in excess of £6m which is not offset to any great extent by the business' fixed assets (minimal) or working balance (generally in the order of £1m). This results in WME producing a negative balance sheet each year, with net liabilities of around £5m each year.
- 6.5. In adopting Option C above, the resulting capital receipt from the sale of WMS was split evenly between the owning authorities and it is appropriate, therefore, to continue to apply this methodology to the Pension Liability calculation. In the intervening years no formal methodology was followed for the deduction of the pension liability in relation to the owners shares of WME profit. As a result, the actual deduction for each authority would have been incorporated within the distribution of surplus calculation and would have varied slightly from an equal share. There will be no backdating of the methodology, however, to adjust for this. Upon implementation, this arrangement will have a positive financial implication for WME (removing the WMS pension deficit from the balance sheet and removing the WMS

pension deficit payments from the Profit and Loss Account) and there will be a reciprocal negative financial implication for the Owing Authorities. The Owing Authorities will be required to cover the cost of 25% of the WMS pension deficit payment annually. The Owing Authorities will, however, benefit from marginally increased distributions from WME as a result of the pension deficit payments for WMS no longer being charged to the WME Profit and Loss Account.

- 6.6. Given that the main issue in WME bidding for contracts is the presence of the pension deficit in its business accounts, there is a presumption that the asset shares should be determined so that WME is initially fully funded (at the date the WMS pension liabilities are separated), with the remaining assets (and the historic WMS liabilities) being allocated to the four owning authorities in equal shares. This will potentially transfer a slightly larger deficit to the Owing Authorities. Furthermore, there is a choice as to whether WME’s pension liabilities should be fully funded on ongoing actuarial assumptions or on actuarial assumptions used for accounting purposes, as the two will generate different answers. The Shropshire County Pension Fund actuaries have been asked to calculate the approximate figures using both approaches, and the details below provide an estimate of how the final figures may look. The figures have been calculated as at 31 March 2019 as part of the 2019 actuarial valuation of the Shropshire County Fund, but will in due course need to be updated to the date of separation. Given that IAS19/FRS102 liabilities have increased over recent months, as a result of falls in bond yields, it is likely to need a slightly higher asset allocation to WME (resulting in a slightly lower asset allocation and therefore slightly increased deficit on an ongoing valuation basis for WMS):

Table 1: WME fully funded on illustrative ongoing valuation assumptions:

	<b>WME</b>	<b>WMS</b>
<b>Illustrative ongoing valuation position</b>		
Assets	0.93	9.36
Liabilities	0.93	10.79
Surplus/(deficit)	-	(1.43)
<b>Estimated IAS19/FRS102 position</b>		
Assets	0.93	9.36
Liabilities	1.64	14.96
Surplus/(deficit)	(0.71)	(5.60)

Table 2: WME fully funded on estimated IAS19/FRS102 assumptions:

	<b>WME</b>	<b>WMS</b>



<b>Illustrative ongoing valuation position</b>		
Assets	1.64	8.65
Liabilities	0.93	10.79
Surplus/(deficit)	0.71	(2.14)
<b>Estimated IAS19/FRS102 position</b>		
Assets	1.64	8.65
Liabilities	1.64	14.96
Surplus/(deficit)	-	(6.31)

- 6.7. The recommendation would be for the WME asset share to be fully funded using IAS19/FRS102 actuarial assumptions, and therefore the £1.64m asset allocation would form the basis of the figures. This would leave £8.65m worth of assets and £10.79m worth of liabilities (on the Shropshire County Pension Fund’s ongoing valuation assumptions) to be allocated to the four Owing Authorities (which would impact on deficit contributions payable, with the accounting deficit feeding through to the owning authorities’ balance sheets). The figures should be updated (as far as is reasonably possible) to the agreed date of separation of the WME/WMS liabilities, so that at this “strike date” WME has no surplus or deficit for employer accounting purposes. It is recommended that the final arrangements are implemented in line with these estimates by Shropshire Council Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Section 151 Officers from the remaining Owing Authorities.
- 6.8. By ensuring WME is fully funded under IAS19/FRS102 assumptions, it will actually be in surplus under on-going actuarial assumptions. As a result, WME may not be required to physically pay annual pension contributions to Shropshire County Pension Fund under this arrangement, as the actuarial surplus relating to former service would offset the on-going employers’ contributions for WME staff. While this may look unusual in isolation, the overall position is unchanged and there are no overall financial implications arising from this.
- 6.9. The Owing Authorities would be required to make separate contributions for the WMS pension liabilities allocated to the new employer to cover deficit contributions and Compensatory Added Years Benefits. A separate contribution from each Owing Authority is required as the removal of the deficit from WME means that a share of the liability effectively sits with each Owing Authority to be funded by them, rather than being funded directly by WME from its income, prior to any calculation and distribution of profits. Consequently, the WME profits distribution would be proportionately higher as a result of the pension deficit contribution no longer being accounted for through this mechanism. The payment mechanism for the proposal would need to be agreed between the Owing Authorities’ Section 151 Officers.

- 6.10. Over and above the funded pension liabilities, WME is responsible for some historic Compensatory Added Years (CAY) benefits which currently amount to approximately £31,500 per annum. The recommendation is that these benefits should also become the responsibility of WMS Pension Joint Committee, so that the costs will then be split equally between the four Owning Authorities.
- 6.11. To implement the proposal there have been limited one-off costs of £7,140 in 2019/20, as the majority of preparatory costs have been absorbed within the existing agreements between WME, Shropshire Council, Shropshire County Pension Fund and Mercer. There will be on-going costs associated with the managing and administration of a second Joint Committee and the cost of preparing a set of accounts for that new Joint Committee. These are estimated to be £5,000 and would be split between the four Owning Authorities and recovered via the agreed payment mechanism.

Table 2: On-going Financial Implications estimate:

Details	Total Cost (£)	Cost to each authority (£)
Joint Committee	5,000	1,250
Deficit repayment	175,000	43,750
CAYS	31,500	7,875
Total Costs	211,500	52,875
Change in WME distribution of surplus	(206,500)	(51,625) <sup>1</sup>
Net impact	5,000	1,250

- 6.12. The following set up costs have been incurred in reaching the recommendations proposed within this report:

Table 3: One Off Costs:

Date	Details	Value (£)
Apr 2018	Work and advice in relation to the pension liability options – Mercer	2,865
Mar 2019	Advice/meeting/discussion on pension liability options – Mercer	1,285
	<b>Costs already charged to 2018/19 WME Accounts</b>	<b>4,150</b>
January 2020	Work and advice in relation to the pension liability options – Mercer	3,140
March 2020	Interpretation and report production - Shropshire Council, Shropshire County Pension Fund	4,000
	<b>Costs to be charged to 2019/20 WME Accounts</b>	<b>7,140</b>

<sup>1</sup> Shown here for illustrative purposes using 25% distribution to each owning authority but will vary between authority and each year based on the distribution of surplus calculation.

- 6.13. It would be possible for the four Owing Authorities to make payments in advance (annually or three years in advance at each triennial valuation). This would generate a saving over the three year period, but would have a cashflow implication for the Owing Authorities. Given the complexity of the arrangements, it may be necessary for all four Owing Authorities to agree to adopt the same mechanism, and this would be reviewed following each triennial valuation. This decision would form part of the delegation in Recommendation D.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1. Part VI of the Local Government Act 1972 and Part 1A, Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) makes provision for local authorities to establish joint committees. Provided that the functions to be exercised are executive functions, further to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, it is a matter for the respective Cabinets to determine the establishment of an executive joint committee and to agree the executive functions to be delegated to that joint committee. Every member of the joint committee must be a member of their nominating council's Cabinet.
- 7.2. The functions to be delegated to the WMS Pension Joint Committee are not functions relating to pension or related payments due to local authority employees pursuant to the Superannuation Act 1972 which are identified in the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 as Council (not executive) functions. Each Owing Authority's obligation to make payments to the relevant Pension Fund in respect of current or past employees for which they are responsible may therefore be exercised by the Owing Authority's executive and delegated accordingly.

## **8. Climate Change Appraisal**

- 8.1. The recommendations in this report relate to the accounting and practical treatment of the Pension Liability relating to West Mercia Supplies former employees. As such, these recommendations have no implications for the operation of the WME business or for the Local Authority and as a result there are no climate change implications as a result of the approval of recommendations within this report.

## **9. Background**

- 9.1. Worcestershire County Council, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Councils have for many years been constituent members of a Joint Committee undertaking procurement activity. This business was originally called West Mercia Supplies, but following the sale of the stationery supplies business it has been renamed West Mercia

Energy (WME). Each of the four Owing Authorities have delegated their functions in relation to the procurement of energy and utilities to the Joint Committee and each Owing Authority has two votes each on the WME Joint Committee.

- 9.2. The WME Joint Committee operates under the Joint Agreement, the latest version of which was approved by the Owing Authorities and for Shropshire Council this was at Cabinet on 6 September 2017. The Joint Agreement sets out how the Joint Committee operates and that the four Owing Authorities are jointly liable in equal shares for the liabilities of the Joint Committee and the WME business.
- 9.3. On 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019 the Joint Committee approved recommendations to:
- a. propose that the four WME Owing Authorities take direct responsibility for the pension deficit liability relating to former WMS employees (including Compensatory Added Years Benefits) and WME with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020; and
  - b. subject to the formal decisions of the four WME Owing Authorities to agree the above, to remove the pension deficit liability relating to former WMS employees (including Compensatory Added Years Benefits) and WME from the WME Balance Sheet from 1 April 2020.
- 9.4. It is a decision for each Owing Authority, rather than the WME Joint Committee, to agree that the Owing Authorities create a new Joint Committee and employer to take responsibility for the current WMS pension deficit so that it can be removed as a liability from the WME business.
- 9.5. It is a decision for each Owing Authority, rather than the WME Joint Committee, to remove the responsibility for the pension deficit from WME and the Joint Committee's management and to put in place a new mechanism under which the Owing Authorities take direct responsibility for the current WMS pension deficit.
- 9.6. The aim of the proposal identified in this report is to create a new Joint Committee and employer to take responsibility for this so that it can be removed as a liability from the WME business to put WME in a position where, at least initially, it is not carrying a pension deficit (and certainly not relating to former WMS employees) under the Shropshire County Pension Fund. To achieve this, the overall aim is that the liabilities relating to former WMS employees will be separated from the WME business and instead more clearly allocate the liability to the Owing Authorities.

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

Variation to West Mercia Energy Joint Agreement – Cabinet 06 September 2017

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Councillor Peter Nutting

Councillor Robert Macy

**Local Member**

All

**Appendices**

Appendix 1: Draft governance arrangements the WMS Pension Joint Committee

## **WMS Pension Joint Committee – Principles of the Joint Agreement**

### Purpose

1. Shropshire Council, the County Of Herefordshire District Council, Worcestershire County Council and the Borough Of Telford & Wrekin (“the Member Authorities) have established an executive joint committee known as the WMS Pension Joint Committee for the purpose of discharging the functions relating to the Member Authorities’ liabilities to the Shropshire County Pension Fund (SCPF) in respect of the pension deficit and liabilities allocated to the employer body within the SCPF known as WMS Pension.
2. WMS Pension Joint Committee is a joint committee of the executives of the Member Authorities established further to section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, section 9EB of Part 1A, Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

### Governance Arrangements

3. The Member Authorities have agreed that the Member Authority appointed as the ‘Lead Authority’ for the purposes of the West Mercia Energy Joint Committee shall be the Lead Authority for the WMS Pension Joint Committee with responsibility for the administration of this Joint Committee (and whose relevant standing orders shall apply), including appointing from its officers a Secretary and a Treasurer to undertake the roles set out below. The Secretary and Treasurer shall liaise with the monitoring officers and section 151 Officers of the Member Authorities to enable those officers to comply with their responsibilities under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.
4. The responsibilities of the Secretary shall be as follows:
  - 4.1. to make all necessary arrangements for the publication of forthcoming decisions, convening of meetings of the Joint Committee and any Sub-Committees, to ensure that the meetings and decision making of the Joint Committee are undertaken in accordance with legal requirements;
  - 4.2. to provide, or, where necessary, procure the provision of, all necessary legal advice on matters under consideration by the Joint Committee or relevant to the Committee’s functions;

- 4.3. to arrange for the taking and maintenance of minutes of meetings of the Joint Committee and any Sub-Committees, the publication of any resulting decisions and ensure that the business of the Joint Committee at its meetings is conducted in accordance with legal requirements;
- 4.4. to manage and co-ordinate the day-to-day affairs of the Joint Committee and its administrative support.
5. The responsibilities of the Treasurer shall be as follows:
  - 5.1. to provide financial advice and information to the Joint Committee;
  - 5.2. to keep proper accounts of the monies received and expended by the Joint Committee;
  - 5.3. the calculation and apportionment of liabilities of the Member Authorities which shall be apportioned in equal shares;
  - 5.4. to arrange any appropriate audit requirements in respect of the Joint Committee;
  - 5.5. to prepare and present such financial reports or other financial information as may be required by the Joint Committee to properly discharge their functions.
6. The Member Authorities shall be jointly liable in equal shares and shall indemnify the Lead Authority for the liabilities of the WMS Pension Joint Committee in respect of all claims, liabilities and costs incurred by the Lead Authority in fulfilling the obligations of the WMS Pension Joint Committee.

#### Membership

7. Each Member Authority shall be entitled to appoint two of their Executive Elected Members to serve on the Joint Committee until they cease to be an Executive Elected member or unless earlier replaced by the appointing Member Authority. The appointed members shall wherever possible be aligned with the Member Authority's appointments to the West Mercia Energy Joint Committee.
8. A substitute member shall only be entitled to attend, speak and vote as if an ordinary member of the Joint Committee where, at least one clear working day prior to the date of the meeting, notice has been given to the Secretary that:
  - 8.1. it is impracticable for the named ordinary member of the Joint Committee to attend a specified meeting;
  - 8.2. the named substitute member will attend in place of their named ordinary members; and
  - 8.3. the named substitute member is also an Executive Elected Member

9. Each Joint Committee Member shall observe and comply with the provisions of the Code of Conduct for elected members adopted by their appointing Member Authority (“Code of Conduct”). Where a Joint Committee Member attends a meeting of the Joint Committee they must declare any disclosable pecuniary and other interests as required by their Code of Conduct either at the start of the meeting, or otherwise as soon as the interest becomes apparent in the course of the meeting.

#### Meetings and Voting

10. The Joint Committee shall meet at least annually in February of each year on the same date as the WME Joint Committee meeting, unless the Joint Committee shall agree that further meetings are required at such time or times as shall be deemed necessary by the Joint Committee. A Special Meeting may be requisitioned by the Chief Executive of a Member Authority, such requisition to set out the business to be transacted at the meeting and to be delivered to the Secretary of the Joint Committee in normal circumstances at least ten clear working days prior to the date of the meeting and the Secretary shall undertake the relevant publication of notices and documents relating to the Special Meeting. Where it is certified that the business to be transacted is urgent business the time limit for delivery of such requisition may be waived by the Secretary of the Joint Committee following consultation with the Chair of the Joint Committee. Wherever possible any additional meetings shall be held on the same date as a meeting of the WME Joint Committee.
11. At the meeting in February and thereafter every year at the meeting in February the Joint Committee shall elect by majority vote one of their members to be Chair for the ensuing 12 month period and another member to be Vice-Chair for the same term. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall not be from the same Member Authority.
12. The quorum of the Joint Committee shall be two members from at least two separate member authorities
13. Any Joint Committee Members who are absent from meetings of the Joint Committee for three consecutive meetings (unless excused by the Joint Committee) or who communicate in writing to the Secretary to the Joint Committee a wish to resign shall thereupon cease to be Joint Committee Members. The Secretary shall notify the relevant Member Authority and invite them to appoint replacement Joint Committee Members.
14. Wherever the Member Authorities have the power to decide any matter by majority vote then each Member Authority shall have such number of votes as that Member Authority has representatives (or an entitlement to representatives) on the Joint Committee. Any question coming before the Joint Committee shall be decided by a simple majority of those present



and voting the Chair having the casting vote in the event of an equality of votes in addition to his/her vote as a member of the Committee.

15. Each Member Authority shall defray the expenses of their own respective Joint Committee Members.
16. The Secretary shall undertake the publication of notices of meetings and accompanying documents and conduct the Joint Committee's meetings in accordance with the 'Access to Information Procedure Rules' as contained within the Lead Authority's constitution ensuring compliance with the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.
17. Should an individual Member Authority wish to terminate their membership of the Joint Committee they may serve at least [3] months written notice of termination to take effect at the end of the financial year in which it is served ("the Notice") to the Chief Executives of the other Member Authorities.
18. Where an individual Member Authority has served the Notice of termination ("the Exiting Authority"), the Treasurer shall assess the liabilities of the Joint Committee as they exist at the date of termination of the Exiting Authority's membership of the Joint Committee. Upon exit, the Exiting Authority shall be liable for an equal share of any liabilities of the Joint Committee incurred up to the date of their exit, irrespective of whether the liability is claimed prior to or after the date of exit and the Treasurer shall calculate any amount due from the Exiting Authority as at the date of exit of the Exiting Authority.
19. Where the Joint Committee requests a payment from the Exiting Authority for a contribution to its liabilities, the Exiting Authority shall make the relevant payment within 20 days of receipt of the request.

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