



Shropshire Council
 Legal and Democratic Services
 Shirehall
 Abbey Foregate
 Shrewsbury
 SY2 6ND
 Wednesday, 16 September 2020

Committee: Council

Date: Thursday, 24 September 2020
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: THIS IS A VIRTUAL MEETING

Members of the public will be able to listen to this meeting by clicking on this link:

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/Council24September2020>

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

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

Ann Hartley (Chairman)
 Peter Nutting (Leader)
 Vince Hunt (Speaker)
 Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader)
 Peter Adams
 Roy Aldcroft
 Clare Aspinall
 Nicholas Bardsley
 Joyce Barrow
 Thomas Biggins
 Ed Bird
 Andy Boddington
 Gwendoline Burgess
 Gwilym Butler

Karen Calder
 Dean Carroll
 Lee Chapman
 Ted Clarke
 Gerald Dakin
 Steve Davenport
 Julian Dean
 Pauline Dee
 David Evans
 Roger Evans
 Hannah Fraser
 Rob Gittins
 Nat Green
 Kate Halliday
 Simon Harris

Nigel Hartin
 Nick Hignett
 Ruth Houghton
 Richard Huffer
 Tracey Huffer
 Roger Hughes
 Ioan Jones
 Simon Jones
 Mark Jones
 Heather Kidd
 Christian Lea
 Matt Lee
 Elliott Lynch
 Robert Macey
 Jane MacKenzie

Chris Mellings
Paul Milner
David Minnery
Dan Morris
Pamela Moseley
Alan Mosley
Cecilia Motley
Peggy Mullock
Kevin Pardy
William Parr
Vivienne Parry

Tony Parsons
Malcolm Pate
Alexander Phillips
Lezley Picton
Ed Potter
John Price
Keith Roberts
Madge Shingleton
Robert Tindall
Dave Tremellen
Kevin Turley

David Turner
David Vasmer
Claire Wild
Brian Williams
Leslie Winwood
Michael Wood
Tina Woodward
Paul Wynn

Your Committee Officer is:

Julie Fildes Committee Officer

Tel: 01743 257723

Email: julie.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

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

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th July 2020

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th July 2020. [To follow]

4 Announcements

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

5 Public Questions

To receive any questions from the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. Deadline for notification for this meeting is 10am on Tuesday 22nd September 2020.

A petition, bearing over 1000 signatures has been received from Emma Dolphin, requesting a debate under the Council's Petition Scheme. The petition requests that the Council:

Retains the Clive of India Statue in Shrewsbury Town Centre

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

6 Appointment of the Chief Executive (Pages 1 - 2)

Report of the Director of Workforce and Transformation is attached.

Contact Michele Leith Tel 01743 254402

7 Annual Treasury Report 2019/20 (Pages 3 - 16)

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

Contact James Walton Tel 01743 258915

8 Annual Assurance Report of Audit Committee to Council (Pages 17 - 32)

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

Contact James Walton Tel 01743 258915

9 Review of the Constitution to Permit the Audit Committee to Approve the Final

Accounts Pack Including the Annual Statement of Accounts (Pages 33 - 38)

The report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance is attached.

Contact James Walton Tel 01743 258915

10 20mph Speed Restrictions Outside Schools (Pages 39 - 70)

The report of the Director of Place is attached.

Contact Mark Barrow Tel 01743 258919

11 Greenacres Farm Supported Living Scheme (Pages 71 - 138)

Report of the Director of Adult Services is to attached.

Contact Andy Begley Tel 01743 255807

12 Portfolio Holder Report for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services (Pages 139 - 170)

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services is attached.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Gwilym Butler

13 Annual Report 2019/20 Communities Overview Committee (Pages 171 - 174)

The Annual Report of the Chair of the Communities Overview Committee is attached.

Communities Overview Committee Chair: Councillor Cecilia Motley

14 Motions

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

1. The following motion has been received from Councillor David Vasmer and is supported by Councillors Kate Halliday, Julian Dean and Roger Evans:

Cycle Infrastructure Design

This Council notes that:

1. The Prime Minister has called for "A Golden Age of Cycling".
2. The Prime Minister has set out a vision for a travel revolution in England's streets, towns and communities, stating that: "When I was Mayor of London, one of the things I was proudest of was building some of the world's best cycle lanes".
3. The Government has announced £2 billion of funding for walking and cycling.
4. The announcement was accompanied by a document from the Department for Transport, entitled 'Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking'.
5. Gear Change states: "Inadequate cycling infrastructure discourages cycling and wastes public money" and "In order to see the increases in cycling we want, the quality of cycling infrastructure installed on our roads must dramatically improve."
6. Alongside this document, the Department for Transport (DfT) published new cycling design guidance (LTN 1/20 Cycle infrastructure design) which sets out the much higher standards they will now require if schemes are to receive funding.

7. The standards will be enforced by a new inspectorate, Active Travel England, and DfT will expect Local Authorities and developers to utilise the guidance in the design of their schemes regardless of whether they are seeking Government funding.

This Council resolves to:

- a) Support the Prime Minister's "Gear Change" announcement.
- b) Ensure that all cycling infrastructure built in Shropshire conforms to the standards laid out in LTN 1/20.

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

Protecting the public's say in the planning process

This Council notes:

1. The publication by Government of the White Paper, 'Planning for the Future' on 6 August 2020, which set out proposals on reforms to the planning process for the future.
 - That the vast majority of planning applications are given the go ahead by local authority planning committees, with permission granted to around 9 out of 10 applications.
 - That research by the Local Government Association has said that there are existing planning permissions for more than one million homes that have not yet been started.

This Council is concerned that the proposals seek to:

1. Reduce or remove the right of residents to object to applications near them.
2. Grant automatic rights for developers to build on land identified as 'for growth'.
3. Makes alterations to how and where affordable homes can and will be built.

Council notes with concern that:

That the proposed Infrastructure Levy will no longer provide ring fenced money for affordable housing or perhaps even infrastructure.

This Council Further Notes:

1. The Royal Institute for British Architects called the proposals 'shameful and which will do almost nothing to guarantee delivery of affordable, well-designed and sustainable homes'. RIBA also said that proposals could lead to the next generation of slum housing
2. The reforms are opposed by the all-party Local Government Association, currently led by Conservative Councillors.

This Council Believes:

1. That existing planning procedures, as currently administered by our own team allow for local democratic control over future development, and give local people a say in planning proposals that affect them.
2. That proposals for automatic rights to build in 'growth' areas, and increased permitted development rights, risk unregulated growth and unsustainable communities.
3. That local communities must be in the driving seat on shaping the future of their

communities, and local determination of the planning framework and planning applications play an important part in this process.

This Council resolves to:

1. Take part in the consultation in the planning proposals, and to make representations against the proposals as outlined in this motion.
2. Write to and lobby all our Members of Parliament, urging them to oppose these proposals and to circulate their replies to all elected members.
3. Highlight its concerns over these proposals with the public, Parish & Town Councils and local residents.

3. The following motion has been received from Councillor Ruth Houghton and is supported by the Liberal Democrat Group

Motion on working from home September 2020

Our working arrangements changed abruptly in the spring of 2020. With lockdown and social distancing, employees and employers around world and here in Shropshire have learnt new ways of working and made more effective use of established ways of working from home. Notwithstanding the government urging that people should flock back to their offices, it is expected that working from home will become an established part of employment practice and the daily lives of employees, including those employed here at Shropshire Council.

This council requests officers to bring to the December full council meeting, a report on its new strategies and support services for council staff working from their homes.

This might include but not be limited to:

- Results of a survey of experiences of employees and councillors, covering both homeworking and office working (perhaps split by “I normally work from home”, “I normally work from the office”, “I work roughly half and half in the office and at home”).
- A description of support measures for both homeworkers and those unable to work from home.
- The council’s plans for office and home working in the short-term and its ideas for the longer term.
- The impact of home working on the council’s ambition to become carbon neutral

4. The following motion has been received from Councillor Nigel Hartin and is supported by the Liberal Democrat Group

Motion to express support for those working hard through the Covid-19 epidemic

This council gives its thanks to everyone who has worked tirelessly to help our county during the Covid-19 epidemic. This council applauds the exceptional efforts that council staff, health and care workers, broadcasters and people in all professions have made to support and strengthen our communities. This council in particular recognises the immense contributions and sacrifices that families, friends and volunteers have made during one of the most challenging years of our lifetimes.

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

Motion on Parking on Pavements

The Department for Transport is consulting on banning parking on pavements in England. Ministers are asking for opinions on three options:

1. Keep things as they are but clarifying some technicalities in the legislation.
2. Give civil enforcement officers working for councils the power to issue penalty charge notices where there is an obstruction.
3. Enforce an outright ban except for emergency vehicles and loading.

It is not unusual to see cars or vans, even HGVs, partially or completely blocking pavements in Shropshire's towns and villages. People struggle to get a pushchair or mobility scooter past. Pavements should be for pedestrians, children on cycles, people in wheelchairs and on mobility scooters, and parents pushing children in buggies. They should not be forced into the road.

This council resolves that officers will respond to the consultation along the following lines:

4. The council supports an outright ban on parking on pavements in residential streets except for emergency vehicles and for loading

15 Questions from Members

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

16 Exclusion of Press and Public

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

17 Exempt Minutes of 16th July 2020

To approve as a correct record the exempt minutes of the Council meeting held on 16th July 2020. [To follow]

18 Alverley Industrial Estate [EXEMPT] (Pages 175 - 184)

The exempt report of the Director of Place is attached.

Contact Mark Barrow Tel 01743 258919

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<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council 24 th September 2020

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

Appointment of Chief Executive

Responsible Officer Michele Leith, Director of Workforce and Transformation
e-mail: Michele.leith@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 254402 Fax

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the approach to the recruitment to the permanent position of Chief Executive undertaken since the departure of the previous postholder and recommends confirmation of the successful candidate.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Council confirm the permanent appointment to the Chief Executive position to Andy Begley with effect from 1st October 2020.

REPORT

3.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 The Chief Executive position, as Head of Paid Service, is a statutory role in Local Government. Without a permanent appointment to this position the organisation could be at risk of uncertainty and a lack of leadership and direction. The permanent Chief Executive will therefore able provide stability, demonstrate strong leadership and drive change required in the post Covid world.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Chief Executive post has been vacant since April 2020 and covered on an interim basis jointly by the Executive Director of Adult Services and Executive Director of Children's Services. The additional costs associated with the recruitment to the post are off-set by the salary savings made.

5.0 Background

- 5.1 The previous Chief Executive, Clive Wright, resigned from his post in April 2020. Interim arrangements were put into place with the Executive Director of

Adult Services and Executive Director of Children’s Services jointly undertaking the role on a temporary basis until recruitment could commence. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic recruitment was delayed until such time as it was felt appropriate to go to the market.

- 5.2 In June the recruitment process was instigated with an Executive Recruitment Agency being engaged to support the search. Penna Plc were appointed through a competitive tender process. Penna have extensive experience of senior recruitment in the public sector, particularly Local Authorities for Chief Executive and Director level recruitment.
- 5.3 The process/timeline of recruitment was as follows:

Advert – MJ / Microsite Executive Search commenced	29 th June 2020
Longlisting of Applicants	28 th July 2020
Technical Interviews – Mark Lloyd, LGA	w/c 3 rd August 2020
Shortlisting	17 th August 2020
Psychometric Testing of Shortlisted Candidates	18 th to 21 st August 2020
<u>Assessment Centre run over 2 days:</u>	
Stakeholder Panel (Members) Stakeholder Panel (Partners) One to One with Leader/Deputy Leader	25 th September 2020
Final Interview Panel (Members)	27 th September 2020

- 5.4 There were 26 applicants for the role, 8 Longlisted and 5 shortlisted. The shortlist comprised of both internal and external candidates of an extremely high caliber.
- 5.5 Following the Final Member Panel interviews, the panel reviewed all of the information that was available throughout the process and recommended Andy Begley to be appointed into the position.

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

Cabinet Member: Peter Nutting

Local Member

Appendices



<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Cabinet 07 September 2020	
Audit Committee 17 September 2020	
Council 24 September 2020	
	<u>Public</u>

ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 2019/20

Responsible Officer James Walton

e-mail: James.Walton@shropshire.gov.uk

Tel: (01743) 258915

1. Summary

- 1.1. The report informs members of treasury activities for Shropshire Council for 2019/20, including the investment performance of the internal treasury team to 31 March 2020. The internal treasury team outperformed their investment benchmark by 0.42% in 2019/20 and performance for the last three years is 0.32% per annum above benchmark. Treasury activities during the year have been within approved prudential and treasury indicators set and have complied with the Treasury Strategy.
- 1.2. During 2019/20 the performance of the Treasury Team delivered an under spend of £3.75 million compared to budget as highlighted in paragraph 11.4 of this report. This was mainly due to Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) savings following the Council's review of the policy and interest earned being higher and debt charges lower than budgeted.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are asked to accept the position as set out in the report.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1. The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 3.2. There are no direct environmental, equalities or climate change consequences arising from this report.
- 3.3. Compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Council's Treasury Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance together with the rigorous

internal controls will enable the Council to manage the risk associated with Treasury Management activities and the potential for financial loss.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. The Council makes assumptions about the levels of borrowing and investment income over the financial year. Reduced borrowing as a result of capital receipt generation or delays in delivery of the capital programme will both have a positive impact of the council's cash position. Similarly, higher than benchmarked returns on available cash will also help the Council's financial position. For monitoring purposes, assumptions are made early in year about borrowing and returns based on the strategies agreed by Council in the preceding February. Performance outside of these assumptions results in increased or reduced income for the Council.
- 4.2. The 2019/20 performance is above benchmark for the reasons outlined in paragraph 10.4 of this report and has delivered additional income of £3.75 million which has been reflected in the final Revenue Monitor report for 2019/20.

5. Climate Change Appraisal

- 5.1. The Council's Financial Strategy includes proposals to deliver a reduced carbon footprint for the Council therefore the Treasury Team is working with the Council in order to achieve this. There are no climate change impacts arising from this report.

6. Background

- 6.1. The Council defines its treasury management activities as "the management of the authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions, the effective control of the risks associated with those activities, and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks".
- 6.2. The Council is required through regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury report reviewing treasury management activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2019/20. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- 6.3. Changes in the regulatory environment place a much greater onus on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. Minimum reporting requirements are that the Council should receive the following reports:
- An annual treasury strategy in advance of the year.
 - A mid-year treasury update report.
 - An annual report following the year describing the activity compared to

the strategy.

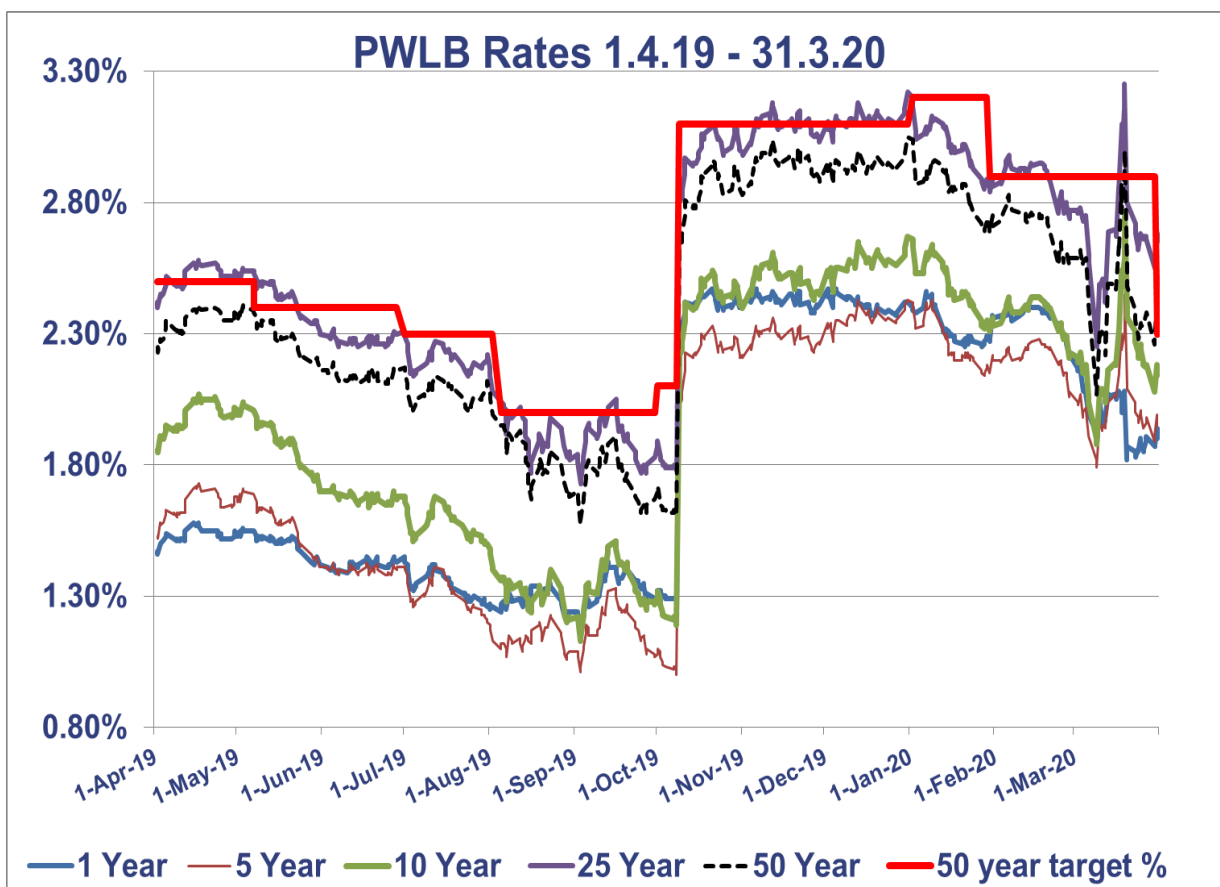
- 6.4. The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management states that these reports should be scrutinised by a nominated committee. These reports were scrutinised by the Audit Committee before they were reported to full Council for approval.
- 6.5. In addition to the minimum reporting requirements, the Director's and Cabinet also receive quarterly treasury management update reports for information.
- 6.6. The Treasury Strategy for 2019/20 was approved by Council in February 2019, the mid-year treasury update report was approved by Council in December 2019. This Annual Report sets out our actual treasury performance for the year and shows how the actual treasury performance varied from our estimates and planning assumptions.

7. Borrowing Strategy for 2019/20

- 7.1. The Council's only borrowing requirement identified within the Capital Programme 2018/19 to 2020/21 was self-financing prudential borrowing of £8.197m therefore no external borrowing was required but based on the prospects for interest rates outlined in the Treasury Strategy, the Council would adopt a pragmatic approach if circumstances changed when considering any new borrowing.
- 7.2. Short term Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) rates were expected to be significantly cheaper than longer term borrowing rates during the year therefore borrowing in the under 10 year period early on in the financial year when rates were expected to be at their lowest would be considered. Variable rate borrowing was also expected to be cheaper than long term fixed rate borrowing throughout the year.
- 7.3. An alternative strategy was to defer any new borrowing as long term borrowing rates were expected to be higher than investment rates during the year. This would maximise savings in the short term and also have the added benefit of running down investments which would reduce credit risk.

8. Borrowing outturn for 2019/20

- 8.1. The Treasury Team take advice from its external treasury advisor, Link Asset Services, on the most opportune time to borrow. Movements in rates during 2019/20 are shown in the graph below.



8.2. Members have previously been advised of the unexpected change of policy on PWLB lending arrangements in October 2010 following the Comprehensive Spending Review. In addition, in October 2019, the Treasury and PWLB announced an increase in rates of 1% across all borrowing periods. This made new borrowing more expensive and repayment relatively less attractive.

8.3. The table below shows PWLB borrowing rates for a selection of maturity periods. The table also shows the high and low points in rates during the year, average rates during the year and individual rates at the start and the end of the financial year.

	1 Year	5 Year	10 Year	25 Year	50 Year
01/04/2019	1.46%	1.52%	1.84%	2.41%	2.24%
31/03/2020	1.90%	1.95%	2.14%	2.65%	2.39%
Low	1.17%	1.00%	1.13%	1.73%	1.57%
Date	03/09/2019	08/10/2019	03/09/2019	03/09/2019	03/09/2019
High	2.47%	2.45%	2.76%	3.25%	3.05%
Date	21/10/2019	19/03/2020	19/03/2020	19/03/2020	31/12/2019
Average	1.83%	1.77%	2.00%	2.56%	2.40%

8.4. Following discussions with Link, as general fund borrowing rates were significantly higher than investment rates during the year it was agreed that if any new borrowing was required during the year it would be deferred in order to maximise savings in the short term and reduce credit risk by reducing investments. No new external borrowing was required in 2019/20.

8.5. The Council's total debt portfolio at 31 March 2020 is set out below:-

Type of Debt	Balance £m	Average Borrowing Rate 2019/2020
General Fund Fixed rate – PWLB	175.02	5.05%
HRA Fixed rate - PWLB	83.35	3.51%
Fixed rate – Market	49.20	4.10%
Variable rate	0	N/A

8.6. The maturity profile of the debt is evenly spread to avoid large repayments in any one financial year. The average debt period for PWLB loans is 20 years, market loans have an average debt period of 51 years. The total debt portfolio has a maturity range from 1 year to 59 years.

8.7. The Treasury Strategy allows up to 15% of the total outstanding debt to mature in any one year. It is prudent to have the Council's debt maturing over many years so as to minimise the risk of having to re-finance when interest rates may be high. The actual debt maturity profile is within these limits (Appendix A).

9. Debt rescheduling

9.1. No debt restructuring was undertaken during 2019/20. The introduction of a differential in PWLB rates on the 1 November 2007, which was compounded further following a policy change in October 2010 as outlined above has meant that large premiums would be incurred if debt restructuring was undertaken, which cannot be justified on value for money grounds.

9.2. Although these changes have restricted debt restructuring, the current debt portfolio is continually monitored in conjunction with external advisers in the light of changing economic and market conditions to identify opportunities for debt rescheduling. Debt rescheduling will only be undertaken:

- To generate cash savings at minimum risk.
- To help fulfil the Treasury Strategy.
- To enhance the balance of the long term portfolio by amending the maturity profile and/or volatility of the portfolio.

10. Investment Strategy for 2019/20

10.1. Our treasury advisor originally felt when the strategy was approved by Council in February 2019 that the bank rate would remain at 0.75% during 2019/20 as it was not expected the MPC would be able to deliver on an increase in Bank Rate until the Brexit issue was finally settled. However, there was an expectation that Bank Rate would rise after that issue was settled but would only rise to 1.0% during 2020. Consequently, our treasury advisor's interest rate forecast was reviewed and their updated forecast was approved by Council in December 2019 as part of the mid-year report. Their revised forecast took account of the expectation that Bank Rate would stay

at 0.75% during 2019/20.

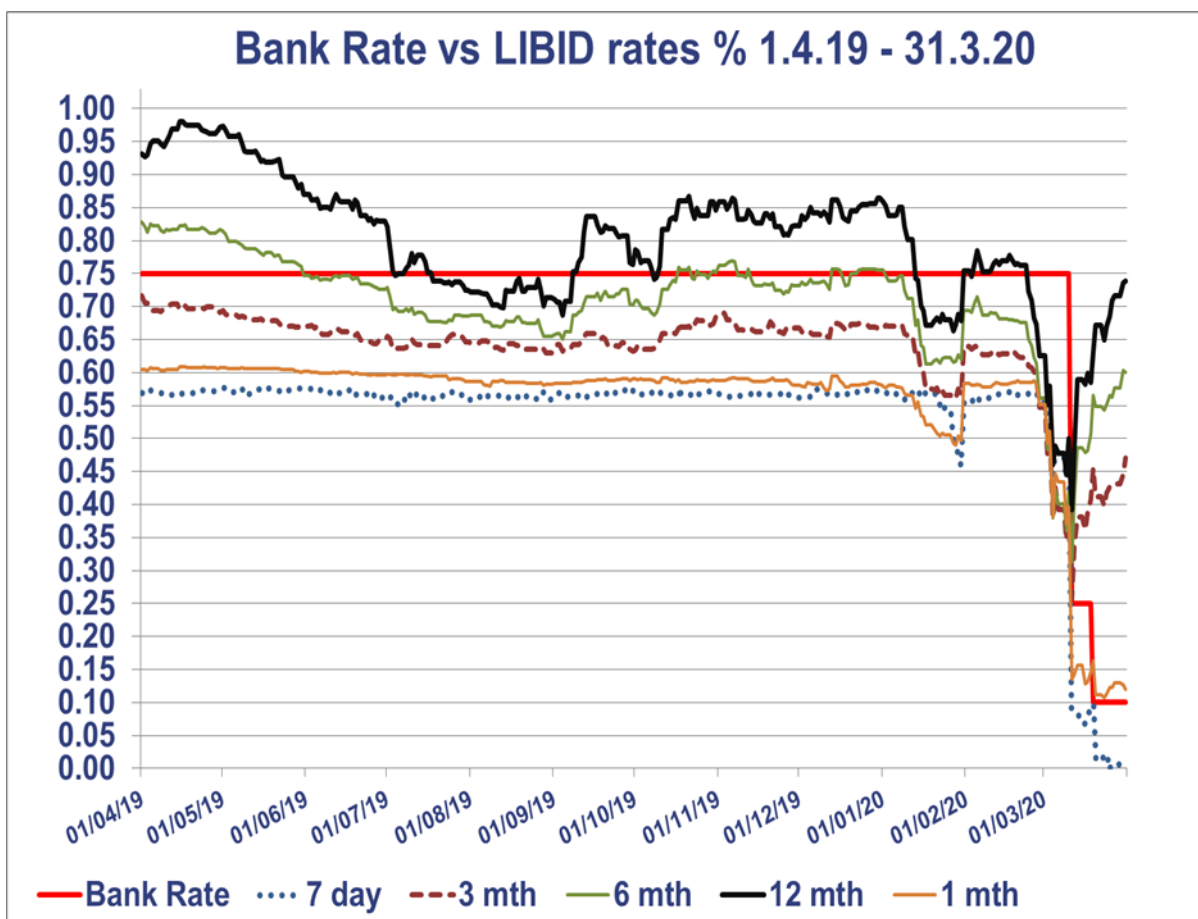
10.2. In 2019/20 investment of surplus cash was managed by the internal treasury team. The strategy for the in-house team was influenced by the need to keep funds relatively short for cash flow purposes. Lending continued to be restricted to UK banks, one overseas bank, three Building Societies, two Money Market Funds (AAA credit rating), Part Nationalised Banks, UK Government and other Local Authorities in line with the Council's policy on creditworthiness which was approved in the Annual Investment Strategy.

11. Investment outturn 2019/20

11.1 Rising concerns over the possibility that the UK could leave the EU at the end of October 2019 caused longer term investment rates to be on a falling trend for most of April to September. They then rose after the end of October deadline was rejected by the Commons but fell back again in January before recovering again after the 31 January departure of the UK from the EU. When the coronavirus outbreak hit the UK in February/March, rates initially plunged but then rose sharply back up again due to a shortage of liquidity in financial markets.

11.2 To counter the low investment rates and following advice from Link, use was made of direct deals with main UK banks, for various periods from three months to one year. Direct deals offered enhanced rates over the equivalent rates available through brokers. This provided opportunities to lock into higher, long term rates at times when it was thought they offered substantial enhancement over short term benchmark rates. Enhanced market rates when compared to bank rate has resulted in the total portfolio outperforming the benchmark. Use of instant access accounts with HSBC and Svenska Handelsbanken was continued, together with use of Money Market Funds with Aberdeen & Insight Investment. These accounts offered both instant access to funds and paid a rate which was higher than placing short term deposits through brokers.

11.3 Movements in short term rates through the year are shown in the below.



11.4 Throughout the year the average interest rate earned on investments was higher than budgeted. This resulted in the internal treasury team achieving a higher level of interest on revenue balances than budgeted. This surplus was in addition to an under-spend on debt charges due to no long-term general fund borrowing being undertaken in 2019/20. The total £3.75 million underspend was mainly due to MRP savings following a review of the Council's policy and interest earned being higher and debt charges lower than budgeted.

11.5 At 31 March 2020 the allocation of the cash portfolio was as follows:

	£m
• In-house short dated deposits for cash flow management	56.6
• In-house long dated deposits (up to 1 year)	48.0
• Other Local Authorities	52.5
Total	157.1

11.6 The following table shows the average return on cash investments for the internal treasury team during the year and for the last 3 years to 31 March 2020. Recognising the need to manage short term cash flow requirements, the target for the internal team is the 7 day LIBID rate.

	Return 2019/20	Return 3 years to 31 March 2020
	%	% p.a.
Internal Treasury Team	0.96	0.74
Benchmark (7 Day LIBID rate)	0.54	0.42

11.7 The conclusions to be drawn from the table are:

- During 2019/20 the internal treasury team outperformed their benchmark by 0.42%.
- Over the 3 year period the internal team's performance has been 0.32% per annum above the benchmark.

12. Compliance with Treasury Limits and Prudential Indicators

12.1 All borrowing and lending transactions undertaken through the year have complied with the procedures and limits set out in the Council's Treasury Management Practices and Treasury Strategy. In addition, all investments made have been within the limits set in the approved counterparty list. No institutions, in which investments were made, showed any difficulty in repaying investments and interest in full during the year.

12.2 Appendix B shows the Prudential Indicators approved by Council as part of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 (revised estimate) Treasury Strategies compared with the actual figures for 2019/20. In summary, during 2019/20 treasury activities have been within the prudential and treasury limits set in the Treasury Strategy.

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

Council, February 2019, Treasury Strategy 2019/20.

Council, December 2019, Treasury Strategy 2019/20 Mid-Year Review.

Council, February 2020, Treasury Strategy 2020/21.

Cabinet, September 2019, Treasury Management Update Quarter 1 2019/20.

Cabinet, December 2019, Treasury Management Update Quarter 2 2019/20.

Cabinet, February 2020, Treasury Management Update Quarter 3 2019/20.

Cabinet, July 2020, Treasury Management Update Quarter 4 2019/20.

Cabinet Member:

David Minnery, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Local Member

N/A

Appendices

A. Debt Maturity Profile as at 31 March 2020

B. Prudential Indicators 2019/20

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APPENDIX B

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2019/20

- C1. The Prudential Code requires the Council to set Prudential Indicators in the Treasury Strategy and report performance against those indicators in the Annual Treasury Report.
- C2. The ratio of financing costs compared to the net revenue stream of the Council was lower than expected in 2019/20 due to net revenue stream being higher than estimated.

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Revised Estimate	2019/20 Actual
	%	%
Non HRA Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	9.3	6.9

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Revised Estimate	2019/20 Actual
	%	%
Non HRA Ratio of financing costs (net of investment income) to net revenue stream	8.6	6.2
HRA Ratio of financing costs to HRA net revenue stream	38.8	36.8

- C3. It can be seen from the tables that the authority was well within the approved authorised limit and the operational boundary for external debt for 2019/20.

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Estimate	2019/20 Actual
External Debt	£m	£ m
Authorised Limit:		
Borrowing	446	308
Other long-term liabilities	101	102
Total	547	409

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Estimate	2019/20 Actual
External Debt	£ m	£ m
Operational Boundary:		
Borrowing	404	308
Other long-term liabilities	101	102
Total	505	410

C4. Gross borrowing was as anticipated due to no general fund borrowing being undertaken in 2019/20. A key indicator of prudence is that net borrowing should not exceed the capital financing requirement. It can be seen from the following figures that the Council continues to meet this prudential indicator.

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Estimate	2019/20 Actual
Net Borrowing & Capital Financing Requirement:	£ m	£ m
Gross Borrowing (inc. HRA)	312	308
Investments	100	157
Net Borrowing	212	151
Non HRA Capital Financing Requirement	289	275
HRA Capital Financing Requirement	85	85
Total CFR	374	360

C5. Non HRA was higher and HRA capital expenditure was lower than anticipated during the year. Explanations for these under/overspends were included in the 2019/20 final capital outturn report.

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Revised Estimate	2019/20 Actual
	£ m	£ m
Non HRA Capital expenditure	56.7	61.4
HRA Capital expenditure	7.6	6.0

C6. The level of fixed rate and variable rate borrowing were within the approved limits for the year.

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Estimate	2019/20 Actual
Upper Limit for Fixed/Variable Rate Borrowing	£ m	£ m
Fixed Rate (GF)	350	308
Fixed Rate (HRA)	96	85
Variable Rate	223	0

C7. The level of fixed rate and variable rate investments were within the approved limits during 2019/20.

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Estimate	2019/20 Actual
Upper Limit For Fixed/Variable Rate	£ m	£ m

Investments		
Fixed Rate	220	104
Variable Rate	220	53

C8. Longer term investments were held at the year-end due to the investment in Shrewsbury Shopping Centres.

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Estimate	2019/20 Actual
Upper Limit for Sums Invested over 364 days	£m	£m
Internal Team	50	0
External Manager	30	0
Shrewsbury Shopping Centres	60	20

C9. The maturity profile was within the limits set in the Treasury Strategy.

Prudential Indicator	2019/20 Upper Limit	2019/20 Actual
Maturity Structure of External Borrowing	%	%
Under 12 months	15	1
12 months to 2 years	15	4
2 years to 5 years	45	2
5 years to 10 years	75	3
10 years to 20 years	100	37
20 years to 30 years	100	24
30 years top 40 years	100	13
40 years to 50 years	100	7
50 years and above	100	9

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<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Audit Committee 31 July 2020	
Council 24 September 2020	<u>Public</u>

ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT OF AUDIT COMMITTEE TO COUNCIL 2019/20

Responsible Officer James Walton

e-mail: James.walton@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 258915

1. Summary

Attached to this report is the Audit Committee's Annual Assurance Report to Council for 2019/20. This provides Council with independent reasonable assurance that it has in place adequate and effective governance, risk management and internal control frameworks; internal and external audit functions and financial reporting arrangements that can be relied upon and which contribute to the high corporate governance standards that this Council expects and maintains consistently.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Recommendations to Audit Committee

Audit Committee is asked to consider and comment on the contents of the draft Annual Assurance report for 2019/20 before forwarding to Council with a recommendation to consider, comment upon and accept this report.

2.2 Recommendations to Council

Council is asked to consider and comment on the contents of the Annual Assurance report for 2019/20 before recommending accepting this report.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 The Audit Committee's Annual Assurance Report is part of the overall internal control arrangements and risk management process. The Audit Committee objectively examines and evaluates the adequacy of the control environment through the reports it receives and in turn can provide assurances to Council on its governance, risk management and internal control frameworks; internal and

external audit functions and financial reporting arrangements that inform the Annual Governance Statement.

- 3.2 The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. There are no direct environmental, equalities, consultation or climate change requirements or consequences of this proposal.

4. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications from this report. In assessing the internal control environment, risk management and governance aspects of the Council, the Audit Committee can provide a perspective on the overall value for money of these.

5. Climate Change Appraisal

Energy and Fuel Consumption; This report does not directly make decisions on energy and fuel consumption. Therefore, no effect.

Renewable Energy Generation; This report does not directly make decisions on renewable energy generation. Therefore, no effect.

Carbon offsetting or mitigation; This report does not directly make decisions on carbon offsetting or mitigation. Therefore, no effect.

Climate Change Adaption; This report does not directly make decisions on climate change adaption. Therefore, no effect.

6. Background

- 6.1 A key part of the Audit Committee's role is to report annually to Full Council on the Committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations; providing its opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and internal control frameworks; internal and external audit functions and financial reporting arrangements. In addition, the Audit Committee should report to Council where they have added value, improved or promoted the control environment and performance in relation to its Terms of Reference and the effectiveness of the Committee in meeting its purpose and functions.
- 6.2 The Audit Committee has a well-established role within the Council and it is important that an Annual Assurance report based on the work of the Committee is produced and recommended to Council. In compiling this assurance report, information provided at the Audit Committee meeting on 31st July 2020 has also been considered.
- 6.3 In addition, this report has been reviewed to ensure its continuing compliance with CIPFA¹'s Audit Committees, Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police, 2018 edition. This requires the Audit Committee to be held to account on a regular basis by the Council specifically in relation to:

Whether the;

¹ The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

- committee has fulfilled its agreed terms of reference;
- committee has adopted recommended practice;
- development needs of committee members have been assessed and whether committee members are accessing briefing and training opportunities;
- committee has assessed its own effectiveness, or been the subject of a review, and the conclusions and actions from that review and,
- what impact the committee has on the improvement of governance, risk and control within the Council.

6.4 The annual assurance report to Council for 2019/20, attached to this report, is an aid to addressing the key areas where the Committee should be held to account. **(Appendix A).**

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

CIPFA's Audit Committees, Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police, 2018 edition
Audit Committee reports 2019/20

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Peter Nutting, Leader of the Council and Peter M Adams, Chairman of Audit Committee

Local Member

N/A

Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Audit Committee Annual Assurance Report 2019/20

AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT FINANCIAL YEAR 2019/20

STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

1. Governance in and of the public sector continues to be high profile with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) supporting good practice in local government. In Shropshire we have a Code of Corporate Governance which is reviewed annually in line with the best practice issued by CIPFA and SOLACE²; we have also produced an Annual Governance Statement, again in line with best practice and legislative requirements. Being well managed and well governed are important attributes in helping to improve performance and in reducing the risk of failing to achieve our objectives, and providing good service to our community.
2. Shropshire Council has an Audit Committee that is long established in seeking to maintain and improve our governance procedures. The Committee is a key component of the Council's corporate governance arrangements and a major source of assurance of the Council's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment and reporting on internal and external audit functions and financial and non-financial performance.
3. The benefits to the Council of operating an effective Audit Committee are:
 - Maintaining public confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting.
 - Reinforcing the importance and independence of internal and external audit and any other similar review process; for example, reviewing and approving the Annual Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement.
 - Providing a sharp focus on financial reporting both during the year and at year end, leading to increased confidence in the objectivity and fairness of the financial reporting process.
 - Assisting the co-ordination of sources of assurance and, in so doing, making management more accountable.
 - Providing additional assurance through a process of independent and objective review.
 - Raising awareness within the Council of the need for governance, internal control and the implementation of audit recommendations.
 - Providing assurance on the adequacy of the Council's risk management arrangements and reducing the risk of illegal or improper acts.
4. The Committee continues to have a professional and arm's length relationship with Grant Thornton, the Council's external auditors, who attend all meetings of the Committee to offer their advice where needed.

² Society of Local Authority Chief Executives

5. The Committee undertakes a substantial range of activities and works closely with both internal and external auditors and the Chief Finance Officer (Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance {Section 151 Officer}) in achieving our aims and objectives. We have put together a work and development plan for the year to enable key tasks to be considered and completed.
6. As Chair of the Audit Committee, I see training as a key priority for members to undertake our roles effectively. The Committee continues to undertake a full and extensive programme of training and this year has been no exception. Training has been received in relation to:
 - Single person discount council tax review
 - Programme assurance – what to look for
 - Cloud service – what does this mean for Shropshire Council and the Audit committee
 - New systems programme assurance for the Audit Committee;
 - CIPFA Statement on the Head of Internal Audit
 - Assurance on the process of identifying, monitoring and achieving savings to stay within identified budgets
 - Challenging officers on the systems within their area to deliver against the financial strategy ...from a finance perspective and from a service perspective
 - Strategic risks including children and adults safeguarding
 - Treasury managementMembers also have access to CIPFA's Better Governance Forum network which provides specific information in the form of regular briefings, training events, and an informative web site and received various communication updates throughout the year on the following topics:
 - Champions of Fraud, National Fraud Initiative;
 - LGA A Councillor's workbook on bribery and fraud prevention (shared with all Shropshire Council Councillors);
 - National Audit Office (NAO) Round up for Audit Committees November 2019.
 - Local Authority Investment in Commercial Property
7. This year the Committee has held five planned meetings including the meeting held on 31st July 2020. A meeting planned for the 25th June was cancelled in responding to COVID19 changes to the financial framework for submitting and approving the financial accounts. We have received and considered a substantial number of reports across key areas of the Council's activity (see **Annex A**).

Audit Committee Membership and Dates of Meetings

8. Membership of the Audit Committee for 2019/20 was made up of the following Councillors: Peter Adams (Chairman); Brian Williams (Vice Chairman); Chris Mellings, Michael Wood and Ioan Jones.
9. Substitutes were invited to attend and contribute at all meetings and training.

10. Meetings of the Committee have been held on:
- 23 July 2019;
 - 12 September 2019;
 - 5 December 2019;
 - 25 February 2020; and
 - 31st July 2020³.

Details of Reports/Information Received

11. **Annex A** provides a summary of the key reports and information received by the Audit Committee at its meetings. These appear categorised in the areas which, under the Terms of Reference, Audit Committee have a responsibility to consider and report upon. They are:
- Governance;
 - Risk management framework;
 - Controls, including specific focus on:
 - Contracts and partnerships
 - Fraud, corruption and whistleblowing
 - Value for money
 - Financial reporting and treasury management.
- A detailed audit work plan has been agreed for the current year.

12. Following receipt of the reports Audit Committee resolved that:
- The Audit Committee resolved that there were reasonable arrangements for corporate governance and where improvements are required there is a clear improvement plan with dedicated lead officers that will be monitored by Members.
 - The Audit Committee resolved that the risk management and assurance framework was fit for purpose and operating as intended.
 - The Audit Committee resolved that there is still a need in the current situation with pressures on resources and changes to major systems, to ensure continual monitoring by management and members alike on the internal control environment. Members focus will remain on areas critical to the Council, i.e. internal control environments in respect of the embedding of ERP software, major contracts; commercial activities; commissioning, and achieving planned income levels especially during and following the Council's response to COVID19.
 - The Audit Committee resolved that there were effective arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption, and for enabling whistleblowing (confidential reporting).
 - The Audit Committee resolved that there was evidence of effective arrangements in place to support Value for Money but recognised the links to sound internal controls in minimising opportunities for waste and fraud and maximising income and use of all assets, and the need to ensure continual monitoring by management and members alike.
 - The Audit Committee resolved that Financial Statements reflected the Council's true position, were complete including all transactions, and

³ Included because this meeting will cover the reports originally planned for the 25th June 2020 which was cancelled and the timetable for completion of the financial accounts extended following COVID19.

were prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards.

13. The Head of Audit has offered limited assurance for the 2019/20 year on the Council's framework for governance, risk management and internal control. There are an increased number of high and medium risk rated weaknesses identified in key individual assignments that are significant in aggregate but discrete parts of the system of internal control remain unaffected. In addition to which, the response to the Coronavirus pandemic has led to scope limitations which restricts the independent assurances provided on the key systems that have undergone fundamental changes during the year. Where systems have been evaluated to a draft stage, assurances remain low. Management of Coronavirus has introduced unprecedented pressures and responses. Managers have been diverted onto business continuity pressures and unable to plan improvements to known internal control processes, leading to increased risks in some areas that will impact on delivery of the Council's objectives. 2019/20 has been a challenging year given the embedding of key fundamental line of business systems (financial and human resources) alongside the challenge to deliver savings, increase income and respond to Coronavirus.

Additional Responsibilities

14. Members of the Audit Committee and the Head of Audit and her staff are aware of the changing nature of local government in relation to the greater responsibilities for innovative practice allowed by the Government's Powers of Competence Act. We are aware that the Audit function has an essential and on-going role to play in monitoring the risks involved in the arrangements for strategic commissioning. Members continue to receive training in this extended aspect of their responsibilities, and the Head of Audit reports on the resources available in order to minimise any possibility of the risk of financial malpractice.

Audit Service Staff

15. The key staff are James Walton, the Section 151 Officer, Ceri Pilawski, the Head of Audit and her deputies, Principal Auditors: Katie Williams, Peter Chadderton and Barry Hanson.
16. Without the support of all Audit staff and of the officers mentioned above, it would not be possible for the Audit Committee to be as highly effective as peer comparisons show us to be. My thanks and that of my fellow committee members are given to all our Audit Service officers.

Annual Statement of Assurance

17. Based on:
- The work carried out by the Internal and External Auditors and their reports presented to this Committee;
 - Reports from service managers and;
 - The work carried out by the Section 151 Officer, Head of Audit and their reports presented to this Committee.

The Audit Committee recognises and is concerned about the limitations identified in the internal control framework. However, on balance the Committee can provide reasonable assurance, founded on those reports, explanations and assurances received, that the Council has in place adequate and effective governance, risk management and internal control systems; internal, external audit functions and financial reporting arrangements that can be relied upon and which contribute to the high corporate governance standards that this Council expects.

RECOMMENDATION – Council is asked to accept this report

Signed Date.....

On behalf of the Audit Committee

Peter M Adams

Summary of assurance reports received by Audit Committee

Governance

- **Management report; Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and a review of the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls and Shropshire's Code of Corporate Governance**

Report of the Section 151 Officer on the effectiveness of the system of internal controls and the production of the Annual Governance Statement. In addition, he reported on compliance with the Corporate Governance Code as reasonable.

- **Internal Audit – Annual review of Internal Audit, Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme (QAIP) 2019/20**

Report of the Section 151 Officer which provided Members with the results of a self-assessment of the Internal Audit Service against the requirements of the Public Sector Audit Standards, compliance against which demonstrates an effective Internal Audit service. There are no areas where the Internal Audit function is not complying with the Code and, whilst there are areas of partial compliance, these are not considered significant and do not compromise compliance with the code. It was noted the report should be read in conjunction with the Internal Audit Annual Report.

- **Annual review of Audit Committee terms of reference**

Report of the S151 Officer which set out changes proposed in the Terms of Reference in respect of reflecting the Council's political balance.

- **Annual Audit Committee self-assessment**

Report of the Section 151 Officer which requested members to review and comment on the self-assessment of good practice questionnaire to assess the effectiveness of the Audit Committee and identify any further improvements. Following the assessment Members have identified areas for future focus and refresh training sessions.

- **Internal Audit Charter**

Report of the Head of Audit which set out the requirement for an annual review of the Internal Audit Charter which had been completed and only a minor clarification change was proposed being the introduction, for clarity and completeness, of the Overall Assurance Opinion.

- **Draft Audit Committee annual work plan and future training requirements**

Report of the Head of Audit which provided a proposed Audit Committee work plan and sought discussion and agreement around a learning and development plan for members to ensure they were well informed and appropriately skilled to fulfil their role and drew members attention to the workplan and the proposed amendments. The only proposed change was for the Audit Committee and not Council to approve the final statement of accounts and accompanying documents at its meeting on 31 July 2020). It was agreed that the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference would be amended and a change to the Constitution sought to permit this.

- **Annual Assurance report of Audit Committee to Council 2019/20**
Report of the Section 151 Officer in respect of the Audit Committee's Annual Assurance report to Council.

The Audit Committee resolved that there were reasonable arrangements for corporate governance and where improvements are required there is a clear improvement plan with dedicated lead officers that will be monitored by Members.

Risk Management Framework

- **Management report: Risk and Insurance Annual Report 2018/19**
Report of the Risk and Insurance Manager which set out the challenges and achievements accomplished by the Risk and Insurance Team during 2018/19. The Risk and Insurance Manager informed the meeting that the Emergency Planning Unit had recently been incorporated into the team, which had been renamed 'Risk, Insurance and Resilience Team'. She then drew attention to the 'good' assurance level achieved following a risk management audit. The Risk and Insurance Manager informed the Committee how the quarterly reviews of strategic risks were undertaken in order to ensure that risk levels were closely monitored. The Risk and Insurance Manager reported that an additional level of business continuity tactical plans were being developed for HR, Finance and Assets which were currently being finalised and would provide a corporate approach across these areas. She then drew attention to the Business Continuity exercise recently undertaken along with the week-long live exercise undertaken during Business Continuity week in May each year. Both the Risk and Insurance Manager and the Risk Management Officer answered several queries from Members in relation to the following strategic risks: Staffing, Work Related Stress, Failure to Safeguard Vulnerable Children/Adults and the Economic Impact of Brexit. The Risk and Insurance Manager explained that there were detailed risk profiles sitting behind each risk and reminded Members that if they wished they could ask for individual risk profiles to be brought by the risk owner to future meetings for Members to look at in more detail. In relation to Failure to Safeguard Vulnerable Children/Adults the Risk and Insurance Manager explained that the impact of the risk could be mitigated by having a lot of controls in place and this may well be the reason for the lower 'likelihood' score for Safeguarding Vulnerable Children. Members requested that both the Director of Children's Services and the Director of Adult Services be invited to the next meeting to discuss the risk profiles. This was completed at a training session.
- **Management report: Strategic risks update**
Reports during the year from the Risk and Insurance Manager set out the current strategic risk exposure. There were currently 17 strategic risks on the strategic risk register, which was an increase of one strategic risk relating to the effects of Climate Change, for which a Lead Officer had been appointed and was in the process of completing the risk profile. The Economic Growth Strategy risk had increased from low to medium because of the impact of Brexit on the economy being unknown at the time. The reputation risk had been reduced from high to medium however this had since been increased due to an emergency being announced within highways in relation to the number of potholes in the county. The risk score for Safeguarding

Children had also been reduced from high to medium following the recruitment of more social workers.

➤ **Internal Audit report of the review of Risk Management audit 2019/20**

Report of the Principal Auditor which summarised the detailed findings identified in the Internal Audit review of risk management of which the overall control environment had been assessed as Good, the highest rating that could be given.

➤ **Draft Internal Audit risk based plan 2020/21**

Report of the Head of Audit on the proposed risk based Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21. She drew attention to the summarised Internal Audit Plan which confirmed that 1,794 days had been planned for Shropshire Council audit work and 171 days for external clients. She also referred members to the Appendix, which set out those audit areas of high priority for which no provision had been made in this year's internal audit plan those low risk areas that would not be considered for review by Internal Audit on a rolling basis, to allow Members to consider first line assurances, if required, from managers on these areas.

➤ **External Audit: Informing the risk assessment**

Report of the Engagement Lead (Grant Thornton) which contributed towards the effective two-way communication between auditors and the Council's Audit Committee, as 'those charged with governance'. The External Auditor drew Members' attention to the responses received from the Council's management to the questions raised on those areas where External Audit were required to gain an understanding of management processes and the Audit Committee's oversight of those areas. The Committee confirmed that they were comfortable with the management responses.

The Audit Committee resolved that the risk management and assurance framework was fit for purpose and operating as intended.

Controls

➤ **Management Report: Liquid Logic Project Review Update**

The Assistant Director of Adult Services introduced the report of the Director of Adult Services and confirmed that appropriate action had been taken to address the 6 recommendations (4 Significant and 2 Requires Attention) following the Audit review of Liquidlogic Adults Social Care System (LAS) Project which concluded that the current level of assurance was 'limited' and that the direction of travel was 'a weakening control environment'. Members were pleased that all recommendations had been taken on board however they did not agree that the management controls in place at the time of the audit were robust nor that the limited assurance level was due to the delay in providing information and documents to the Audit team.

➤ **Management Report: Children's Direct Payments Update**

The Head of Safeguarding reported the progress that had been made following the 2018/19 internal audit, the final report of which was issued in March 2019. The Service Manager informed the meeting that following a management review in June 2019, progress implementing recommendations had been made. Members raised

concerns that the level of assurance had fallen from being good to limited with 17 areas of concern reported. The Service Manager explained that the service had been missing a key post for a significant amount of time which had finally been filled in December 2018, following which, the system control weaknesses in this area were strengthened. A further progress report was planned and received in February 2020. The Interim Assistant Director of Children’s Social Care and Safeguarding informed Members of the progress made to address the recommendations. She informed the Committee that both an Interim Service Manager and a Short Breaks Reviewing Officer had been appointed. She drew attention to the progress made against the Action Plan and confirmed that only five actions remained outstanding. She reported that development and implementation of the all age payment service was progressing and was being overseen on a bi-monthly basis by the Strategic Board.

➤ **Management report: Digital Transformation Programme (DTP) Update**
Report of the Director of Workforce and Transformation on the progress and outcomes to date of the Digital Transformation Programme, delivery to date, lessons learnt and the progress in moving to business as usual.

➤ **Third line assurance report: Highways Term Maintenance Contract**
Report of the Head of Audit provided members with the key findings following a review of the Term Maintenance Contract and the actions that management were taking.

➤ **Management report – Highways Term Maintenance Contract**
The Director of Place and Enterprise provided Members with an update on progress of the Action Plan following the audit undertaken to review payment mechanisms for the Highways Term Maintenance Contract, he reported a positive direction of travel.

➤ **Management Report: Commercial Strategy Update**
The Assistant Director Commercial Services explained that the ‘Hopper’ process was an assessment method used to appraise proposals coming forward with potential commercial prospects. An investment fund of up to £40m had been identified to help deliver additional revenue. Following a review of all proposed projects, three were currently being delivered, three had been approved by Council and others in the pipeline required further appraisal. The Assistant Director Commercial Services addressed the issue of the revision of the target to deliver a minimum of £5m of new revenue income down to £2m in the revenue budget. He explained that it had been recognised that the Council had not been on course to achieve £5m in this financial year and it had therefore been accepted that £2m would be a more realistic target. He reported that work was currently being undertaken to demonstrate how the savings target of £2m as set out in the Financial Strategy would be achieved.

➤ **Management Report: Theatre Severn update**
Report of the Interim Head of Culture and Heritage Services following several Internal Audit reports and investigations that identified control weaknesses across the Theatre’s operations that were reoccurring, Members were provided with

management progress against internal control weaknesses to date in the following areas:

- Theatre Severn Audit (Limited)
- Theatre Severn Chip and Pin (Unsatisfactory)
- Theatre Ticketing and Online Booking (Limited).

➤ **Internal Audit performance report and revised annual audit plan 2019/20**

Report of the Head of Audit which provided Members with an update of the work undertaken by Internal Audit throughout the year. By mid-July she informed Members that 35% of the revised plan had been completed reporting four good, nineteen reasonable and seven limited and four unsatisfactory assurance opinions had been issued and the 34 final reports contained 360 recommendations, two of which were fundamental in relation to Brockton CE Primary School and Legionella. The Head of Audit highlighted those areas where Audit had added value in the delivery of work and reported that the number of lower level assurances to date (32%) was slightly lower than for the previous year (33%).

By mid-November 2019 the revised plan was on target for 90% completion. The Head of Audit drew attention to the audit recommendations and the decrease in the higher levels of assurance along with a corresponding increase in unsatisfactory assurances and explained that it was too early to say whether the reviews to be undertaken in the final quarter would reveal a risk to the internal control environment, but she confirmed that it was an early indicator as to the direction of travel.

At her February 2020 update the Head of Audit informed members that 79% of the revised plan had been completed; There had been minor revisions to the plan and in total, 18 final reports had been issued. There had been 12 good or reasonable assurances accounting for 66% of the opinions delivered, which was a slight decrease compared to the previous year. This was offset by a corresponding increase in limited and unsatisfactory assurances up from 33% in the previous year to 34% this year. Turning to Direction of Travel, the Head of Audit cautioned that the lower level assurances and the higher proportion of areas attracting unsatisfactory and limited assurances were an early indication of a weakening control environment. Members expressed concern at the direction of travel.

➤ **Internal Audit annual report 2019/20**

Report of the Head of Audit on achievements against the revised internal audit plan for 2019/20 and the annual internal audit assurance. The Head of Audit gave limited assurance for the 2019/20 year that the Council's framework for governance, risk management and internal control is sound and working effectively. She explained that there are an increased number of high and medium risk rated weaknesses identified in key individual assignments that are significant in aggregate but discrete parts of the system of internal control remain unaffected. In addition to which, the response to the Coronavirus pandemic has led to scope limitations which restricts the independent assurances provided on the key systems that have undergone fundamental changes during the year. Where systems have been evaluated to a draft stage, assurances remain low. Management of Coronavirus has introduced unprecedented pressures and responses. Managers have been diverted onto business continuity pressures and unable to plan improvements to known internal control processes, leading to increased

risks in some areas that will impact on delivery of the Council's objectives. 2019/20 has been a challenging year given the embedding of key fundamental line of business systems (financial and human resources) alongside the challenge to deliver savings, increase income and respond to Coronavirus.

The Audit Committee resolved that there is still a need in the current situation with pressures on resources and changes to major systems, to ensure continual monitoring by management and members alike on the internal control environment. Members focus will remain on areas critical to the Council, i.e. internal control environments in respect of the embedding of ERP software, major contracts; commercial activities; commissioning, and achieving planned income levels especially during and following the Council's response to COVID19.

Controls: Fraud, Corruption and Whistleblowing

➤ **Fraud, special investigation and Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) update (Exempted by categories 2, 3 and 7)**

Members are provided with exempt reports of the Principal Auditor providing an update on the current fraud and special investigations undertaken by Internal Audit and current RIPA activity.

➤ **Annual review of Counter Fraud, Bribery and Anti-Corruption Strategy and activities, including an update on the National Fraud Initiative**

Report of the Head of Audit provided which outlined the measures undertaken in the last year to evaluate the potential for the occurrence of fraud, and how the Council managed these risks with the aim of prevention, detection and subsequent reporting of fraud, bribery and corruption. It also provided an update on the action plan to ensure continuous improvement and an update to members in response to national and local issues. It was confirmed that no changes were being proposed to the existing strategy.

➤ **Annual Whistleblowing report**

Report of the Director of Workforce and Transformation on the number of cases raised through the whistleblowing process over the last year and the actions resulting.

The Audit Committee resolved that there were effective arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption, and for enabling whistleblowing (confidential reporting).

Controls: Value for Money

➤ **External Audit: Shropshire Council audit findings 2018/19**

Report of the Engagement Lead (Grant Thornton) on key matters arising from the audit of Shropshire Council's financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2019. He advised that most of the financial statements had been completed and he anticipated that an unqualified opinion would be given.

➤ **External Audit: Audit plan**

Report of the Engagement Lead (Grant Thornton) setting out the plan for the year ending 31 March 2020 for Shropshire Council in relation to the Council's financial

statements and to satisfy themselves that the Council had made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

➤ **External Audit: Pension fund audit plan 2019/20**

Report of the Engagement Lead (Grant Thornton) setting out the Pension fund plan for the year ending 31 March 2020.

➤ **External Audit: Audit fee letter 2019/20**

Report of the Engagement Lead (Grant Thornton) setting out the audit fee for the year ending 31 March 2020.

The Audit Committee resolved that there was evidence of effective arrangements in place to support Value for Money but recognised the links to sound internal controls in minimising opportunities for waste and fraud and maximising income and use of all assets, and the need to ensure continual monitoring by management and members alike.

Financial reporting

➤ **External Audit: Shropshire County Pension Fund (Information) 2018/19 letter 2018/19**

Report of the Engagement Lead (Grant Thornton) summarised the findings for the year ended 31 March 2019 on the audit of the Pension Fund financial statements. He drew attention to the unadjusted misstatements set out in the report but confirmed that an unqualified opinion would be given.

➤ **External Audit: Audit progress report and sector update**

Report of the Engagement Lead (Grant Thornton) which highlighted the progress made on work undertaken during the year and summarised the emerging national issues and developments of relevance to the Council. Members' attention was directed to the progress to date on the audit delivery and he confirmed that External Audit continued to meet with officers as appropriate. In relation to the Annual Certification Letter, it was confirmed that any matters arising from this work going forward would be clarified in the letter. In December, the Engagement Manager highlighted emerging risks and the approach to the Council's Value for Money Conclusion and explained that a detailed risk assessment would be undertaken following discussions with the Chief Executive and the Chief Financial Officer.

➤ **External Audit: Annual audit letter 2018/19 Shropshire Council**

Report of the Engagement Lead (Grant Thornton) which summarised the key findings arising from the work carried out for the year ended 31 March 2019. The Senior Manager introduced the report and drew attention to the unqualified opinion given on the Council's Financial Statements and those for Shropshire County Pension Fund along with the Value for Money Conclusion for 2018/19.

➤ **Financial outturn report 2019/20**

Report from the Section 151 Officer providing details of the revenue outturn position for the Council and the full year capital expenditure and financing of the Council's capital programme.

➤ **Approval of the Council's Statement of Accounts 2019/20 including a review of accounting policies**

Report of the Section 151 Officer on the draft Annual Statement of Accounts and the accounting policies.

Treasury Management

➤ **Annual treasury report 2018/19**

Report of the Section 151 Officer providing information on treasury activities for Shropshire Council for the year and including the investment performance of the internal treasury team to 31 March 2019. He reported that the Internal Treasury Team had outperformed their investment benchmark by 0.29% and that performance over the last three years was 0.29% per annum above benchmark delivering an underspend of £5.061 million. This was mainly due to a review of the Minimum Revenue Provision policy. He also drew attention to the significant levels of ongoing savings and one-off adjustments and highlighted the minimum reporting requirements for the review and scrutiny of the Council's treasury management policy and activities undertaken by Audit Committee before being reported to full Council for approval

➤ **Treasury Strategy 2019/20 mid-year report**

Report of the Section 151 Officer which provided an economic update for the first six months of 2019/20; including a review of the Treasury Strategy; Annual Investment Strategy, the Council's investment portfolio; the Council's borrowing strategy; any debt rescheduling undertaken and compliance with Treasury and Prudential limits all for 2019/20.

➤ **Treasury Strategy 2020/21**

Report of the Section 151 Officer which proposed the Treasury Strategy for 2020/21 and the recommended Prudential Indicators for 2021/22 to 2022/23.

The Audit Committee resolved that Financial Statements reflected the Council's true position, were complete including all transactions, and were prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards.



Committee and Date

Council Date
24th September 2020

Item

Public

REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION TO PERMIT THE AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE THE FINAL ACCOUNTS PACK INCLUDING THE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Responsible Officer James Walton
e-mail: James.walton@shropshire.go.uk Tel: 01743 258915

1. Summary

Currently the Council approves the Final Accounts Pack including the Statement of Accounts. This was traditionally undertaken in September but under 'faster closedown' this has, by necessity, in a normal year been brought forward to July each year. Given these statutory changes to the Government's timetable for closing Local Authority Accounts, it is proposed for the Audit Committee to approve the Statement of Accounts in late July. This approach is adopted at several other authorities and is recognised by the External Auditors. Audit Committee Members, at the meeting in February agreed to request this change to the Constitution to enable the responsibility to rest with them.

For this year, in response to changes to the timetable for closing Local Authority Accounts, the change will be applied to the extended timetable.

2. Recommendations

The Council is asked to consider and approve, with appropriate comment:

- a) That the Audit Committee be given responsibility for approving the Final Accounts Pack including the Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2019/20 onwards and the detailed changes to the Constitution proposed in **Appendix A** are adopted.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 Audit Committee currently considers and approves the Council's draft and audited Statement of Accounts pack before it is taken to Full Council for formal approval. Members of Audit Committee undergo a series of appropriate learning and development sessions in respect of their roles and responsibilities, to undertake their duties effectively and deliver them to a high standard, thereby adding to:
- the robustness of the risk management framework;
 - the adequacy of the internal control environment and
 - the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance of the Council.
- 3.2 The shift of formal approval from a full Council Meeting to a committee meeting does not create significant governance risks for the authority. The approval of the Statement of Accounts pack by Audit Committee does not preclude any Member of the Council from attending the meeting, raising questions or concerns. Furthermore, the meeting will continue to be held in public.
- 3.3 The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. There are no direct environmental, climate change or equalities requirements or consequences to this proposal.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 This proposed change does not create any additional financial implications for the authority.

5 Climate Change Appraisal

- 5.1 This proposed change is procedural and creates no additional climate change impacts.

6 Background

- 6.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) identifies the purpose of an Audit Committee, in its Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2018 Edition, as providing those charged with governance, independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance processes. In local authorities, audit committees are necessary to satisfy the wider requirements for sound financial and internal control. Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 state 'the relevant authority must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control which; facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and the achievement of its aims and objectives; ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective; and includes effective arrangements for the management of risk'. With a known work plan, and appropriate and timely learning and development for Members, the Committee will be well prepared and Members will gain the knowledge and experience needed to carry out their role effectively. Their skills will be compatible with approving the Final Accounts Pack including the Statement of Accounts.

- 6.2 Under current arrangements the draft and audited Statement of Accounts pack is taken to Audit Committee before formal approval at Council. Full Council is able to gain assurance from the robust manner in which Audit Committee Members currently review the Council's Statement of Accounts, Analytical Review, Annual Audit Letter and Annual Governance Statement. As a result, it is generally accepted that the formal approval of these documents at Full Council does not provide significant added value.
- 6.3 To enable the Audit Committee to approve the Council's Statement of Accounts Pack it is necessary to request a formal delegation from Full Council to approve the Final Statement of Accounts and accompanying documents annually each year in accordance with the statutory timetable.
- 6.4 Research across other councils has found this to be the practice in other Local Authorities, for example Telford and Wrekin, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The External Auditor, Grant Thornton, have also been consulted upon this and have no objections. If members agree then changes to the Constitution as set out in **Appendix A** are requested and a change to the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference will be agreed in consultation with the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance and the Chair to reflect the Constitutional changes sought.

Coronavirus and the 2019/20 Final Accounts process

- 6.5 For this year only, as a result of the Coronavirus, there has been an adjustment to the statutory timetable enabling draft accounts to be prepared at the latest by 31 August, instead of the 31 May. The date for final publication of the accounts and Annual Governance Statement has also been put back from 31 July to 30 November in England.
- 6.6 Officers have considered the impact of Covid-19 across the organisation alongside other time-critical pieces of work and have produced a revised timetable in consultation with External Auditors. The agreed proposal is to produce the draft Statement of Accounts by 10th July 2020. The External Auditors have confirmed their intention to complete the audit of the accounts by mid-September, early October 2020. This will enable Audit Committee and/or Full Council to approve the audited Statement of Accounts by 30 October 2020.
- 6.7 It is anticipated that these arrangements will not be replicated in 2021, with the assumption that the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts Pack will be produced in line with faster closedown; draft accounts produced by 31 May 2021, external audit completed in June and July, with the Audit Committee able to approve the Audited Statement of Accounts Pack by 31 July 2021.

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

CIPFA's Audit Committees Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2018 Edition

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2020 will amend the relevant sections of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015,

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/new>

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Peter Nutting (Leader of the Council) and Peter M Adams (Chairman of Audit Committee)

Local Member n/a

Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed changes to the Constitution

Appendix A: 2020/21 Proposed changes to the Constitution

Part 3 – Responsibility for Council Functions, Page C7

Committee	Membership	Functions	Onward delegation of functions
Audit Committee	Members of the Authority	To provide those charged with governance an independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of financial reporting and annual governance processes. <i><u>To approve the Annual Statement of Accounts</u></i>	

Reference to Statement of Accounts in Financial Rules

FINANCIAL RULE 1 – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

The Full Council *(No change proposed)*

3.2. Is responsible for:

F Approving the annual Statement of Accounts.

Audit Committee

3.8. Is responsible for *approving the Annual Statement of Accounts and* providing those charged with governance independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It will review and monitor the robustness of the treasury management arrangements in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Responsibilities of Section 151 Officer *(No change proposed)*

A.4.7. To prepare and publish the audited accounts of the Council, with no qualifications, for each financial year, and with the requirement for the Council, to approve the audited Statement of Accounts and to publish this document in accordance with the statutory timetable.

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Committee and date

Council

24th September 2020

Item

Public

PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED RESTRICTIONS / SCHOOL STREETS PROGRAMME FOR SHROPSHIRE SCHOOLS

Responsible Officer Steven Brown
Email: steven.brown@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 253949

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 At its meeting on 19th December 2019, Shropshire Council passed a motion to support the principle of a 20mph speed limit outside all schools in the county and requested officers to bring a report to Council within 6 months to consider how this could be implemented. Due to the impact of COVID19, the report has been deferred until the September 2020 Council meeting.
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of how 20mph speed restrictions can be implemented in Shropshire and the site-specific considerations that must be made. Further the report also considers how the “School Streets” Initiative, that was brought forward as a motion and subsequently approved at July 2020 Council meeting. Thus, this report blends those two initiatives, as in our communities, local geography and local conditions one approach isn’t appropriate to all, but certain aspects or interventions may be, and for the purposes of this report any proposed intervention should be regarded as School Streets or 20 mph interchangeably, or that an intervention may not be appropriate.
- 1.3 There are 150 schools in Shropshire and 126 sites would require a level of intervention, if the Council opted to progress with a county wide programme of interventions (20 mph or school streets). The scale of intervention would depend upon any existing measures already in place and the local context. The report outlines that there is no single generic approach for the application of any intervention that is in line with Department for Transport guidance,
- 1.4 Reducing traffic speed can reduce road traffic collision frequency and reduce the risk of fatal injury to casualties where collisions occur. 20mph speed restrictions can also present the potential for a range of environmental, health and community benefits, depending on the style of intervention and supporting measures and behaviour. Police data on reported personal injury accidents occurring outside schools has been reviewed for the last three years, this identified eleven accidents have been reported outside Shropshire schools. Three were serious and eight were slight in severity.

- 1.5 This report presents a range of considerations in relation to the potential benefits and disbenefits in Shropshire of different types of intervention some of which can be confidently forecast in time and cost and some will only emerge following local consultation in respect of appropriateness of intervention and time and cost
- 1.6 Current guidance from the Department for Transport suggests that vehicle speeds must already be low before a signed only 20mph speed limit is introduced. Signed-only speed limits typically only lead to small reductions in vehicle speeds so the extent to which a defined benefit can be achieved must be considered. There are further considerable financial (capital and revenue for ongoing maintenance) implications for sites where traffic calming is deemed necessary to achieve low vehicle speeds, either as part of a scheme or post-implementation. It is important that the potential financial legacy of this blended approach to the introduction of 20mph speed restrictions outside all schools and or elements of the Safer Schools is understood, notwithstanding the local community view of any physical interventions.
- 1.7 20 mph / School Streets are an obvious option that could support improvements and would combine several issues and strategies of this council such as Clean Air, Carbon Reduction, Active Travel etc, however the coordination, liaison and officer time and financial cost would undoubtedly require a dedicated Member of staff to support and facilitate to ensure the overall programme is delivered.
- 1.8 The estimated cost of delivering a programme of mandatory 20mph speed restrictions outside schools is estimated to be between £1.8M and £2.9M, depending upon the scale of intervention required, could take between five and seven years to complete as they are reasonably predictable, whereas school's street interventions are less so, and indeed it may not be appropriate to provide any interventions at all at some schools, and some multi-site locations may benefit from minimal interventions and until the local liaison and consultation is completed a complete picture of cost and time scale cannot be provided with any certainty. As explained within this report, the identification of proposed interventions at schools, the necessary consultation time and programme development the availability of the capital funding provided each year and programming of works dependent upon the level of resource applied. If a full-time additional resource (staff) was identified and dedicated to this programme, then this would reduce the estimated programme length significantly. If progressed, initial data collection and feasibility work could commence in 2021/22, which would determine an ongoing programme of work, as stated a dedicated staff resource would be required to support and drive this.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That Shropshire Council approves:

- a) That a consultation process that engages with School Governing Bodies and Senior Leaders, local Member's and communities is implemented to ensure

the appropriateness of specific interventions for each school are identified as required.

- b) That the Council commits to preliminary investment in traffic data collection and design advice to ensure appropriate options with defined benefits are selected for any future programme of work.
- c) That parking behaviour and existing traffic regulations near schools are also reviewed and, where appropriate, new enforceable parking measures are introduced to complement any introduction of 20mph speed restrictions outside schools, as part of programmed work.
- d) Delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Highways and Transport and Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, to undertake the necessary investigations and develop a programme of design and works to implement appropriate improvements outside schools where considered necessary.
- e) That the Council notes that resources will be diverted from other streams of work typically funded through the Integrated Transport programme to support this initiative, except for where there are legal and statutory requirements placed on the authority (for example, accident data investigations under the Road Traffic Act 1988). Where possible, additional funding options, such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be investigated.
- f) That, if progressed, the programme of review, design and delivery is reported to the Communities Overview Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

REPORT

3.0 Risk Management and Opportunities

Human rights

3.1 The following article of the Human Rights Act is likely to be relevant to this report:

- Article 2 – The Right to Life. The presence of appropriate traffic management measures on the highway outside of schools can have a direct impact on the likelihood highway related personal injury accidents occurring and the severity of any casualty caused. In general terms, killed or seriously injured casualties are less likely to be a result of low speed accidents. This report deals with 20mph speed restrictions outside of schools, where there is the additional consideration of the presence of vulnerable road users at peak times. If the Council takes the decision to progress with the introduction of appropriate low speed traffic management measures, this is unlikely to result in an increase in the likelihood of killed or seriously injured accidents outside schools.

3.2 Police data on reported personal injury accidents outside schools has been reviewed. There is no evidence to suggest the occurrence of killed or seriously injured accidents outside schools at high risk times (the start and the end of the school day) over the last three years or accidents that are speed related.

- 3.3 Shropshire Council has a statutory duty under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to conduct studies into accidents on roads, other than trunk roads, within the local authority area and take appropriate measures to prevent such accidents, further identification of data for other forms of transport such as cycling should also be considered.
- 3.4 Through the annual identification and assessment of accident cluster sites in conjunction with routine liaison with West Mercia Police, any sites with known highway risks are already prioritised for funding for appropriate remedial measures. Therefore, if the decision is taken to not progress with the implementation of 20mph speed restrictions outside all schools, this does not mean that there is likely to be an increase in the number of killed and seriously injured accidents outside schools.

“School Streets” – impacts and issues.

- 3.5 “School Streets” are short term road closures except for pedestrians and cyclists at key school times which are enforceable. Where installed already, these are either by zone and camera, or by installing physical barriers. Short term is likely to be barriers, but long term can be by camera enforcement. A good low-cost starting point is to encourage schools to introduce a voluntary 5-minute walk bubble.
- 3.6 The focus is to encourage more pupils to walk or cycle to school, however in response to the pandemic it is likely that there will be demand in relation to creating more space outside of schools. Key factors to consider would be sites where a street may serve more than one school, sites where footways are already constrained, sites where there are high numbers of pupils arriving by car or where there is the greatest potential for people to use alternative modes (need to be realistic).
- 3.7 “School Streets” require a legal order. Experimental orders are the most useful if schools are looking at staggering start times etc. however signs would need to reflect times. On busy streets, it may be necessary to consider other options to create more space but maintain traffic, this may be by removing parking.
- 3.8 Key considerations are:
- Appropriateness and prioritisation. This approach would not be necessary or appropriate for all schools in Shropshire for example geographical issues (schools on main roads etc)
 - Engaging with schools and preparing assessments and consultation, whilst schools will be focused on other initial priorities such as return to school and COV19
 - How would any portable barriers be stored, erected and dismantled and arrangements in place to ensure barriers are utilised as agreed, at the locations and times required
 - How would any proposed intervention impact on the local area, typically traffic congestion displacement,
 - Who is permitted into the zone?
 - How is the scheme communicated, consulted upon and monitored and evaluated post interventions?
- 3.9 “School Streets” could combine several strategies of this council such as Clean Air, Carbon Reduction - research demonstrates possible reductions in air pollutants and traffic reduction which is not displaced. Active Travel, Health Improvements - coordination, liaison and officer time, financial costs would require dedicated staff resources to support and facilitate to ensure the overall programme is delivered.

Equalities

3.10 An Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) has been carried out and is contained in Appendix A.

Risks

3.11 20mph speed restrictions can present several potential benefits to Shropshire's people and places:

- A reduction in road traffic collision frequency and casualties and a lower risk of fatal injury to casualties where collisions occur. This is particularly in relation to potentially high numbers of vulnerable young people who may be present on the highway at the start and end of the school day.
- Where vehicles are travelling at low speeds the likelihood and severity of road traffic accidents is reduced. Therefore, the introduction of 20mph speed restrictions outside schools where a defined reduction in actual vehicle speeds is achieved, will reduce the risk of accident and killed or seriously injured casualties. However, it is considered that where vehicle speeds are already low, the introduction of a 20mph speed restrictions will add no further reduction in risk.
- Shropshire Council will continue to address accident cluster sites in line with statutory duties placed on it by the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- Modal shift to healthier and more sustainable transport such as walking and cycling due to improved perceptions of road safety. Walking and cycling can improve health, contribute towards tackling congestion, improve accessibility, reduce carbon emissions and improve local environments.
- Improved quality of life and community benefits.
- Environmental benefits. Where motorists drive appropriately at a slow and steady pace, they can reduce pollution and save fuel.

3.12 The current approach to the implementation of 20mph speed restrictions in Shropshire is based upon Department for Transport (DfT) guidance and is expected to ensure that appropriate and achievable traffic management interventions are delivered in locations where the potential benefits are greatest.

3.13 The Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 "Setting Local Speed Limits" is the key guidance relating to why and how speed limits are determined on local roads. The Circular outlines that speed limits should:

- Be evidence-led and self-explaining.
- seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel, and
- encourage self-compliance.

3.14 The Circular also states that to achieve self-compliance i.e. through existing road conditions together with measures such as signing or traffic calming, there should be no expectation on the police to provide additional enforcement beyond their routine activity. *This presents the following risks to Shropshire Council:*

- Managing the public's perceptions of what can be realistically achieved on many of Shropshire's roads.
- Interventions must be considered on a site by site basis; blanket delivery of a generic scheme is not possible.
- Environmental impacts in terms of sign clutter and traffic calming in the context of Shropshire's natural and historic environments, and
- Environmental impacts arising from physical traffic calming measures. There is evidence to suggest that measures that promote stop-start driving styles increase fuel consumption and emissions.
- The movement of vehicles and longer journey times associated with schools that are on primary or main traffic distributor routes. This risk could be reduced by the introduction of variable speed limits that only operate at key times.
- The potential for low levels of modal shift, where no obvious change in vehicle behaviour is observed outside of schools. There is currently no clear resource for the promotion and support of positive journey choices for school travel.
- Lack of impact on behavioural change associated with other school related highway issues such as indiscriminate parking and the adverse effect on air quality arising from parents waiting with vehicle engines running.
- Potential challenge from campaign groups such as '20s Plenty' to extend 20mph speed restrictions to wider urban areas.

3.15 As a key partner in road safety and speed management, Shropshire Council's highway officers have detailed discussions with the local traffic liaison officer for West Mercia Police, who provides additional support and guidance in determining appropriate traffic management interventions. Where Police advice is not followed, this could lead to ongoing issues with enforcement where speed restrictions are inappropriate or in the case of 20mph speed restrictions, not self-enforcing.

3.16 There are also short term and long-term resource risks in relation to:

- Availability of staff resource within the Highways and Transport Department to oversee and manage the design, delivery and consultation associated with a large programme of site-specific proposals.
- Financial risk in terms of available funds to deliver schemes associated with the Integrated Transport Block capital grant (see Section 4) and the availability of revenue funding for initial feasibility work coupled with the fact that a complete programme and cost cannot be arrived at until local discussions and liaison have concluded.
- Increased maintenance burden in relation to signs, lines and traffic calming.

Environmental

3.17 A climate change appraisal has been completed and is contained in Section 10.

3.18 There are additional considerations in relation to the visual impact of highway infrastructure associated with the introduction of 20mph speed restrictions, in whatever form, on Shropshire's natural and historic environments. Signs, lines, flashing lights or physical traffic calming can have a detrimental impact on the aesthetics and appearance of the streetscape. In terms of the proposals contained within this report, this may have an impact on schools in either historically sensitive environments or in rural villages.

Consultation

3.19 Consultation has not yet been carried out. School Leaders have been briefed on the intention to move forward on this work.

3.20 Consultation would be carried out on a site by site basis, depending on the level of scheme proposed or the type of intervention required, Consultation is likely to be a combination of meetings with schools, letter drops to affected properties (both residential or otherwise) and online information available via Shropshire Council's website.

3.21 If a mandatory 20mph speed restriction is recommended to be implemented with an associated Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), Shropshire Council are required to undertake a statutory consultation exercise. This involves a statutory process whereby interested parties are consulted for 21 days and a draft TRO for the new speed limit is formally advertised for objection. Significant objections to a proposed speed restriction may result in a decision to not progress. Road traffic law pertaining to speed limits is contained in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984¹.

3.22 Where physical traffic calming measures are proposed, Shropshire Council is required to notify customers of the proposals and comments can be made over a 21-day period.

3.23 Consultation will be carried out with West Mercia Police regarding the design of measures that are appropriate, and enforcement requirements and constraints.

4.0 Financial Implications

Scheme costs

4.1 Table 1 provides an indication of estimated costs for works and design associated with various options for the introduction of 20mph speed restrictions. Design has been estimated at 20% of the estimated construction cost. The appropriate type of intervention can only be determined through the collection of robust traffic data, therefore an estimate for the cost of data collection using an Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) has been included for both before and after scheme implementation.

4.2 There are considerable financial implications associated with delivering schemes where physical traffic calming is required to achieve a 'self-enforcing' speed restriction, as recommended by the Department for Transport. The cost of including traffic calming either initially or as a remedial measure to an existing scheme, can vary considerably, therefore Table 1 contains estimates for both minimum and maximum interventions. The maximum estimate is based on the implementation of three raised tables. It should be noted that costs for school streets interventions will only emerge from local liaison and engagement and these costs have not been forecast.

¹ *Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984*. [Online]. [Accessed: 05-03-2020]. Available from: Norwich: The Stationery Office. Available from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27/contents>

- 4.3 It should be noted that some schools may have multiple access points and as such interventions may be required on more than one section of highway. The cost estimates shown are based on a linear intervention on one section of highway with two vehicular approaches.

Table 1: Estimated cost for 20mph speed restriction interventions

Option	Works	Design 20%	Data*	Total
1 Do nothing	£0	£0	£0	£0
2 Advisory 20mph speed restriction - signs only	£1,000	£200	£1,000	£2,200
3 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - signs only	£5,500	£1,100	£1,000	£7,000
4 Variable 20mph speed restriction - advisory	£8,000	£1,600	£1,000	£10,600
5 Variable 20mph speed restriction - mandatory	£8,500	£1,700	£1,000	£11,200
6 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - zone with traffic calming, minimum	£25,000	£5,000	£1,000	£31,000
7 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - zone with traffic calming, maximum	£100,000	£20,000	£1,000	£121,000
8 Average intervention for schools on secondary distributor routes*	£19,150	£3,830	£1,000	£23,980

*Data costs are based on one Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) per site, before and after. In some locations more than one counter may be required.

**The network hierarchy has been used to inform the level of intervention that may be required at sites. Secondary distributor routes can vary considerably in local nature and for this reason are difficult to assign a predicted level of intervention in the absence of robust traffic data. Therefore, a random sample of schools located on secondary distributor routes has been taken and reviewed. Either Option 3 or 6 has been assigned and the proportionate split of interventions across the same has been used to generate an average cost for schemes on these parts of the network.

- 4.4 Site specific information has been reviewed to determine the likely level of intervention required at the 150 schools in Shropshire and the costs outlined in Table 1 have been assigned. As the Council motion refers to 20mph speed restrictions, only mandatory measures have been allocated. Further details on the potential types of intervention are contained in Section 6. Table 2 shows the estimated cost of delivering a programme of mandatory 20mph speed restrictions outside schools in Shropshire.

Table 2: Estimated cost of programme to deliver 20mph speed restrictions outside schools

Option	Works	Design	Data	Total
1 Do nothing	£0	£0	£0	£0
3 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - signs only	£407,000	£81,400	£74,000	£562,400
5 Variable 20mph speed restriction - mandatory	£42,500	£8,500	£5,000	£56,000
6 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - zone with traffic calming, minimum	£300,000	£60,000	£12,000	£372,000
7 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - zone with traffic calming, maximum	£1,200,000	£240,000	£12,000	£1,452,000

8	Average intervention for schools on secondary distributor routes*	£670,250	£134,050	£35,000	£839,300
Total cost - minimum traffic calming (excl. Option 7)					£1,829,700
Total cost - maximum traffic calming (excl. Option 6)					£2,909,700

- 4.5 The introduction of signs and infrastructure associated with 20mph speed restrictions outside of schools would present a future maintenance burden consequently incur additional revenue costs.
- 4.6 To form a more robust profile of the level of intervention required at each school, traffic data would need to be collected and some preliminary feasibility design work undertaken. This work would need to be procured through Shropshire Council's term engineering contract. Table 3 provides an indication of how much of the total estimated cost for the programme (Table 2) would need to be invested as a first stage.

Table 3: Preliminary costs to establish programme

Cost of before monitoring (50% of data cost)	£69,000.00
Cost of preliminary design (25% of design cost)	£115,987.50
Total	£184,987.50

Budget

- 4.7 20mph speed restriction schemes would typically be funded from the Integrated Transport Block capital grant (capital). This grant is 100% externally funded by the Department for Transport and is not augmented by Shropshire Council.
- 4.8 This grant provides funding support for transport capital improvement schemes costing less than £5m. The grant is intended to fund projects that aim to address improvements in a range of areas such as road safety, congestion, traffic signals, air quality, public transport infrastructure and accessibility. Demand upon this budget is always greater than the available financial resource.
- 4.9 The allocation for Shropshire has remained static at £1,626,000 since 2015/16. £500,000 of this grant has been allocated to the Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Package (SITP) major scheme annually since 2016/17 and will continue until 2021/22. As stated in this report, 20 mph interventions can be forecast with some relative certainty, this isn't the case for School streets and those costs will only emerge once initial discussions and liaison with schools have been completed.
- 4.10 In 2018, Shropshire Council reduced its entire Highways and Transport capital budget by £5m per annum. This reduction was initially put in place for two financial years: however, it has been extended to 2020/21. As such, there has been a proportionate impact on the Integrated Transport work. The focus of any remaining Integrated Transport budget has therefore been restricted to dealing statutory requirements in relation accident data led schemes and post-scheme safety reviews.
- 4.11 In some instances, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) may be appropriate, and this would be explored to determine if there was an ability to derive funding from this source.
- 4.12 Without additional capital funds identified and in consideration of the range of requirements of the Integrated Transport capital grant, a potential funding scenario is that following completion of SITP, £500,000 is reallocated to delivering a programme of 20mph speed restrictions county wide. This would diminish the ability to fund and support other Integrated

Transport elements such as community led road safety concerns, traffic signal enhancements and air quality and sustainable travel initiatives that may come forward. Staff costs will be included as the total cost recovery “capitalisation” of a scheme. On this basis, the financial profile would be as shown in Table 4.

- 4.13 Year 1 (2021/2022) would be focused on data collection and preliminary design options to effectively and efficiently programme future delivery. This work is required to be revenue funded and can be capitalised where the work results in the implementation of a scheme. Until this work is completed a fully forecast budget and programme cannot be provided. Where the feasibility work indicates that a scheme will not be progressed, this will remain as a revenue cost to the authority, and budgetary provision will have to be identified to fund the cost of work that does not progress, and a development budget to progress work and necessary studies would be required. Due to the current pressures on the highways budget this additional budget should be identified before the plan progresses.

Table 4: Potential financial profile for delivery

Potential level of intervention	Funding by financial year ('000s)						
	2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26	2026 /27	2027 /28	2028 /29
Minimum traffic calming	£185	£500	£500	£500	£145	-	-
Maximum traffic calming	£185	£500	£500	£500	£500	£500	£225

- 4.14 If the level of investment was reduced to an average of £300,000 per annum, the programme delivery period would be extended by three years for each potential implementation level.
- 4.15 The routine maintenance of any signs, lines, lights or other highway features associated with 20mph speed restrictions is provided through Shropshire Council’s revenue budgets for highways maintenance.
- 4.16 A new post would be required to be created on a fixed term contract to plan, prepare, coordinate delivery and provide ongoing monitoring. A fixed term posts a Band 11 (is required for this programme). This would give additional pressure to an already strained revenue budget; additional funds should be made available for this post.

5.0 Climate Change Appraisal

Energy and fuel consumption (buildings and / or travel)

- 5.1 NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guideline [NG70] published in 2017² suggests that evidence on using lower speed limits and encouraging smoother driving rather than 'stop-go' driving could help reduce emissions of air pollutants. The guideline suggests that this can be promoted by using “20 mph limits without physical measures to reduce speeds in urban areas where average speeds are already low (below around 24 mph) to avoid unnecessary accelerations and decelerations”. This has implications for sites where measured vehicle speeds suggest that additional physical measures are required to comply with Department for Transport guidelines that promote the self-regulation of 20mph speed restrictions.
- 5.2 If 20mph speed restrictions are implemented outside schools, the need to travel will not be reduced. There is, however, potential that more sustainable travel choices will be made for

² NICE. 2017. *Air Pollution: outdoor air quality and health*. [Online]. [Accessed 13 February 2020]. Available from: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng70>

the journey to school rather than use of the private car, if parents and pupils feel safer. In general, this would be more likely in urban rather than rural areas due to shorter journey to school distances.

- 5.3 A study commissioned by the Department for Transport³ in 2018 to evaluate the effectiveness of 20mph signed only speed limits suggested only small increases in the use of active travel modes following the introduction of a 20mph speed restriction. The report also highlights that “in addition to the need to address wider physical aspects of the walking and cycling environment, other personal and psychological factors are important including recognition of the benefits of changing behaviour and perception that it’s the right thing to do from a personal, social, environmental perspective; knowledge about the options available and experience of using these modes; and perceptions about time and cost implications.”
- 5.4 The Department for Education no longer collects mode of travel as a data item within the School Census and as such, it is not possible to determine whether there has been any demonstrable modal shift at schools where a 20mph speed restriction has already been implemented.

Renewable energy generation

- 5.5 The decision arising from this report is not considered to create opportunities to generate renewable energy.

Carbon offsetting or mitigation

- 5.6 A decision to introduce a 20mph speed restriction could be done in conjunction with wider initiatives to promote carbon reduction such as campaigns to promote active travel or to turn vehicle engines off when waiting outside of schools. Any such initiative would require dedicated resource and funding from Shropshire Council.

Climate Change adaptation

- 5.7 A decision to introduce 20mph speed restrictions could improve the health and well-being of Shropshire’s residents by improving actual safety by reducing the likely severity of road traffic accidents, perceived safety, and by encouraging the increased use of more sustainable and active modes of transport that can help people to become fitter and healthier. However, as outlined above, there is limited evidence to support large scale modal shift.

6.0 Background

The current approach to implementing 20mph speed restrictions in Shropshire

- 6.1 In Shropshire, the approach to implementing 20mph speed restrictions is based upon supporting the delivery of appropriate and achievable traffic management interventions in locations where the potential benefits are greatest and reflects current Department for Transport guidance (see section 10).
- 6.2 Members will recall that Scrutiny committee undertook significant work on 20mph and concluded that the current council policy remained. It would be appropriate as to update Scrutiny as appropriate on the scheme if this report is approved due to the nature of the

³ Atkins, AECOM, and Maher. 2018. *20mph Research Study: Process and Impact Evaluation Technical Report*. [Online]. [Accessed 13 February 2020]. Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/757302/20mph-technical-report.pdf

works and the finalised timetable and costs isn't yet able to be determined , states that in Shropshire 20mph restrictions should only be considered in the following locations:

- Outside schools or where there are high numbers of vulnerable road users.
- On urban residential streets in specific cases (where wide community support can be demonstrated, where there is evidence that streets are being used by people on foot and on bicycles and where the characteristics of the street are suitable) and,
- On town centre streets / pedestrian dominated areas.

6.3 The guidance notes states that 20mph speed restrictions must be implemented with clear objectives and with an understanding of potential future liabilities. The note outlines several key considerations that need to be considered if such schemes are to be progressed:

- Is a 20mph speed restriction the most suitable measure to implement to address a defined problem?
- Is it likely to have a measurable and positive speed reducing effect?
- Is there something that would better address the community's concerns?
- Is implementation of a 20mph speed limit going to need additional physical measures to promote self-compliance and is this suitable in the given location?

6.4 Several additional considerations that traffic engineers might employ are outlined as follows:

- Are there / or could there be significant numbers of non-motorised users?
- Are there / could there be high numbers of vulnerable road users present?
- Will a 20mph limit improve the perception of safety for non-motorised users?
- How will residents and users respond to a 20mph speed limit?
- Do the advantages of slower speeds outweigh the disadvantage of longer journey times for motorised traffic?
- Is there aesthetic sensitivity on the street? How much will a signed only speed limit add to sign clutter?
- Current guidance suggests that average speeds need to be 24mph or less for a signed only speed limit. If this average speed is already being achieved, is there a need for additional sign clutter?

Accident history

6.5 Under the Road Traffic Act 1988, Shropshire Council has a duty to conduct studies into accidents on roads, other than trunk roads, within the local authority area and take appropriate measures to prevent such accidents.

6.6 This duty is currently met through the identification and analysis of accident cluster sites on Shropshire's roads, and through the development of appropriate remedial measures at the highest priority sites. Accident cluster sites are based on reported personal injury accident data generated by West Mercia Police relating to Shropshire's highways.

6.7 Police data on reported personal injury accidents occurring outside schools has been reviewed for the last three years. An overview of the data is contained in Appendix B and shows that:

- Eleven accidents have been reported outside Shropshire schools. Three were serious and eight were slight in severity.
- Six accidents took place at high risk times (08:00 – 09:00 and 15:00 – 16:00). One was serious and five were slight in severity.

- Six casualties were associated with accidents occurring at high risk times. All casualties were pedestrians and four were children.
- For two of the accidents recorded at high risk times, whilst inappropriate vehicle speed was not a cause of the accidents, as in both cases vehicles were already moving slowly, faster moving traffic would have influenced the outcome of the accident. One school already has traffic calming in place.
- For two of the accidents recorded at high risk times, parking was a factor causing the accident.

How are 20mph speed restrictions implemented?

- 6.8 There are two main ways in which a 20mph speed restriction can be implemented: a 20mph speed limit or a 20mph zone.
- 6.9 20mph speed limits are signed only and do not require traffic calming but do need repeater signs. 20 mph limits are like other local speed limits and normally apply to individual or small numbers of roads. DfT evidence suggests that these limits typically only lead to small reductions in vehicle speeds. To implement a signed only limit, a mean vehicle speed of 24mph or less must be achieved.
- 6.10 A 20mph zone requires either traffic calming or signs at frequent intervals. At least one traffic calming feature must be placed in a zone. DfT evidence suggests that 20mph zones are more effective in reducing vehicle speeds than 20mph speed limits. Traffic calming involves the installation of specific physical measures to encourage lower traffic speeds. Some examples may be speed tables, central islands, road narrowing's or chicanes.
- 6.11 In both cases, there is a presumption that vehicle speeds are already low and that 20mph speed restricted areas are self-enforcing. The DfT's guidance "Setting Local Speed Limits" (2013) clearly states that to achieve compliance there should be no expectation on the police to provide additional enforcement beyond their routine activity. Therefore, in Shropshire general compliance needs to be achievable without reliance on enforcement.
- 6.12 The concept of introducing self-enforcing speed limits and zones may, in several circumstances, require supporting engineering measures to encourage compliance and correspondingly the costs of implementation can increase significantly.
- 6.13 In addition to the approaches outlined above, the highway authority is now able to introduce 20mph speed limits that apply only at certain times of day. Shropshire currently has one such system in place in Minsterley.

Current interventions at Shropshire schools

- 6.14 Table 5 provides a summary of the current interventions in place at Shropshire schools based on the nearest street to the main access.

Table 5: Summary of interventions at Shropshire schools

School type	No.	Number with existing 20mph speed restriction	Number with advisory 20mph speed restriction	Number with school safety zone
Primary	127	17	23	19
Secondary	20	5	6	5
Other*	3	0	1	0

Total	150	22	30	24
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*Other relates to special or through schools

6.15 Speed data that has been collected since 2016 is held for eight schools, all within 30mph speed restrictions. Average vehicle speeds were recorded at below 30mph for all schools, with speeds of below 24mph recorded at three schools.

6.16 22 schools sit within a designated conservation area, where consideration may need to be given to appropriate interventions that limit the aesthetic impact on the surrounding environment.

Potential types of scheme

6.17 There is no uniform approach to introducing 20mph speed restrictions due to the nature of specific streets, as outlined above, and the guidance provided by the Department of Transport (Section 10). Therefore, the implementation of 20mph speed restrictions outside schools could take several forms in Shropshire (Table 6):

6.18 A robust assessment or validation of specific interventions for individual schools cannot be undertaken without significant investment in traffic data collection and preliminary design advice in order to understand current vehicles flows and speeds. In the absence of this information currently, a desktop review of data relating to the highway outside schools has been carried out and an initial suggestion of the scale of intervention outside schools that do not currently have a mandatory 20mph speed restriction is shown in Table 7.

6.19 As the motion relates to speed restrictions, all proposals assume the implementation of mandatory 20mph speed restrictions and therefore any existing advisory 20mph speed restrictions would be replaced. Advisory 20mph speed restrictions are not enforceable however can be placed at most sites and present implementation cost savings.

Table 6: 20mph options

Option	Works
1 Do nothing	Current highway conditions are considered to promote a low vehicle speeds and further sign clutter will be detrimental to the surrounding environment / school is not on the public highway.
2 Advisory 20mph speed restriction - signs only	Advisory signs can be implemented on any street regardless of current vehicle speeds and there are no concerns about additional sign clutter.
3 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - signs only	Mean speeds of 24mph or below are recorded and there are no concerns about additional sign clutter. This type of limit typically only leads to small reductions in traffic speeds and are therefore most appropriate for areas where vehicle speeds are already low, and compliance can be achieved.
4 Variable 20mph speed restriction - advisory	Advisory signs can be implemented on any street regardless of current vehicle speeds and there are no concerns about additional sign clutter. These advisory speed limits only apply at certain times.
5 Variable 20mph speed restriction - mandatory	Traffic authorities have powers to introduce 20mph speed limits that apply only at certain times of day. These variable limits may be appropriate where a school is located on a road that is not suitable for a full-time 20 mph zone or limit i.e. a major through route.
6 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - zone with traffic calming (minimum & maximum)	Mean speeds of higher than 24mph are recorded and additional measures are required to promote general compliance and self-enforcement. These may be in the form of road narrowing, buildouts, speed cushions / tables etc.

6.20 In determining the likely level of intervention, consideration has been given to the network hierarchy (as outlined in Shropshire Council’s Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan, 2019) and any speed data collected in the last three years. Table 7 shows the general parameters that have been applied.

- 6.21 If a programme was to progress, more detailed investigation could highlight the following:
- Narrow roads are likely to already promote low vehicle speeds regardless of network hierarchy, therefore a signed only 20mph would have limited benefit. Similarly, secondary distributors in rural areas may not require additional traffic calming due to road width.
 - 18 schools that do not currently have a 20mph speed restriction are in conservation areas. The introduction of a 20mph speed restriction could be seen to add additional clutter with no defined benefits.
 - Some rural link roads may have speeds higher than the threshold for signed only speed restrictions and would require additional traffic calming.

Table 7: Allocation of potential interventions to Shropshire schools

Option	Parameters	Total
1 Do nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20mph restriction already in place • School not on the public highway 	24
3 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - signs only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed data collected over last three years suggests speeds that comply with DfT guidelines • School is on a link road or local access road 	74
5 Variable 20mph speed restriction - mandatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School on a strategic route where priority is given to long distance traffic movement 	5
6 Mandatory 20mph speed restriction - zone with traffic calming (minimum and maximum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is on a main distributor route where speeds are likely to be higher 	12
8 Average intervention for schools on secondary distributor routes*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is on a secondary distributor route with no clear intervention 	35

*The network hierarchy has been used to inform the level of intervention that may be required at sites. Secondary distributor routes can vary considerably in local nature and for this reason are difficult to assign a predicted level of intervention in the absence of robust traffic data. Therefore, a random sample of schools located on secondary distributor routes has been taken and reviewed. Either Option 3 or 6 has been assigned and the proportionate split of interventions across the same has been used to generate an average cost for schemes on these parts of the network.

Prioritisation

6.22 If a programme of introducing appropriate 20mph speed restrictions was progressed, schemes would be prioritised based on efficiency, using an estimate of potential pupil benefit. The ratio of the cost of the scheme over the number of pupils at an individual school or schools site would be calculated. Schemes that would deliver the greatest potential benefits per pupil would be progressed first.

Parking

6.23 Several issues outside schools relate to inappropriate parking and congestion. This can increase the likelihood of road accidents, either between vehicles or where pedestrians moving in between parked vehicles. The Highway Authority can introduce yellow zig-zag markings outside of school which can be used to keep the main access points to the school clear of parked vehicles. This can be particularly important at the start and end of the school day where there can be high pedestrian footfall focused on constrained access points. In Shropshire, there is a legacy of yellow zig-zag markings that have been introduced over time

which means that there is currently an inconsistency between schools and where parking enforcement activity is possible. This report provides the opportunity to review these issues.

6.24 If, because of the outcomes of this report, speed limit interventions are to be made at individual schools, it is recommended that parking behaviour near each school should be reviewed with a view to introducing Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) where appropriate and enabling parking enforcement activity.

7.0 Additional information

Current Department for Transport Guidance

7.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) gives traffic authorities the power to set local speed limits in situations where local needs and conditions suggest a speed limit which is lower than the national speed limit. The DfT Circular 01/2013 "Setting Local Speed Limits" is the key guidance relating to why and how speed limits are determined on local roads. This DfT Circular is used as a basis for reviewing Shropshire Council's position in relation to speed limit policy and strategy. A technical guidance notes outlining Shropshire's approach to implementing 20mph speed restrictions was approved by the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport in 2013.

7.2 The "Setting Local Speed Limits" Circular states that speed limits should:

- Be evidence-led and self-explaining.
- seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel, and
- encourage self-compliance.

7.3 The Circular also states that speed limits must be appropriate for the individual road and reflect local needs.

7.4 The Circular states that traffic authorities can, over time, introduce 20mph speed limits or zones on:

- Major streets where there are or could be, significant numbers of journeys on foot, and/or where pedal cycle movements are an important consideration, and this outweighs the disadvantage of longer journey times for motorised traffic.

7.5 This is in addition to:

- Residential streets in cities, towns and villages, particularly where the streets are being used by people on foot and on bicycles, there is community support, and the characteristics of the street are suitable.

Enforcement

7.6 West Mercia Police will not generally enforce 20mph speed restrictions unless specifically agreed. West Mercia Police currently follow the guidance contained in DfT's "Setting Local Speed Limits" (2013) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidance on speed enforcement (2013) in relation to the enforcement of 20mph speed restrictions. The DfT's guidance clearly states that to achieve compliance there should be no expectation on the police to provide additional enforcement beyond their routine activity and recommends that 20mph speed restrictions are self-regulating.

7.7 Where intelligence indicates deliberate breaches of 20mph speed restrictions, offenders can be targeted through enforcement subject to the availability of limited police resources. The

Police will enforce the law, however individual officers retain the right of discretion in the application of their powers.

Place Plans and Local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.8 Place plans are documents which focus on local infrastructure needs in communities across the county. There are eighteen Place Plans in the Shropshire Council area. The Place Plans are currently being updated, however there are currently four Place Plans that reference requests for 20mph speed restrictions outside four specific schools. There are seventeen entries, across all Place Plans, which reference general speed reduction and safety around schools.
- 7.9 To date, no CIL Local Expressions of Interest (EOI) have been received by Shropshire Council from Town and Parish Councils for specific 20mph speed restriction projects. One EOI has been received in relation to improvements to school parking. The Council must use CIL funds in accordance with the national CIL regulations on infrastructure to support the development of its area. Therefore, any use of CIL funds for these purposes would have to be justified against that criteria.

External examples

- 7.10 The Midlands Service Improvement Group for Highways has been contacted to determine the approaches of other authorities in implementing 20mph speed restrictions outside schools.
- 7.11 Telford and Wrekin Council is currently delivering a scheme to introduce advisory 20mph speed restrictions with flashing warning lights at peak school times, outside most schools in the authority area. The main objectives of this project are to encourage increased numbers of pupils walking or cycling to school, and to address local parking and congestion issues.
- 7.12 The decision to progress with advisory rather than mandatory 20mph speed restrictions was taken for the following reasons:
- Advice from West Mercia Police that speed restrictions under 30mph would not be enforced.
 - The requirement for statutory consultation associated with introducing a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was removed, which presented time and financial savings, and
 - For schools on higher speed roads, a mandatory 20mph speed restriction was considered unsuitable on the basis that the Department for Transport guidance recommends a mean speed of 24mph or below must be achieved to introduce a signed only mandatory 20mph speed restriction.
- 7.13 To determine the allocation of funding, schools were assessed against three factors and categorised as being low, medium or high risk:
- Collision data within 200m of the school site.
 - Any engineering measures implemented within the last five years, and
 - The level of involvement from the school in road safety education schemes.
- 7.14 By the end of August 2020, 36 schemes will have been implemented since August 2019, which equates to around 50% of schools.
- 7.15 Cheshire West and Chester Council have developed a programme to introduce signed only 20mph speed restrictions on roads where average speeds were below 24 mph, in line with Department for Transport guidance. However, the Council decided to deviate from this

guidance and apply the signed only approach to roads outside schools where the average speed was below 30 mph.

7.16 Because of the above, where there have been issues of non-compliance and pressure to enforce, additional measures such as shorter spacing between repeater signs and 20 roundels on the road have been investigated. In reviewing earlier schemes, it has been found that where terminal signs have been installed some distance from a school entrance, the average speeds did not drop to below 24mph.

7.17 Officers have recently been asked to produce a report that details the costs to implement traffic calmed schemes outside schools where average speeds are between 24 and 30 mph. For school locations where, average speeds are above 30mph, advisory 20 mph speed limits at the start and end of the school day linked to school warning flashing wigwag signs are the only option.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 There is no single prescriptive approach to introducing 20mph speed restrictions or School Streets outside schools. To reflect current guidance and different environments around schools, careful consideration should be given to appropriate measures that can demonstrate defined benefits.

8.2 In Shropshire, the current approach to implementing 20mph speed restrictions is based upon supporting the delivery of appropriate and achievable traffic management interventions in locations where the potential benefits are greatest; the development of clear objectives and understanding potential future liabilities.

8.3 Where existing vehicles speeds are already low, there could be a low return on investment where resources could be allocated to higher risk sites.

8.4 20mph speed restrictions should be self-enforcing and on this basis West Mercia Police do not routinely enforce these speed limits. Therefore, there are risks associated with managing the public's perceptions of what can realistically be achieved in terms of enforcement.

8.5 A review of reported accident data does not suggest a history of speed related accidents outside schools in Shropshire. Shropshire Council already undertakes accident studies and remedial work at high risk accident sites.

8.6 Other options that can reduce the risk to vulnerable road users at peak times, such as reviewing parking controls, could be considered.

8.7 In some cases, the type of intervention can have a direct environmental impact on air quality and the aesthetics of the surrounding area.

8.8 Further support is likely to be required to promote modal shift to healthier and more sustainable transport.

8.9 Out of 150 schools, 126 would require intervention if the aim to achieve 20mph speed restrictions outside most schools was progressed, other interventions may also be identified, and these may be more suitable than 20 mph and this work needs to progress.

8.10 Significant investment in collecting up to date traffic data, and in preliminary design advice, is required to make a robust assessment of the level of intervention required at individual

schools. This must be funded from revenue in the first instance but can be capitalised later if a scheme is progressed.

- 8.11 The cost of delivering a programme of mandatory 20mph speed restrictions outside schools is estimated to be between £1.8M and £2.9M, depending upon the scale of intervention required, and could take between five and seven years to deliver, if commenced in 2022/23.
- 8.12 Scheme design and delivery would be financed using Integrated Transport capital funding. Resources would need to be diverted from other streams of work typically funded the Integrated Transport budget to support this initiative.
- 8.13 No consultation has been carried out. If the decision is made to proceed with rolling out a programme of 20mph speed restrictions outside schools across Shropshire, the consultation responses from different schools and surrounding neighbourhoods will need to be considered.
- 8.14 There are several advisory 20mph speed restrictions outside schools in Shropshire. Advisory 20mp speed restrictions can demonstrate cost savings however they present the same challenges in terms of enforcement and sign clutter. If a programme of introducing mandatory 20mph speed restrictions outside Shropshire schools was taken forward, all existing advisory 20mph speed limits would be removed.
- 8.15 If the report is approved, then Scrutiny Committee should be provided with updates on programme development, costs and timescales.

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

Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). 2013. *Speed Enforcement Policy Guidelines 2011-2015: Joining Forces for Safer Roads*. [Online]. [Accessed: 27-02-2020]. Available from: <http://library.college.police.uk/docs/appref/ACPO-Speed-Enforcement-Guidance.pdf>

Atkins, AECOM, and Maher. 2018. *20mph Research Study: Process and Impact Evaluation Technical Report*. [Online]. [Accessed 13 February 2020]. Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/757302/20mph-technical-report.pdf

Department for Transport. 2013. *Circular 01/2013 "Setting Local Speed Limits*. [Online]. [Accessed: 27-02-2020]. Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/63975/circular-01-2013.pdf

NICE. 2017. *Air Pollution: outdoor air quality and health*. [Online]. [Accessed 13 February 2020]. Available from: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng70>

Road Traffic Act 1988. [Online]. [Accessed: 05-03-2020]. Available from: Norwich: The Stationery Office. Available from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/52/contents>

Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. [Online]. [Accessed: 05-03-2020]. Available from: Norwich: The Stationery Office. Available from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27/contents>

Shropshire Council Highways and Transport Asset Management Steering Group. 2019. *Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan, June 2019*. Internal document.

Shropshire Council Place Plans [Online]. [Accessed 08-04-2020]. Available from: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/place-plans/view-the-place-plans/>

Shropshire Council. 2013. *Technical Guidance Note 1/13: 20mph speed restrictions*. [Online]. [Accessed: 27-02-2020]. Available from: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/Data/Decision%20Making%20Session%20by%20Portfolio%20Holder%20for%20Highways%20and%20Transport/20131220/Agenda/1A%20Appendix%20A%20Technical%20guidance%2020mph.pdf>

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Steve Davenport, Portfolio Holder - Highways and Transport

Local Member

All

Appendices

A: Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

Appendix A: Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

Part One Screening Record

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change
20mph speed restrictions outside schools in Shropshire

Name of lead officer carrying out the screening
Victoria Merrill, Highway Policy and Strategy Manager

Decision, review and monitoring
--

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	✓	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		✓

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

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations
<p>At this stage, the potential impact in equality terms across Protected Characteristic groupings is not yet known. It is envisaged that the impact will be low to medium positive for the groupings of Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, and Social Inclusion, as there will be potential safety gains for children and families in these groupings.</p> <p>A review of police data on reported personal injury accidents indicates that there is no evidence to suggest the occurrence of killed or seriously injured accidents outside schools at high risk times over the last three years, or accidents outside schools that are speed related.</p> <p>Shropshire Council has a statutory duty under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to conduct studies into accidents on roads, other than trunk roads, within the local authority area and take appropriate measures to prevent such accidents. Through the annual identification and assessment of accident cluster sites in conjunction with routine liaison with West Mercia Police, any sites with known highway risks are already prioritised for funding for appropriate remedial measures.</p> <p>Based on the above, if a programme of implementation of 20mph speed restrictions outside all schools is not progressed, this does not mean that there is likely to be an increase in the number of killed and seriously injured accidents outside schools in Shropshire. However, in general, the presence of a 20mph can support reductions in road traffic collision frequency and casualties and a lower risk of fatal injury to casualties where collisions occur. This is particularly in relation to potentially high numbers of vulnerable young people who may be present on the highway at the start and end of the school day.</p>

In addition, where vehicles are travelling at low speeds the likelihood and severity of road traffic accidents is reduced. Therefore, the introduction of 20mph speed restrictions outside schools where a defined reduction in actual vehicle speeds is achieved, will reduce the risk of accident and killed or seriously injured casualties. However, it is considered that where vehicle speeds are already low, the introduction of a 20mph speed restrictions will add no further reduction in risk.

Whilst a defined reduction in travelled vehicle speeds can make some streets easier to negotiate for non-motorised users, some physical measures may present challenges to some disability groups, people with mobility impairments or vulnerable users. This also includes people with temporary mobility difficulties, such people who are pregnant or families with young children. The prevalence of these users may be exacerbated at locations, for example outside schools. Where these measures pose such challenges, the negative impact will need to be mitigated through consultation, communication and engagement. Shropshire Council may also need to consider that speed reduction is not the only measure that can reduce risk to highway users at school times, for example in some cases vehicles speeds may already be slow but existing parking arrangements present challenges to the user groups outlined above. Again, this will need to be reviewed through consultation and engagement.

If Shropshire Council makes the decision to progress with the implementation of 20mph speed restrictions outside of all schools in Shropshire, in whatever engineering format, consultation will need to be carried out with the individual schools in the first instance to establish any travel / access requirements and the level of support for any potential proposal. The Highways Department will work in conjunction with the Learning and Skills Department to establish appropriate consultation mechanisms with schools. Depending upon the type of intervention, consultation may also need to be carried out with neighbouring properties, both residential and otherwise.

The Council will also be mindful of the need to look at the impacts and arrangements for rural schools and urban schools alike, recognising that there will be differing physical road layouts which could pose both positive and negative influences on the potential scale of intervention at different schools. This could include narrow rural roads, practical limitations on access past sites, and suitable parking for residents and for school users. Consideration will also be given to the visual impact of any highway infrastructure installed as part of this programme, if it is progressed, on Shropshire's natural and historic environments. Attention will be given to schools that are in either historically sensitive environments or in rural villages.

Any proposals will be developed will be done so in collaboration with Shropshire Council's term engineering consultants and in line with current national guidance. Where possible, and appropriate, specific user groups or local interest groups will be consulted.

Where mandatory speed limits are to be implemented, statutory consultees will be contacted.

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

Any scheme designs will be developed in consultation the school and wider local community, where appropriate. Depending on the scale of intervention, safety audits are required before and after construction of a scheme, which will consider the needs of end users.

Local Members will be consulted as part of the development of schemes within their respective areas and encouraged to participate with any engagement with schools /

communities and act as a first point of contact post scheme development for any unforeseen issues arising.

As part of developing the response to Council on the motion outlined, the Midlands Service Improvement Group for Highways has been contacted to determine what approaches other authorities had considered with regard to 20mph speed restrictions outside of schools. Responses are outlined in Section 7 of the report. The Highways Department will continue to review experience and best practice arising from comparable local authority areas as well as any national guidance in relation to the implementation of 20mph speed restrictions.

Associated ESIIAs

Shropshire Council. 2019. *Managing Highway Risks: Appendix C ESIIA*. (Cabinet report 13-02-2019, p289). [Online]. Shrewsbury, Shropshire Council. [Accessed: 23-03-2020]. Available from: <http://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/g3685/Public%20reports%20pack%2013th-Feb-2019%2011.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

Shropshire Council. 2018. *Shropshire Local Plan Partial Review: Third Stage: Preferred Sites ESIIA*. (Cabinet report 07-11-2018, Item 97). [Online. Shrewsbury, Shropshire Council. [Accessed: 08-04-2020]. Available from: <http://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=3681&Ver=4>

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

Energy and fuel consumption (buildings and / or travel)

NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guideline [NG70] published in 2017 suggests that evidence on using lower speed limits and encouraging smoother driving rather than 'stop-go' driving could help reduce emissions of air pollutants. The guideline suggests that this can be promoted by using "20 mph limits without physical measures to reduce speeds in urban areas where average speeds are already low (below around 24 mph) to avoid unnecessary accelerations and decelerations". This has implications for sites where measured vehicle speeds suggest that additional physical measures are required to comply with Department for Transport guidelines that promote the self-regulation of 20mph speed restrictions.

If 20mph speed restrictions are implemented outside schools, the need to travel will not be reduced. There is however, potential that more sustainable travel choices will be made for the journey to school rather than use of the private car, if parents and pupils feel safer. In general, this would be more likely in urban rather than rural areas due to shorter journey to school distances.

A study commissioned by the Department for Transport in 2018 to evaluate the effectiveness of 20mph signed only speed limits suggested only small increases in the use of active travel modes following the introduction of a 20mph speed restriction. The report also highlights that "in addition to the need to address wider physical aspects of the walking and cycling environment, other personal and psychological factors are important including recognition of the benefits of changing behaviour and perception that it's the right thing to do from a personal, social, environmental perspective; knowledge about the options available and experience of using these modes; and perceptions about time and cost implications." The Department for Education no longer collects mode of travel as a data item within the School Census and as such, it is not possible to determine whether there has been any

demonstrable modal shift at schools where a 20mph speed restriction has already been implemented.

Renewable energy generation

The decision arising from this report is not considered to create opportunities to generate renewable energy.

Carbon offsetting or mitigation

A decision to introduce a 20mph speed restriction could be done in conjunction with wider initiatives to promote carbon reduction such as campaigns to promote active travel or to turn vehicle engines off when waiting outside of schools. Any such initiative would require dedicated resource and funding from Shropshire Council.

Climate Change adaptation


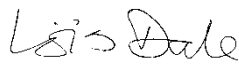
A decision to introduce 20mph speed restrictions could improve the health and well-being of Shropshire’s residents by improving actual safety by reducing the likely severity of road traffic accidents, perceived safety, and by encouraging the increased use of more sustainable and active modes of transport that can help people to become fitter and healthier. However, as outlined above, there is limited evidence to support large scale modal shift.

Corporate Plan

Shropshire Council’s Corporate Plan 2019/20 to 2021/22 provides a guide to the corporate approach towards prioritising and measuring overall economic, environmental and community outcomes:

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/shropshire-council/corporate-plan/>

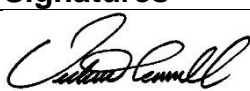
Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
Lead officer carrying out the screening		5 th March 2020
Any internal support*		
Any external support** Mrs Lois Dale Rurality and Equalities Specialist		17 th 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

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer’s name		5 th March 2020

Accountable officer's name*



5th March 2020

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

B. Detailed Screening Assessment

Aims of the service change and description

At its meeting on 19th December 2019, Shropshire Council passed a motion to support the principle of a 20-mph speed limit outside all schools in the county and asks officers to bring a report to Council within 6 months to consider how this could be implemented. This ESIIA supports the report.

Shropshire Council's current approach for dealing with 20mph speed restrictions is embedded in Shropshire Council's Road Safety Policy and is based upon supporting the delivery of appropriate and achievable traffic management interventions in locations where the potential benefits are greatest.

The technical guidance note that was approved by the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport in 2013 states that in Shropshire 20mph restrictions should only be considered in the following locations:

- Outside schools or where there are high numbers of vulnerable road users;
- On urban residential streets in specific cases (where wide community support can be demonstrated, where there is evidence that streets are being used by people on foot and on bicycles and where the characteristics of the street are suitable) and,
- On town centre streets / pedestrian dominated areas.

The guidance notes states that 20mph speed restrictions must be implemented with clear objectives and with an understanding of potential future liabilities. There are several key considerations that need to be considered if such schemes are to be progressed:

- Is a 20mph speed restriction the most suitable measure to implement to address a defined problem?
- Is it likely to have a measurable and positive speed reducing effect?
- Is there something that would better address the community's concerns?
- Is implementation of a 20mph speed limit going to need additional physical measures to promote self-compliance and is this suitable in the given location?

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

If this approach were to be adopted by Shropshire Council, and funding identified to implement the associated highway schemes, it would affect all those who live work or visit Shropshire. It would affect residents living near schools in Shropshire and individuals associated with attending, working at or visiting Shropshire Schools.

Evidence used for screening of the service change

This paper associated with the ESIIA has been written in response a motion passed by Shropshire Council on 19th December 2019 to support the principle of a 20-mph speed limit outside all schools in the county and asked officers to bring a report to Council within six months to consider how this could be implemented. The extent to which service will be changed will be dependent on decisions made by Councillors in response to this report.

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 19th December 2019 can be accessed via the following link:

<http://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=125&MId=3882&Ver=4>

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

Consultation has not yet been carried out.

Consultation will be carried out on a site by site basis, depending on the outcome of the Council’s decision and the level of scheme proposed. Consultation is likely to be a combination of meetings with schools, letter drops to affected properties (both residential or otherwise) and online information available via Shropshire Council’s website.

Where a mandatory 20mph speed restriction is to be implemented with an associated Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), Shropshire Council are required to undertake a statutory consultation exercise which lasts for 21 days. Where physical traffic calming measures are proposed, Shropshire Council is required to notify customers of the proposals and comments can be made over a 21-day period.

Initial assessment for each group

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

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group e.g. child for whom there are safeguarding concerns e.g. older person with disability)		.	✓ Potential accident likelihood and severity is reduced for children, young people and all using the highway near a school	
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes)			✓	

including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)			Lower vehicle speeds may make some streets easier to negotiate however, some physical measures can provide challenges to some disability groups.	
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			✓ Potential accident likelihood and severity is reduced for children, young people and all using the highway near a school	
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)				✓
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non-conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				✓
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				✓
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)			✓ Reduced vehicle speeds outside schools may make it more attractive to people to use	

			sustainable modes of travel to school.	
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Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations

As outlined in report to Council: Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal and Climate Change Appraisal.

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 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 standalone for a member of the public to read.

The approach helps to identify whether any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions or projects, may have an adverse impact on a 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 behavior, for contractors to read and sign. It may well not be 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 must 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 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 maximize 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 about equality, where you are commissioning a service or product from them;
- If you are setting out the standards of behavior 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 regarding these groupings.

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.

Appendix B: Summary of recorded personal injury accidents outside schools

Police data on reported personal injury accidents has been reviewed for the last three years to determine how many accidents have been recorded on streets outside schools in Shropshire. The following tables provide a summary of the findings.

Table 1: Accidents reported outside Shropshire schools (three years up to March 2020)

School	No. accidents	Accident severity			Number of casualties*	Number of pedestrian casualties	Number of child casualties
		Fatal	Serious	Slight			
Primary	8	0	2	6	19	4	4
Secondary	3	0	1	2	3	3	2
Special	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	11	0	3	8	22	7	6

Table 2: Accidents reported outside Shropshire schools (three years up to March 2020) at school times**

School	No. accidents	Accident severity			Number of casualties*	Number of pedestrian casualties	Number of child casualties	Speed factor***	Other school issue****
		Fatal	Serious	Slight					
Primary	3	0	0	3	3	3	2	1	1
Secondary	2	0	1	2	3	3	2	1	1
Special	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6	0	1	5	6	6	4	2	2

* One accident may result in multiple casualties

**School time relates to 08:00 – 09:00 and 15:00 – 16:00 as these times are when school pupils are most likely to be moving around the highway network.

*** The recorded details for each accident have been reviewed and a judgement made about whether speed would have been a contributory factor in causing the accident, or in affecting the outcome of the accident.

**** The recorded details for each accident have been reviewed and a judgement made about whether another issue relating to the presence of the school was a contributory factor in causing the accident, or in affecting the outcome of the accident (parking for example).

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- 1.4 The development will retain economic benefits within the Shropshire economy and provide a range of financial opportunities to the council in respect of the current housing stock for some of the most vulnerable people Adult Social Care supports.
- 1.5 It is widely recognised that providing suitable alternative Supported Living homes, such as Greenacres, is a more cost-effective, flexible way of helping people live more stable, productive lives, increasing their independence and works particularly well for adults who face complex challenges such as mental health problems; learning/physical disabilities or sensory problems; older people; autism or those with multiple conditions/diagnosis (learning disability, autism, mental health) have spent time in hospital/rehabilitation due to brain injury; adults and young people with a disability who have spent time in residential care and are moving towards independent living; transitioning to adulthood and/or who display behaviours that challenge. There are many examples of people with complex needs living happily and successfully in their local community when they are in the right environment with bespoke personalised support that meets their individual needs.
- 1.6 In addition, we intend to develop a different model to future proof buildings to support the demographic demand; be more creative about the range of Assisted Technology used to support individuals' independence and provide alternative individual living units with communal areas, sharing staff to lower care costs.
- 1.7 Assistive technology is any product or service designed to enable independence or any device or system that allows individuals to perform tasks that they would otherwise be unable to do or increases the ease and safety with which tasks can be performed. Greenacres is influenced by and will use a wide range of stand-alone, supportive but unobtrusive services and equipment, from telecare, telehealth, monitors, sensors, seizure monitors, to more sophisticated systems. Assistive Technology will present Adult Social Care with a range of evidence and data that will be continually monitored, identify any problems or trends so corrective urgent action can be taken to safeguard everyone. It includes computer software, handheld devices or video call systems that increase social interaction and family contact. Using assistive technology to support personalisation in social care can help individuals to complete daily tasks and structure their daily (day and night) routine, such as personal care, cooking and laundry.
- 1.8 Adult Social Care have carried out extensive research and will commission a wide range of assistive technology that will transform how Supported Living is delivered. The benefits promote and maintain independence, educate, entertain and stimulate social interaction to enrich lives and improve outcomes. Tenants are increasingly tech-savvy and use devices like laptops, tablets and smartphones in their homes. Using smart devices and technology will provide a wealth of data that helps professionals provide the highest level of care and can alert carers to any potential problems such as a health or medication so appropriate action can be taken to reduce potential risks. By teaching individuals how to use bespoke assistive technology, it will reduce the number

of care and support hours required as the individual will be able to carry out tasks independently over time.

- 1.9 The project is linked to an existing day facility opportunity on the same site at Greenacres Farm and is an extension of the farm that already provides a range of facilities and day care opportunities to vulnerable people. It is not a stand-alone development. The day services facility will provide opportunities and support to the new proposed residents of the apartments outlined in this proposal. In addition to this, the empty house situated at Greenacres, will be converted to incorporate a variety of uses to suit the needs of the residents living in the apartments, along with the local community. Combining these three services on one site will allow them to complement each other and jointly support adults with a learning disability, autism and/or mental health needs to provide a range of opportunities, mutual benefits and activities that promotes independent living to not only the residents living in Greenacres apartments but the wider community.

2. Recommendations

That Council

- 2.1 Approve a financial investment of up to £3.125m in accordance with the Outline Business Case (Appendix 1) to build eight supported living accommodation apartments, a communal shared area, internal courtyard and outdoor space on the Greenacres Farm site.
- 2.2 Approve the use of Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) investment to finance the development of the Greenacres Farm Supported Living project.
- 2.3 Approve the submission of a suitable application for planning permission to build 8 Supported Living apartments.
- 2.4 Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Adult Services to take appropriate steps to implement the decisions set out above in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services and Climate Change.

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 There are several planning restrictions that will need to be overcome in order to gain planning approval:
- Existing planning Policy CS5 Countryside & Green Belt (p. 65) of the Core Strategy together with Policy MD7a of the Local Plan (SAMDev) that restricts new residential developments in the countryside and are not normally permitted. The policies do, however, facilitate some exceptions, such as

conversion and appropriate new affordable accommodation to meet a local need identifying a preference for locations, which is not connected with a settlement are linked to existing developments or enterprises. This is applicable to Greenacres as Adult Social Care have identified the need; the accommodation will be affordable housing and the day opportunities already operates at Greenacres.

- Policy CS11 Type and Affordability of Housing (pp. 85-89) of the Core Strategy strictly controls new market housing but there is some flexibility on housing that specifically identifies specialist affordable housing to meet a local need. Greenacres will provide good quality, sustainable housing of the right size, type and tenure of affordable housing. Vulnerable tenants will pay social rent.
 - Shropshire’s planning supplementary guidance Type & Affordability of Housing, the National Planning Policy Framework
- 3.2 Risks have been reduced following various discussions with planning officers concentrating around advice on affordable housing as building does not comply with existing planning policy. An Exceptional Needs Case (Appendix 2) has been produced demonstrating the need and benefits of the development and how key planning issues have been addressed in the pre-planning application stage.
- 3.3 The Care Quality Commission’s (CQC) “Registering the right support” sets out the expectation that people with a learning disability and/or autism have the right to the same opportunities as anyone else to live satisfying valued lives and to be treated with dignity and respect. The service model, Building the Right Support, refers specifically to “people with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges, including those with a mental health condition”. They should have a home, be able to develop and maintain relationships, and get the support they need to live healthy, safe and fulfilling lives in the community. Greenacres underpins the principles of both models. Registering the right support currently limits the number of builds in one setting to 8 self-contained apartments.
- 3.4 A screening Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached as Appendix 3 to this report. Building the supported living units at Greenacres Farm is anticipated to have a positive impact for young adults, as the individuals identified to live in the apartments are currently managed by the Preparing for Adulthood Team and are drawn from 14 to 25 year olds transitioning from childhood to adulthood. The positive equality impact will be across the Protected Characteristic groupings, as well as around social inclusion. The first cohort will be young adult males, and there is accordingly an anticipated medium to potentially high positive impact for these people with regard to Age, Disability, and Sex.
- 3.5 This is because the current specialist provision is not available in Shropshire and has and continues to result in individuals leaving Shropshire to live in residential settings or single occupancy homes, especially those with complex needs. This can result in people feeling isolated and lonely and away from their

family support, creating high negative impacts in equality terms and in terms of their health and wellbeing.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 An Outline Business Case (OBC) (Appendix 1) has been prepared for the project which includes the financial effect on both capital and revenue expenditure and incorporates a 25-year income and expenditure cash profile.
- 4.2 The sum of £3.125m is being requested to complete the whole development of the site as detailed. £2.600m construction costs, £0.375m professional fees, £0.020m furniture, £0.005m planning fees and £0.125m contingency.
- 4.3 Using an already identified cohort of individuals that have been deemed to be likely to be most suitable to be placed into the new supported living accommodation, savings totalling £0.289m per annum have been calculated based on a comparison of future care costs against existing costs of those individuals to Shropshire Council. Whilst the care needs of individuals when the building would be ready cannot be certain at this point in time, a long list of potential individuals have been identified and our knowledge of demand gives certainty that all eight properties will be utilised as soon as ready and savings will be realised from the point of completion.
- 4.4 The financial modelling for the project assumes the following:
- Funding the development through Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) borrowing based on a 25-year annuity loan with a forecast interest rate of 3%.
 - Annual borrowing costs of £0.179m.
 - Annual repairs and maintenance costs of £0.005m.
 - Annual revenue savings of ££0.289m.
 - Annual income of £0.060m through a lease agreement with a housing association company to manage the facility
- 4.5 The financial modelling demonstrates annual borrowing costs for the project of £0.179m, net annual cashflow of £0.165m, a good net yield of 5.26% and a payback period of 27 years.
- 4.6 The VAT status of this project will be clarified prior to the commencement of construction.
- 4.7 On top of this, it has been estimated that new income totalling £0.060m could be received by agreeing a lease arrangement with a housing association company to manage the property. Shropshire Council will retain ownership of the asset and will be responsible for the external repairs and maintenance of the building. They will enter into a formal agreement (suggested ten years) with a Registered Housing Provider who will manage the property on a day to day basis and be responsible for internal repairs and maintenance of the building. Final terms to be structured and agreed by the Estates Department.

- 4.8 In addition to that immediate saving, there will be future preventative savings, for example individuals currently being funded through CCGs, but likely to return to Shropshire Council responsibility, or currently Children's funded but soon to transition to Adults with high cost packages can move onto this scheme at a reduced cost. These savings have been estimated at £0.418m per annum.
- 4.9 Whilst a payback period of 27 years would be considered a long payback in a commercial investment, the fact remains that the savings generated in social care are able to pay the borrowing costs as well as generating a further budgetary saving. Furthermore, the payback calculation does not take into account any preventative savings on future expenditure, estimated as above at £0.418m per annum. Whilst this is not considered a direct budgetary saving, it will have a huge impact on managing the level of growth required in future year's budgets.
- 4.10 The project will result in reduced time, expenses and travel time for social care practitioners and family and friends to travel in a car to see loved ones in high cost residential out of county placements, which can be anywhere in England and Wales. This will have a direct reduction in the amount of travel time and subsequent carbon omissions travelling within Shropshire to one central location.

5. Climate Change Appraisal

- 5.1 The design and construction of the project will incorporate measures to maximise energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions during both the construction and the operation of the new buildings. The design of the scheme will reflect 'whole lifetime' costs and will reduce carbon emissions through a 'fabric first' approach to insulation, low-energy lighting and heating and through the inclusion of renewable energy generation, for example solar PV panels and air-source heat pump for space and water heating. The buildings will be designed to be durable and resilient in the face of the more extreme weather conditions (very high or low temperatures and very wet, dry or windy weather) which are expected as the result of climate change. This includes capturing rainwater and battery storage for self-consumption. This will be further strengthened by applying a range of innovative Assistive Technologies as part of the original design and construction which will guarantee endurance and longevity of the building.
- 5.2 Shropshire Council would like to adopt a [PassivHaus](#) approach to the design, which is a pre-fabricated modular house. PassivHaus are super-efficient buildings and have enormous benefits as they are cheaper to run than conventional housing. Buildings are constructed and brought on site from a factory; are a quicker method of construction and is an alternative to it being built on site. The units will be placed on a concrete foundation by a crane and hooked up to utilities.
- 5.3 PassivHaus are prefabricated modular housing and generates significantly better internal air quality which benefits the health of occupants relative to a conventional design. One such example is [Haus4one](#) which is a relocatable

one-person home. The units can be either fully manufactured offsite, delivered and installed ready for occupation within hours or delivered as a structural thermal envelope ready for your contractor to finish. Larger units are also available which would be applicable to the 8 units proposed for Greenacres.

- 5.4 The PassivHaus methodology is focussed on the design and construction of the building. It relies on good planning to take advantage of solar gain, very high levels of insulation, extreme attention to detail to restrict air loss and very efficient mechanical and electrical (M&E) services. Renewable energy systems such as photovoltaic cells to generate electricity, solar thermal systems to pre-heat water and electric 'heat pumps' will also be employed.
- 5.5 The result would be a property with very low running costs and excellent air quality.
- 5.6 The project will comply with Shropshire Council's Sustainable Construction Policy. As the development is in excess of £1m the project will undergo a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) assessment which will assist meeting climate change and reaching a carbon neutral stance. The cost and effort necessary to enhance the sustainability of the project will be significant, but the results will be of benefit to the service users, the Council and the wider community.
- 5.7 This is the first time Shropshire Council will have developed a PassivHaus so Greenacres will be the first example. The advantages include zero carbon, huge amounts of insulation, triple-glazed windows, draught proofing and controlling ventilation. The rate at which heat and energy escapes is so slow that the running costs are really low.

6. Background

- 6.1 It is the Council's duty under the Care Act to meet the assessed accommodation needs of vulnerable people. The current specialist provision is not available in Shropshire and has and continues to result in individuals leaving Shropshire to live in residential settings or single occupancy homes, especially those with complex needs that can result in people feeling isolated and lonely and away from their family support.
- 6.2 Many local authorities have moved away from the provision of residential care services to Supported Living options. Some people with complex needs, such as those identified for Greenacres, will have a social care assessment carried out in which they have expressed a wish and the social care professional has assessed them as being capable of living with support in "ordinary housing". Supported Living is an approach that promotes independence and provides a range of housing for people as an alternative to living in a residential care setting or nursing home but find it difficult to cope at home on their own. The fundamental principle of Supported Living is that people live in their own home, which can be shared with others, or on their own, and the person receives the care and support commissioned by the council as identified in their support plan. This may include personal care; financial help to manage money, bills and

benefits; accessing education opportunities and finding voluntary or paid employment; taking part in social and leisure activities and community life; making and maintaining friendships and relationships; using technology and/or equipment to make independent living and everyday tasks, such as shopping and cooking, easier.

- 6.3 Under Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP), Building the Right Homes and CQC's guidance; Registering the Right Support, the evidence suggests many people end up in hospital following disrupted housing and support arrangements, with many experiencing a lack of choice and control over their lives and the environment in which they are living. Poorly thought-out environments can increase behaviour that challenges and it is clear that just 'slotting' people into settings without really understanding the needs of the person, in partnership with them and their families, is unlikely to lead to people living settled and healthy lives in the community.
- 6.4 This is not a new use but an extension and diversification of an existing use. There is a shortage of suitable accommodation in Shropshire that delivers the needs for highly complex individuals, in addition to more expensive out of county placements. We need to increase the amount of available supported living accommodation for people with a learning disability, autism, mental health or those with a multiple conditions/diagnosis. We acknowledge that having a range of bespoke housing options based on each individual's needs and preferences has a positive impact on health and wellbeing. The project aims to shift provision towards a model that gives people security of tenure and housing rights, with a separate contract for their support enabling people to have choice about their social care provider without jeopardising their home.
- 6.5 For such complex needs individuals, previous experience identifies rural areas achieve better results because they are better supported in a rural setting initially when coming out of secure residential settings. One of the reasons the location was chosen is the belief that rural settings are better because of the reduced noise levels, leading individuals to tend to feel less overwhelmed by their surroundings. This ultimately leads to a more settled, calming and stable living environment and behaviours. It is believed that having access to agricultural, livestock and horticulturally based activities on site will prove beneficial to support people with anxiety and mental health conditions. In addition, opportunities will be considered as to a range of voluntary opportunities or paid employment to residents through the day service, for example the farm shop. Other benefits during delivery include employment while the scheme is under way and the provision of paid and voluntary job opportunities.

7. Additional Information

- 7.1 Adult Social Care, Property Services Group (PSG), Shropshire Council Highways, Planning Services and a range of contractors and sub-contractors will work together to commission and build a super-efficient building that meets an identified local need and delivers against National and Regional housing policies. The project is based on 100% affordability.

7.2 The geographical location of Greenacres was chosen to deliver Shropshire’s specialised housing for some of the most vulnerable individuals we support. This is favourable over a more urban location due to the risk urban locations may pose to individuals with complex needs, for example road awareness and increased risk of harm and abuse. Currently there is nowhere in Shropshire for such individuals to live and this is the reason why we would like to bring them back into county, to be near family, friends and their support networks.

Conclusions

- 8.1 The development will utilise land in our ownership which we will retain for future use to develop and support bigger project initiatives by continuing to provide the type of Supported Living housing that is required by young people with complex needs.
- 8.2 The type of Supported Living accommodation at Greenacres will provide good quality, sustainable housing of the right size, type and tenure of affordable housing. Vulnerable tenants will pay Social Rent.
- 8.3 PSG are aware of the planning risks and constraints of the site and they have made allowances across all areas which are documented in PSG’s Feasibility Study Report (Appendix 4). Their intention is to develop this project as a highly sustainable and independent facility and to that effect we have made allowances to cover for this as identified in the feasibility report. PSG will undertake further studies, investigations and designs to mitigate all issues, concerns and risks raised before any formal planning application is submitted or tender released.

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

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Cllr. Dean Carroll

Local Member Nick Bardsley

Appendices :

Appendix 1 - Outline Business Case

Appendix 2 - Exceptional Needs Case

Appendix 3 - Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment

Appendix 4 - PSG’s Feasibility Study

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Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)
Part One Screening Record 2020

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change
Proposed Supported Living accommodation at Greenacres Farm (First Stage)

Name of lead officer carrying out the screening
Catherine Smith-Ivory, Development & Project Manager, Commissioning & Governance, Adult Social Care

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	✓	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		✓

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 full report stage.

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations

Building x8 supported living units at Greenacres Farm is anticipated to have a positive direct impact on young adults as the individuals identified to live in the apartments are; currently managed by the Preparing for Adulthood Team (14-25 year olds transitioning from childhood to adulthood).

The impact is anticipated to have a positive impact on all of the protected characteristics. The first cohort will be young adult males.

The aim is to increase the supply of affordable and social housing, retaining economic benefits within Shropshire economy and proving a range of financial opportunities to the council in respect of the current housing stock for some of the most vulnerable people Adult Social Care supports.

The current specialist provision is not available in Shropshire and has and continues to result in individuals leaving Shropshire to live in residential settings or single occupancy homes, especially those with complex needs that can result in people feeling isolated and lonely and away from their family support. These individuals are amongst the highest costed and considerable savings on staffing hours can be made by developing this provision.

For such complex needs individuals, previous experience identifies rural areas achieve better results because they are better supported in a rural setting initially when coming out of secure residential settings. We will look to move them into more independent accommodation as their

skills develop, which will be done with support from the Greenacres day opportunities and training offer on site. One of the reasons the location was chosen is the belief that rural settings are better because of the reduced noise levels and the individuals tend to not feel overwhelmed. This ultimately leads to a more settled, calming and stable living environment and behaviours. For people transitioning over, appropriate levels of support will be incorporated in individual support plans to reduce the risk of isolation and withdrawal from the local community. It is believed having access to agricultural, livestock and horticulturally based activities on site will prove beneficial to support people with anxiety and mental health conditions. In addition, opportunities will be considered as to a range of voluntary opportunities or paid employment to residents through the day service, for example the farm shop.

The Care Quality Commission's (CQC) [Registering the right support](#) has a vision that people with learning disability and/or autism have the right to the same opportunities as anyone else to live satisfying valued lives and to be treated with dignity and respect. The service model [Building the Right Support](#) refers specifically to "people with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges, including those with a mental health condition". They should have a home, be able to develop and maintain relationships, and get the support they need to live healthy, safe and fulfilling lives in the community. Greenacres underpins the principles of both models. Registering the right support currently limits the number of builds in one setting to 8 self-contained apartments. The maximum number of supported living units that will be built at Greenacres is 8. This local activity will help to deliver the CQC's vision.

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

As part of ongoing engagement with the wider community and as part of the planning process, Adult Social Care will consult formally with the local community as part of the development of the project. As part of that ongoing engagement, the service area have already consulted with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Baschurch Parish Council and will attend Baschurch Parish Council meeting on 5th October 2020. This meeting will be in the public agenda. Engagement with Cllrs. Dean (Adult Social Care Portfolio Holder) Carroll and Nick Bardsley (Local Cabinet member) has already commenced and Cllr. Carroll will formally take the Cabinet Report to Full Council on 24th September 2020.

Shropshire Council have had discussions with colleagues in the contracting team and they are considering purchasing future supported living services through a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) system which is a flexible purchasing procedure that will be set up to purchase support and care in the community through one contract. The council are trying to commission more innovative and collaborative care for Supported Living that includes a range of assisted technology options. We would envisage the DPS to be able to source not only the care, but also the accommodation, this will enable us to have more formal arrangements with Housing Providers and developers and work with a wider variety of companies. It will also give care providers the opportunity to either develop as a housing provider also or form partnerships with housing providers.

Providers will be required to demonstrate their ability to deliver quality services in order to be placed on the DPS, which will be run on through our current web-based procurement portal called DELTA and will ensure the end-to-end procurement process is competitive, fair and transparent.

We envisage at this stage Social Care Practitioners will carry out post move-in four week, twelve week and yearly reassessments to monitor and review the impact on each individual. Social Care Practitioners will work in close collaboration with the housing and care provider and will carry out the post move-in reassessments identified above to establish what is working well, what is not working well and ensure that the assessed needs of each individual is being met.

Greenacres is influenced and will use a wide-range of stand-alone supportive but unobtrusive services and equipment, from telecare, telehealth, monitors, sensors, seizure monitors, to more sophisticated fingerprint recognition systems that allows people to open doors without a key. Assisted Technology will present Adult Social Care with a range of evidence and data that will be continually monitored, identify any problems or trends so corrective urgent action can be taken to safeguard each individual. It includes computer software, hand held devices or video call systems that increase social interaction and family contact. Using assistive technology to support personalisation in social care help individuals to complete daily tasks and structure their daily (day and night) routine, such as personal care, cooking and laundry. Adult Social Care have carried out extensive research and will commission a wide range of assisted technology that will transform how Supported Living is delivered. The benefits promote and maintain independence, educate, entertain and stimulate social interaction to enrich lives and improve outcomes.

Associated ESIIAs

This is the first ESIIA.

The Supported Living project delivers National and Regional Housing policies and strategy priorities. Cabinet have previously recognised appropriate accommodation should be made available to enable adults with learning or physical disabilities to live in a community setting. The development supports the council's bigger project initiative to develop a different model to future proof buildings to support the demographic demand; enable tenants to live in good quality homes that are highly sustainable and an independent facility; be more creative about the range of Assisted Technology used to support an individual's independence and provide alternative individual living units with communal areas and share staff, if appropriate.

Please also see associated ESIIA's around the Local Plan partial review.

Actions to mitigate negative impact, enhance positive impact, and review and monitor overall impacts in terms of any other considerations. This includes climate change and health and wellbeing considerations

Cabinet have previously recognised that appropriate accommodation should be made available to enable adults with learning and physical disabilities to live in a community setting. Shropshire Council wishes to develop a different model to future proof buildings to support the demographic demand; be more creative about the range of Assisted Technology used to support an individual's independence and provide alternative individual living units with communal areas, sharing staff to lower care costs.

The accommodation will provide an opportunity for people with complex needs to live more independently and will reduce the number of placements in residential care outside of

Shropshire. This accommodation will be suitable for individuals who may currently live with parents, be at risk of going into residential care, already in residential care, in temporary placements or be at risk in the community. The project will create significant savings on care packages, as care hours can be reduced through shared carers, and also by reducing the need for the most expensive out of county packages.

It is widely recognised that by providing suitable alternative Supported Living homes, such as Greenacres, is a more cost-effective, flexible way of helping people live more stable, productive lives and works particularly well for adults who face complex challenges, serious or persistent issues such as mental health problems; learning/physical disabilities or sensory problems; older people; autism of those with dual diagnosis; have spent time in hospital/rehab due to brain injury; adults and young people with a disability who have spent time in residential care and are moving towards independent living; transitioning to adulthood and/or who display behaviours that challenge. There are many examples of people with complex needs living happily and successfully in their local community when they are in the right environment with bespoke personalised support that meets their individual needs.

The development benchmarks and captures best practice from extensive research into a range of Supported Living schemes and will consider a range of assisted technologies to monitor activity, telehealth, medication management and social connection intervention. With the success of the new model, further consideration will be given to expanding and replicating the accommodation in other areas of the county in the future.

The design and construction of the project will incorporate measures to maximise energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions during both the construction and the operation of the new buildings. The design of the scheme will reflect 'whole lifetime' costs and will reduce carbon emissions through a 'fabric first' approach to insulation, low-energy lighting and heating and through the inclusion of renewable energy generation, for example solar PV panels and air-source heat pump for space and water heating. The buildings will be designed to be durable and resilient in the face of the more extreme weather conditions (very high or low temperatures and very wet, dry or windy weather) which are expected as the result of climate change. This includes capturing rain water and battery storage for self-consumption. This will be further strengthened by applying a range of innovative Assisted Technologies as part of the original design and construction which will guarantee endurance and longevity of the building.

Shropshire Council would like to adopt a [PassivHaus](#) approach to the design, which is a pre-fabricated modular house. PassivHaus are super-efficient buildings and have enormous benefits as they are cheaper to run than conventional housing. Buildings are constructed and brought on site from a factory; are a quicker method of construction and is an alternative to it being built on site. The units will be placed on a concrete foundation by a crane and hooked up to utilities.

PassivHaus are pre-fabricated modular housing and generates significantly better internal air quality which benefits the health of occupants relative to a conventional design. One such example is [Haus4one](#). The PassivHaus methodology is focussed on the design and construction of the building. The result would be a property with very low running costs and excellent air quality.

This is the first time Shropshire Council will have developed a PassivHaus so Greenacres will be the first example. The advantages include zero carbon, huge amounts of insulation, triple-glazed windows, draught proofing and controlling ventilation. The rate at which heat and

energy escapes is so slow that the running costs are really low.

The project will result in reduced time, expenses and travel time for social care practitioners and family and friends to travel in a car to see loved ones in high cost residential out of county placements, which can anywhere in England and Wales. This will have a direct reduction in the amount of travel time and subsequent carbon omissions travelling within Shropshire to one central location.


Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i> Catherine Smith-Ivory, Development & Project Manager, Commissioning & Governance	<i>Catherine Smith-Ivory</i>	7th September 2020
<i>Any internal support*</i>		
<i>Any external support**</i> Mrs Lois Dale Rurality and Equalities Specialist	<i>Lois Dale</i>	3 rd September 2020

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

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

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
<i>Lead officer's name</i> Catherine Smith-Ivory, Development & Project Manager, Commissioning & Governance	<i>Catherine Smith-Ivory</i>	7th September 2020
<i>Accountable officer's name</i> Michelle Davies, Service Manager, Commissioning & Governance		8th September 2020

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

B. Detailed Screening Assessment

Aims of the service change and description

The proposal is to build x8 single-storey Supported Living units on Council land at Greenacres Farm, Walford Heath, Shrewsbury. The accommodation will provide an opportunity for people with complex needs to live more independently and will reduce the number of placements in residential care outside of Shropshire. This accommodation will be suitable for individuals who may currently live with parents, be at risk of going into residential care, already in residential care, in temporary placements or be at risk in the community. The project will create significant savings on care packages, as care hours can be reduced through shared carers, and also by reducing the need for the most expensive out of county packages.

Supported Living is an approach that provides a range of housing for people who do not want to live in a residential care setting or nursing home, but finds it difficult to cope at home on their own. Some people with complex needs, such as those identified for Greenacres, are capable of living independently in “ordinary housing”, as long as they have the right care and support packages and assisted technology in place. Supported Living enables people to live as independently as possible and ensures they live a safe environment. It gives people the right to decide where, how and whom they live with, and who should provide them with the support they need to do this.

The fundamental principle is that people live in their own home, can be shared, with a partner, or on their own, and the person receives the care and support from the council as identified in their support plan. This may include personal care; financial help to manage money, bills and benefits; accessing education opportunities and finding voluntary or paid employment; taking part in social and leisure activities and community life; making and maintaining friendships and relationships; using technology and/or equipment to make independent living easier and everyday tasks such as shopping and cooking.

The development will utilise land in our ownership which we will retain for future use to develop and support bigger project initiatives by continuing to provide the type of Supported Living housing that is required by young people with complex needs.

The type of Supported Living accommodation at Greenacres will provide good quality, sustainable housing of the right size, type and tenure of affordable housing. Vulnerable tenants will pay Social Rent.

The current service provided is delivered in high cost residential care placements in various locations in England and Wales. The proposed development will result in reduced time, expenses and travel time for social care practitioners and family and friends to travel to visit out of county placements. This will have a direct reduction in the amount of travel time and subsequent carbon omissions travelling within the county to one central location.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

National & Local Organisations/individuals:

- Building Sector organisations
- Care Providers

- Cllr. Dean Carroll, Cllr. Nicolas Bardsley and Parish Council
- Environment Agency
- Family, friends and support network of potential tenants
- Government Departments and Agencies
- Greenacres Farm employees and service users
- Local Community Groups
- Local residents and consultations will take place as part of the planning application process
- Registered Housing Providers
- Severn Trent Water
- Voluntary & Community Sector Assembly (VCSA)
- Young adults who have been identified to live in the apartments

Council Service Areas:

- Asset Management
- Building Control/Regulations
- Capital and Corporate Budgets
- Commercial Investments
- Economic Growth/Finance
- Estates/surveyors/planning
- Highways Agency
- Licensing and Planning Department
- Preparing for Adulthood Team
- Procurement & Contracts
- Property Services Group

Evidence used for screening of the service change

[Adult Social Care Strategy](#)
[Building the Right Support](#)
[Climate Change and Sustainability Policy](#)
[Commercial Strategy \(2020-23\)](#)
[Commercial Strategy \(2020-23\)](#)
[Core Strategy Policy CS11](#)
[Corporate Plan \(2019-22\)](#)
[CS5 of the Core Strategy](#)
[Economic Growth Strategy \(2017-21\)](#)
[Homes England](#)
[Housing and Regeneration Act 2008](#)
[Learning Disability Service Plan/Strategy \(2018\)](#)
[Local Offer](#)
[Registering the right support](#)
[Sustainability & Transformation plans](#)
[Transforming Care Partnership](#)

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

- Cllr. Dean Carroll
- Cllr. Nick Bardsley
- Baschurch Parish Council
- Service Users, parents and families of potential Greenacre tenants
- Greenacre Farm employees, service users and support network
- Consultation with local residents and wider community will take place as part of the planning application process
- Local Community Groups
- Registered Housing Providers
- Care Providers
- Building sector businesses

Timeline:

- 9th September 2020 - Directors meeting
- 14th September 2020 – Informal Cabinet/Directors meeting
- 24th September 2020 - Full Council
- 5th October 2020 - Baschurch Parish Council

Wider consultation will take place with the local community during the planning stage of the development.

Initial assessment for each group

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

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact Part Two ESIIA required	High positive impact Part One ESIIA required	Medium positive or negative impact Part One ESIIA required	Low positive or negative impact Part One ESIIA required
Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)			✓ Will positively impact to ensure young adults are provided with homes, are supported and kept safe	
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)			✓	
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			✓	
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓

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

Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations including climate change and health and well being

It is expected that the impact is anticipated to have a positive impact on the first cohort of young males who are currently identified as moving from children’s services to adult services. The impact of moving into bespoke accommodation suitable for a range of complex individual needs will be formally assessed during the assessment process by a social care practitioner and/or other practitioners such as Occupational Therapist.

For such complex needs individuals, previous experience identifies rural areas achieve better results because they are better supported in a rural setting initially when coming out of secure residential settings. We will look to move them into more independent accommodation as their skills develop, which will be done with support from the Greenacres day opportunities and training offer on site. One of the reasons the location was chosen is the belief that rural settings are better because of the reduced noise levels and the individuals tend to not feel overwhelmed. This ultimately leads to a more settled, calming and stable living environment and behaviours. For people transitioning over, appropriate levels of support will be incorporated in individual support plans to reduce the risk of isolation and withdrawal from the local community. It is believed having access to agricultural, livestock and horticulturally based activities on site will prove beneficial to support people with anxiety and mental health conditions. In addition, opportunities will be considered as to a range of voluntary opportunities or paid employment to residents through the day service, for example the farm shop.

Under Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP), Building the Right Homes and CQC's guidance; Registering the Right Support, the evidence suggests many people end up in hospital following disrupted housing and support arrangements, with many experiencing a lack of choice and control over their lives and the environment in which they are living. Poorly thought-out environments can increase behaviour that challenges and it is clear that just 'slotting' people into settings without really understanding the needs of the person, in partnership with them and their families, is unlikely to lead to people living settled and healthy lives in the community.

Guidance Notes

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

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

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

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

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

The formal template is there not only to help the service area but also to act as a stand alone for a member of the public to read.

The approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people we may describe as vulnerable, for example due to low income or to safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, eg Age. We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging or delivering services.

When you are not carrying out an ESIIA, 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 ESIIA, 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.

Exceptional Needs Case for Greenacres Supporting Living development

Introduction

It is our legislative duty to look at the accommodation needs for vulnerable people. Under the Mental Capacity Act. Supported Living is the least restrictive offer.

This case demonstrates the need and the benefits of the proposed Supported Living development at Greenacres Farm, Walford Heath, Shrewsbury with a particular focus on specialist requirements and supported affordable housing, including client considerations and local needs. This is not a new use but an augmentation of an existing use, enhancing the offer at Greenacres. It will, however, require planning permission.

The principle of the project will be mainly considered against Local Plan policies (CS5 and MD7a) which make provision for exception local housing need schemes in a countryside location and Policy CS11 which specifically identifies specialist housing needs. However, other policy considerations may also apply. ASC are aware of the current review to the existing Local Plan but believe the over-arching principles will remain the same for the Greenacres Supported Living development project.

There is a shortage of suitable accommodation in Shropshire that delivers the needs for highly complex individuals, in addition to more expensive out of county placements. We needed to radically rethink how we offer housing to people with a learning disability, autism, mental health or those with a dual diagnosis. It is important to note that having a range of bespoke housing options based on each individual's needs and preferences has a positive impact on health and wellbeing. The project aims to shift provision towards a model that gives people security of tenure and housing rights, with a separate contract for their support enabling people to have choice about their social care provider without jeopardising their home.

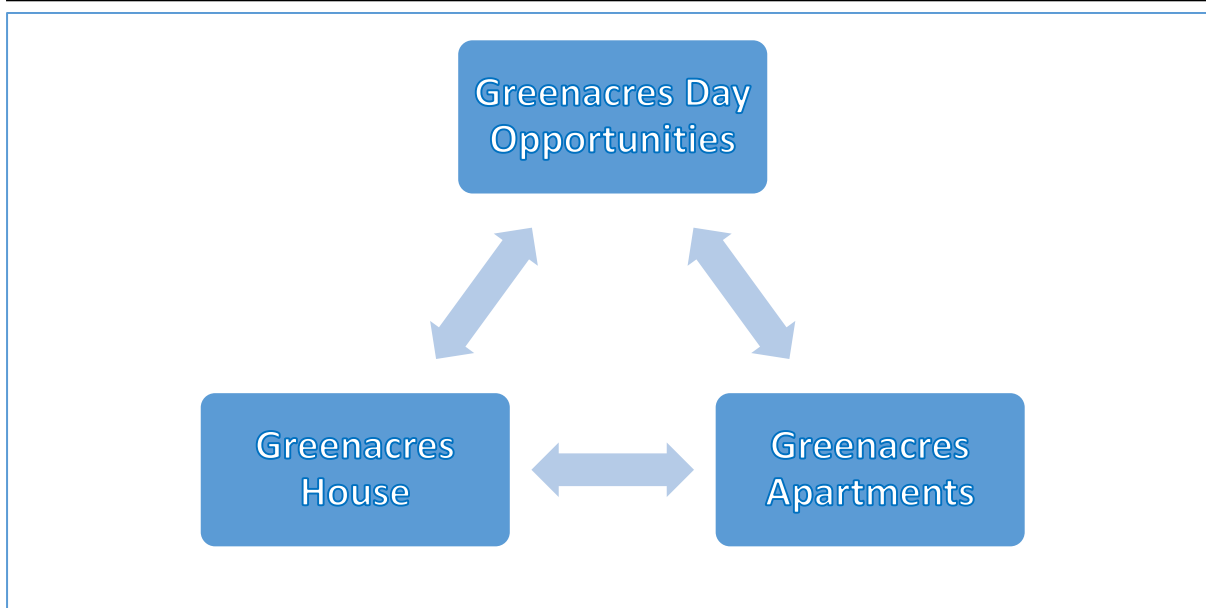
Context and Proposed Development

Cabinet have previously recognised that appropriate accommodation should be made available to enable adults with learning and physical disabilities to live in a community setting. Shropshire Council wishes to develop a different model to future proof buildings to support the demographic demand; be more creative about the range of Assisted Technology used to support an individual's independence and provide alternative individual living units with communal areas, sharing staff to lower care costs.

The project is linked to an existing facility at Greenacres Farm that already provides a range of facilities and day care opportunities to vulnerable people. The day services facility will provide opportunities and support to the new proposed residents of the apartments outlined in this proposal. In addition to this, the empty house situated at Greenacres, will be converted to incorporate a variety of uses to suit the needs of the residents living in the apartments, along with the public.

Combining these three services on one site will allow them to complement each other and provide a range of opportunities, mutual benefits and activities that promotes independent living to not only the residents living in Greenacres apartments but the wider community. A separate entrance will be created to the day service, which will be adjacent to the new project.

Jointly supporting adults with a Learning Disability, Autism and / or Mental Health needs



The following report presents the case as to why Greenacres was chosen as the most favourable location, compared to all other local Shropshire locations that were considered.

The project's intention is to:

1. Build eight single-storey Supported Living units, communal shared area, internal courtyard, outdoor spaces including a sensory garden, fitness area with outdoor gym equipment, a small running track around the perimeter courtyard on council land to provide an opportunity for people with complex needs to live more independently and will reduce the number of placements in residential care outside of Shropshire. In the future this accommodation will be suitable for individuals who may currently live with parents, be at risk of going into residential care, already in residential care, in temporary placements or be at risk in the community. The project will create significant savings on care packages, as care hours can be reduced through shared carers and also by reducing the need for the most expensive out of county packages.

2. Develop an existing empty house on the Greenacres site, which is in close proximity to the suggested apartments, and redevelop it into a more functional useable space to optimise its potential. Various options have been suggested for the house and several would help support residents by creating a central space for activities on a day/evening, such as cooking, education and training, movie nights, take away nights, BBQ, exercise and fitness sessions etc, in addition to supporting the needs of adults with a LD and/or MH needs to help those who wish to transition over to Supported Living. The house is being developed to create a lifestyle for individuals to give them more choice and control and will enable them to get out of their apartments to an alternative building onsite for a number of different reasons.

Planning Policy Context and Exceptional Needs Case

Adult Social Care (ASC) are aware that existing planning **Policy CS5 Countryside & Green Belt** (p. 65) of the [Core Strategy](#) together with [Policy MD7a of the Local Plan](#) (SAMDev) restrict new residential developments in the countryside and are not normally permitted. The project will be based on 100% affordability. The policies do, however, facilitate some exceptions such as conversion and appropriate new affordable accommodation to meet a local need identifying a preference for locations, which is not connected with a settlement are linked to existing developments or enterprises. The relevant extracts of the Policies are set out below.

The project risks have been reduced. Potential planning requirements have been taken into account as much as possible at this stage of establishing, following various discussions with planning officers, in principle policy requirements focussing on advice regarding affordable housing. It is considered that this is compatible with the project intention of providing specialist affordable units to address the need for locally available suitable supported living accommodation for individuals as discussed in more detail later. CS5 states:

*“Subject to the further controls over development that apply to the Green Belt, development proposals on appropriate sites which maintain and enhance countryside vitality and character **will be permitted where they improve the sustainability of rural communities by bringing local economic and community benefits, particularly where they relate to:***

- *dwelling to house agricultural, forestry or other essential countryside workers and other **affordable housing / accommodation to meet a local need in accordance with national planning policies and Policies CS11 and CS12;***
 - *With regard to the above two types of development, applicants will be required to demonstrate the need and benefit for the development proposed. Development will be expected to take place primarily in recognisable named settlements or **be linked to other existing development and business activity where this is appropriate.** “*

- Policy MD7a provides additional detail and states:
“Further to Core Strategy Policy CS5 and CS11, new market housing will be strictly controlled outside of Shrewsbury, the Market Towns, Key Centres and Community Hubs and Community Clusters. Suitably designed and located exceptions site dwellings..... will be positively considered where they meet evidence local housing needs and other relevant policy requirements.....”

The current specialist provision is not available in Shropshire and has and continues to result in individuals leaving Shropshire to live in residential settings or single occupancy homes, especially those with complex needs that can result in people feeling isolated and lonely and away from their family support. These individuals are amongst the highest costed and considerable savings on staffing hours can be made by developing this provision.

The rural location of the existing Greenacres site was chosen to deliver Shropshire’s specialised housing for some of the most vulnerable individuals we support. This is favourable over a more urban location due to the risk urban locations may pose to individuals with complex needs, for example road awareness and increased risk of harm and abuse. Currently there is nowhere in Shropshire for such individuals to live and this is the reason why we would like to bring them back into county, to be near family, friends and their support networks. The opportunity of building an innovative, sustainable building that is future proofed and can be sustained and adapted easily for the young people in Shropshire. The advantages linked to agricultural, livestock and horticultural facilities that are already available on the Greenacres farm site provides an ideal opportunity to develop the facilities from what it currently provides. This includes creating jobs for carers, a gardener, cleaner and maintenance role, in addition to paid or voluntary work to the residents in the farm shop. Out of all the other locations considered, Greenacres was the only site that had the day opportunity facilities attached.

The development will provide a more person-centred, efficient service to people with very complex needs, some of which we do not currently provide a service to within the county. It will make a positive impact on the way vulnerable people live their lives in a way that benefits everyone. The unique approach will enable the tenants to live in good quality homes and lead them on a path of independent living, community integration and volunteer opportunities or employment. It will relocate individuals from high cost expensive residential provision, both in and outside the county, that does not currently best meet their individual needs and choices. It also offers financial savings on an individual basis.

The type of Supported Living accommodation at Greenacres will provide good quality, sustainable housing of the right size, type and tenure of affordable housing. Vulnerable tenants will pay Social Rent. It is proposed, therefore, that it will provide specialist affordable housing for vulnerable people in accordance with **Policy CS11 Type and Affordability of Housing** (pp. 85-89) of the [Core Strategy](#). CS11 states:

“To meet the diverse housing needs of Shropshire residents now and in the future and to create mixed, balanced and inclusive communities, an integrated and balanced approach will be taken with regard to existing and new housing, including type, size, tenure and affordability. This will be achieved by:

- *Seeking housing developments which help to balance the size, type and tenure of the local housing stock;*
- *Seeking to ensure that all housing developments are designed to be capable of adaptation to accommodate lifestyle changes, including the needs of the elderly and people with disabilities, and to achieve the Lifetime Homes standard;*
- ***Supporting the provision of housing for vulnerable people and specialist housing provision, including nursing homes, residential and extra care facilities, in appropriate locations and where there is an identified need;*** “

ASC have confidence they will provide affordable accommodation that meets the needs of local residents in accordance with national and local planning policies.

Although due to be updated, accompanying planning supplementary guidance [Type & Affordability of Housing](#): (pp.2-3) states:

*“2.6 Provision has to be made for the increasing number of elderly people in Shropshire and for other **vulnerable groups who need either specialist accommodation or a setting where appropriate support can be provided.** This provision may be made through the provision of new market housing (eg. for older people), adaptation to existing housing or through some form of **specialist provision, such as supported housing for adults with learning difficulties or other types of accommodation to enable people to live independently in their own homes.**”*

*2.7 Examples of types of specialist housing needs include the provision of **accommodation suitable to meet the housing and support needs of people with learning difficulties; people with physical disabilities; people with mental health problems; people with substance misuse issues; people with acquired brain injuries; people who are ex-offenders; vulnerable young people** and also older people who may require smaller and/or adapted accommodation to help maintain their independence for as long as possible.”*

ASC believe they have the appropriate housing type, including tenure and affordability; that are key to meeting housing needs of the vulnerable people they service and have developed the right mix to provide specialist accommodation which will be supported by a range of specific care packages to each resident. ASC have already had initial discussions with potential residents and families as part of the development process and received positive support and feedback from them.

If ASC gain planning approval, they will engage with the wider local community at relevant stages. The planning application and process requires wider community engagement and will be open to the public to comment. These are priorities of national, regional and Shropshire housing strategies. Greenacres Supported Living development addresses these priorities, will meet specialist housing needs in a rural area, including the need for affordable housing. Greenacres Supported Living development will help ensure that there is adequate provision of specialist accommodation for Supported Living. The design of the housing will be adaptable to the changing needs of the individuals and will be built to a high standard of sustainable design.

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF 2019):

59. *“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay”.*
61. *“Within this context, 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, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers²⁵, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes”.*

Shropshire’s Housing Strategy is being updated and is going out to consultation in August 2020. The Strategy describes specialist accommodation:

“To secure housing to meet the needs of vulnerable people when new developments are identified”. The Strategy also notes “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”.

Greenacres Supported Living project delivers National and Regional housing policies and strategy priorities as described above. The development benchmarks and captures best practice from extensive research into a range of Supported Living schemes and will consider a range of assisted technologies to monitor activity, telehealth, medication management and social connection intervention. With the success of the new model, further consideration will be given to expanding and replicating the accommodation in other areas of the county in the future.

It is a statutory requirement for Shropshire ASC to meet the care and support needs of the individuals this property is designed for and to provide specialist accommodation. Greenacres will meet that need, deliver better outcomes for individuals and families, improve social opportunities and reduced costs. It would utilise land in our ownership which we would retain for future use to develop and support bigger project initiatives by continuing to provide the type of Supported Living housing that is required by young people with complex needs.

PSG are aware of the planning risks and constraints of the site and they have made allowances across all areas which are documented in PSG’s Feasibility Study Report. Their intention is to develop this project as a highly sustainable and independent facility and to that effect we have made allowances to cover for this as identified in the feasibility report. PSG will undertake further studies, investigations and designs to mitigate all issues, concerns and risks raised before any formal planning application is submitted or tender released. ASC and PSG are aware of the challenges of this project; believe they have made the appropriate allowances and have liaised with professional colleagues throughout the process to date. The project has been considered by colleagues in Planning and pre-application advice sought.

Catherine Smith-Ivory
24th July 2020

OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE (OBC)

Project Title: Greenacres new building Supported Living Scheme

Date: 9th July 2020

Director: Andy Begley

Project Manager: Michelle Davies

Lead Officer: Catherine Smith-Ivory

Version No: 0.1 (Guidance on version control:

- The first draft will be 0.1
- Each re-drafted version will be 0.2,0.3 etc
- Once submitted to the Group for approval it will be version 1.0 and any amendments after submission will be 1.1,1.2 etc
- Once the amended version is approved by the Group it will be 2.0)

Project Summary				
Project title	Greenacres new building Supported Living Scheme			
Benefits delivered by this project completion	Jobs Created	Revenue savings	New Income	Homes Created
	30 + newly created care and support roles	This project will ensure direct cost savings on individuals care costs, currently estimated at £0.289m per year. This saving is against five individuals currently funded through either Adult Social Care or Children’s (soon to transition to adults). A further three individuals have been identified who the authority are not currently responsible for, but are likely to be in	A new income stream will be created through a lease with a housing association company, this has been estimated at £60k.	Living units for x8 people currently not living in Shropshire. The intention is to bring vulnerable people that Shropshire Council have a legal responsibility for back into their home county.

		the future. These individuals have extremely complex and specific needs and it is envisaged that this supported living scheme could save Shropshire Council a further £0.418m per year compared to what the costs of these individuals would be with existing provision.		
Dates benefits realised	January 2022			
Project budget	Estimated £3.125 million Design fees 12-15% of total			
Project duration	2 years			
Project start date	Spring 2020			

The Structure and purpose of the OBC

The Outline Business Case is the second phase of the project approval process and follows on from the approved Expression of Interest phase (Phase 1).

The Outline Business Case follows the HM Treasury ‘five case’ model, which in summary covers the following:

Case 1 Strategic Case – why is the project required, what are the objectives and outcomes of the project and how are they achieved.

Case 2 Economic Case – or Option Appraisal – required to develop a value for money solution that meets the objectives set within the Strategic Case. Lays out the full options considered and clearly states the preferred one.

Case 3 Financial Case – How much will the project cost and how will it be funded? This demonstrates the affordability of the project whilst linking to requirements set within the Financial Strategy.

Case 4 Commercial Case – How will the project be procured? Consideration of the powers being used by the Council to deliver the project.

Case 5 Project Management Case – Sets out the arrangements for managing the project, including risks and benefits realisation and post project evaluation methods.

The standard process of progression is from Outline Business Case (OBC) to Full Business Case (FBC) on approval of the Outline Business Case submission. The Outline Business Case phase allows for strategic goals to be set first, follows by the identification and refinement of the options. This

process avoids abortive works on options which are not viable and ensures the full analysis is only undertaken on the option which is most likely to meet the outcome requirements of the project.

Approval of the Outline Business Case is sought in order to affirm that the assumptions made, and the options appraised, lead to the best available option being identified. The Final Business Case then tests the preferred option identified and affirms this option for recommendation (or otherwise disproves it and sends the project for re-consideration)

The 5 Case Model

The 5 key elements of good practice business cases



CASE 1 – Strategic Case

Building on from the Expression of Interest application please layout the following:

Background Information – why is the project required?

It is a statutory requirement for Shropshire ASC to meet the care and support needs of the individuals this property is designed for and to provide specialist accommodation for young people with complex needs (current young people considered for this provision £90,000 - £320,000 per individual per year).

Shropshire currently have 189 individuals in Supported Living schemes across the county. This project will increase Supported Living accommodation in Shropshire to give increased opportunities for more complex people to come back into the county and reduce the number of individuals placed in more expensive residential placements. This development will promote and enable a core and cluster scheme to individual tenancies in 1 bedroomed apartments. The scheme will result in a broader mix of individuals who will share support and common interests and will increase social opportunities and independence, wherever possible.

The geographical location of Greenacres was chosen to deliver Shropshire’s specialised housing for some of the most vulnerable individuals we support. This is favourable over a more urban location due to the risk urban locations may pose to individuals with complex needs, for example road awareness and increased risk of harm and abuse. Currently there is nowhere in Shropshire

for such individuals to live and this is the reason why we would like to bring them back into county, to be near family, friends and their support networks. The opportunity of building an innovative, sustainable building that is future proofed and can be sustained and adapted easily for the young people in Shropshire. The advantages linked to agricultural, livestock and horticultural facilities that are already available on the Greenacres farm site provides an ideal opportunity to develop the facilities from what it currently provides are explained in detail in Project Objectives below. This includes creating jobs for carers, a gardener, cleaner and maintenance role, in addition to paid or voluntary work to the residents in the farm shop.

The development will provide a more person-centred, efficient service to people with very complex needs, some of which we do not currently provide a service to within the county. It will make a positive impact on the way vulnerable people live their lives in a way that benefits everyone. The unique approach will enable the tenants to live in good quality homes and lead them on a path of independent living, community integration and volunteer opportunities or employment. It will relocate individuals from high cost expensive residential provision, both in and outside the county, that does not currently best meet their individual needs and choices. It also offers financial savings on an individual basis.

The project supports Shropshire's [Learning Disability Service Plan/Strategy](#) (2018) by planning for the future; reaching higher standards for Supported Living; housing opportunities; giving individuals choice and control on where and who they live with; presenting an opportunity to make friends and relationships and being part of their own community; reaching their potential developing further skills for independence, carrying out voluntary work or paid employment that is relevant and purposeful.

Eligible individuals with learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and/or mental health conditions will be supported by a range of complex care and support packages, identified in support plans, the opportunity to live in their own homes and develop skills that promotes independence and an improved quality of life. It will ensure anyone who uses the service can live as full a life as possible to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Shropshire Council's Preparing for Adulthood Services team have identified young people currently residing in and out of county residential provisions to move into the specialist Supported Living accommodation. Greenacres Supported Living accommodation principles reflect the need for people with learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and/or mental health conditions to live meaningful lives that includes choice, control and independence. It will give the flexibility for young people to receive high levels of support during their transition with the goal of support reducing as they gain further independent skills. This may lead to young people forming friendships and moving into other Supported Living provisions.

Greenacres is a 16 acre farm that currently provides day services in a new building and they do not require the full 16 acre for their provision. The rural one acre development site has already been looked at and is positively viewed by colleagues in the Planning Department.

The current specialist provision is not available in Shropshire and has and continues to result in individuals leaving Shropshire to live in residential settings or single occupancy homes, especially those with complex needs that can result in people feeling isolated and lonely and away from their family support. These individuals are amongst the highest costed and considerable savings on staffing hours can be made by developing this provision.

Shropshire Council wish to develop a different model to future proof buildings to support the demographic demand; be more creative about the range of Assisted Technology used to support individuals independence and provide alternative individual living units with communal areas, sharing staff to lower care costs.

The development benchmarks and captures best practice from extensive research into a range of Supported Living schemes and will consider a range of assisted technologies to monitor activity, telehealth, medication management and social connection intervention. With the success of the new model, further consideration will be given to expanding and replicating the accommodation in other areas of the county in the future.

Cabinet has previously recognised that appropriate accommodation should be made available to enable adults with learning and physical disabilities to live in a community setting.

The proposed property will include x8 individual level access living units, communal shared area, internal courtyard, significant outdoor space that includes a sensory garden, a fitness area with outdoor gym equipment, a small running track around the internal perimeter courtyard, to promote health and wellbeing, and will be surrounded by a secure fence to ensure the safety of residents. A separate entrance will be created to the day service which is adjacent to the new project.

This development will support our bigger project initiatives by continuing to provide homes for vulnerable people and retaining Council land for future use.

In addition, there is the conversion of an existing empty house on the Greenacres site, in close proximity to the suggested apartments, to redevelop it into a more functional useable space to optimise its potential. Various options have been suggested for the house and several would help support residents by creating a central space for activities on a day/evening, such as cooking, education and training, moving nights, take away nights, BBQ, exercise and fitness sessions etc, in addition to supporting the needs of adults with a LD and/or MH needs to help those who wish to transition over to Supported Living. Emphasis is given on the house being developed to created and develop a lifestyle for individuals to give them more choice and control and will enable them to get out of their apartments to an alternative building onsite for a number of different reasons.

There is already an established overarching Project Board who have already illustrated the rationale of project, authorised the initiation process and will help plan, monitor, control, deliver and close the project. Project Board members will have collective responsibility. Project Board Terms of Reference have been created confirming the project purpose, role and responsibilities, membership, decision making process, Chair, frequency, quorum, record of meetings, reporting mechanism, functions and delegated authority. The Project Board will encompass both projects: the Greenacres supported living new build and the conversion of the empty house on the Greenacres site.

In addition, a sub-group - Operational Task Group has been created who will directly report to the Project Board. Terms of Reference have also been produced in line with the above. The Operational Task Group will work on a more operational level and will manage the operational level and the day to day running of the project.

A Project Manager (PM) has been appointed who has initiated the project and will apply best practice project management principles from inception to delivery. They will define, plan, control, prioritise changes, manage risks/issues, ensure the correct allocation of resources, schedule dates

and workload. The PM will create a Project Plan, Work Breakdown Structure, Highlight Report and update members on progress. Options will be reported to the Project Board to decide on the best course of action. The PM will consult or gain consent from the Project Board throughout the project and will facilitate any changes are escalated through the Project Board. A Risk Register has been produced to identify any considerations that may hinder or prevent the successful delivery of the agreed project outcomes. The Register will be reviewed by the PM and Project Board to consider any steps to reduce or mitigate the risks identified. The project will be scoped, planned and directed with specific milestones with an overall objective also focused on quality and customer satisfaction. The PM will communicate and involve relevant internal and external stakeholders at the right time of the project, including any contractors and sub-contractors.

Project objective – what is the aim of the project?

The project intention is to build x8 Supported Living units on Council land. The accommodation will provide an opportunity for people with complex needs to live more independently and will reduce the number of placements in residential care outside of Shropshire. In the future this accommodation will be suitable for individuals who may currently live with parents, be at risk of going into residential care, already in residential care, in temporary placements or be at risk in the community. The project will create significant savings on care packages, as care hours can be reduced through shared carers, and also by reducing the need for the most expensive out of county packages.

For such complex needs individuals, previous experience identifies rural areas achieve better results because they are better supported in a rural setting initially when coming out of secure residential settings. We will look to move them into more independent accommodation as their skills develop, which will be done with support from the Greenacres day opportunities and training offer on site. One of the reasons the location was chosen is the belief that rural settings are better because of the reduced noise levels and the individuals tend to not feel overwhelmed. This ultimately leads to a more settled, calming and stable living environment and behaviours. For people transitioning over, appropriate levels of support will be incorporated in individual support plans to reduce the risk of isolation and withdrawal from the local community. It is believed having access to agricultural, livestock and horticulturally based activities on site will prove beneficial to support people with anxiety and mental health conditions. In addition, opportunities will be considered as to a range of voluntary opportunities or paid employment to residents through the day service, for example the farm shop.

The case for change delivers on [Sustainability & Transformation plans](#) (STP) as it will develop neighbourhoods, strengthen community resilience and prevent ill health. We will ensure the build will reflect costs that cover the whole lifecycle of the property and we make the best use of our resources to offer financial sustainability which will reduce ongoing costs. We will ensure we invest in the quality of the fabric of the building which will offset energy loss and higher maintenance costs. We will ensure an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating is undertaken using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) in the early stage of the the design process which will help prevent costly redesign and ensure an EPC rating of B+.

In order to help meet CO2 reductions we will ‘Invest to Save’ in sustainable design and construction and will apply an holistic approach in the design, construction and operation processes in a super energy efficient, low carbon building to ensure future running costs are kept to a minimum. This is in line with the council’s over-arching [Climate Change and Sustainability Policy](#). The design and construction of the project will incorporate measures to maximise energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions during both the construction and the operation of the

new buildings. The design of the scheme will reflect 'whole lifetime' costs and will reduce carbon emissions through a 'fabric first' approach to insulation, low-energy lighting and heating and through the inclusion of renewable energy generation, for example solar PV panels and air-source heat pump for space and water heating. The buildings will be designed to be durable and resilient in the face of the more extreme weather conditions (very high or low temperatures and very wet, dry or windy weather) which are expected as the result of climate change. This includes capturing rain water and battery storage for self-consumption. This will be further strengthened by applying a range of innovative Assisted Technologies as part of the original design and construction which will guarantee endurance and longevity of the building.

The build will apply project management principles by constructing the right building, will be value for money, built with a long-term lifecycle and will achieve the best outcomes for individuals. We will monitor developments and undertake audits to ensure they are being effectively managed to ensure high standards are being met, reduce the impact on the environment; including energy use, biodiversity and pollution.

The rural location has been considered and mitigated regarding travel as there is a regular bus route through Walford Heath (Arriva 576 Oswestry to Shrewsbury). It is envisaged that with support from staff this will develop independence skills by teaching individuals how to use public transport and how to travel on their own, or with others.

Greenacres Project delivers on the [Economic Growth Strategy](#) (2017-21) and [Commercial Strategy](#) (2020-23) by working collaboratively across the public and private sectors in our community to deliver housing and economic growth. This will be achieved by targeting actions and resources to an identified need and opportunity; promoting Shropshire to investors; delivering an infrastructure that supports growth; enabling businesses to grow and succeed and growth in jobs by creating jobs in the care and support sector, but also in the building sector.

We needed to radically rethink how we offer housing to people with a learning disability, autism, mental health or those with a dual diagnosis. We acknowledge that having a range of bespoke housing options based on each individual's needs and preferences has a positive impact on health and wellbeing. The project aims to shift provision towards a model that gives people security of tenure and housing rights, with a separate contract for their support enabling people to have choice about their social care provider without jeopardising their home.

Under STP, Building the Right Homes and CQC's guidance; Registering the Right Support, the evidence suggests many people end up in hospital following disrupted housing and support arrangements, with many experiencing a lack of choice and control over their lives and the environment in which they are living. Poorly thought-out environments can increase behaviour that challenges and it is clear that just 'slotting' people into settings without really understanding the needs of the person, in partnership with them and their families, is unlikely to lead to people living settled and healthy lives in the community.

Our commercial strategy will target savings and revenue achieved through commissioning new Supported Living properties through a lease arrangement with a housing provider, whilst maintaining the property as an asset and reducing the pressure on our purchasing budget.

The project will maximise the value of the council's property and investments and will provide savings and reductions on:

- High cost residential care placements
- Multi-agency support
- Police intervention
- Safeguarding referrals
- Impact on family due to crisis
- Absconding
- Psychological impacts of anxiety
- Mental health intervention
- Parent Carer breakdown
- Hospital admissions
- Moving out of county to specialist care providers
- Homelessness applications
- Risks in the community
- Social care practitioner time and expenses

Out of county placements can cost the Council significant amounts of money. We are currently funding a placement of over £5,000 per week in Gloucestershire and similar placements elsewhere.

Project outcomes – what outcomes are expected to be achieved on project completion?

Sector growth

- Use Shropshire businesses, enterprises and services, including private sector care providers, housing providers, building companies
- create 30+ newly created care and support roles and opportunities for jobs in the building sector
- ensure individuals are supported by a range of complex care and support packages

Community cohesion and social value

- provide Supported Living homes for x8 individuals with disabilities
- ensure a more person-centred, efficient service to people with complex needs
- Individuals are involved with people who matter the most to them, for example closer to their family, friends and support network
- present an opportunity to make friends and relationships and be part of a community
- Develop skills to maximise independent, confidence and achieve best possible outcomes
- Receive consistent, long-term support and in-county provisions, supported by the local community, give something back to the local community through voluntary work and community connection, skill sharing
- Value their home environment and receive the positive benefits associated with someone being in their own home
- Involve the local community in scheme development
- Investing in the local economy
- reduce care costs and carer breakdown, in reducing the purchasing budget

Wider economic impact

- provide an improved useable property asset
- support local economic growth strategy by spending own money in Shropshire, rather than out of county
- An integral part of social engagement is being part of a community, voluntary work opportunities or in paid employment

- Encourage the use of land in our ownership to promote and deliver housing and economic growth. This delivers on the Commercial Strategy, Housing Strategy and Corporate Climate Change Strategy.
- X8 units of accommodation for individuals with LD, MH or on the autism spectrum
- Increase Shropshire Council's Supported Living in county accommodation portfolio
- Ensure people with complex needs who want to live in Shropshire can stay in Shropshire in suitable accommodation
- People using the service will receive planned and co-ordinated person-centred support and education that will be appropriate and inclusive
- Gain a return on capital money invested through cost savings and rental income
- Reduced costs by lowering the number of placements in residential care
- Reduced costs of out of county placements
- Reduced care costs by using a range of suitable assistive technology bespoke to each individual and by providing care and support to a group of individuals in one accommodation
- Managing the future growth in the sector by offering a more cost-effective solution to currently available
- Provide a service for young people as they transition from childhood to adulthood
- Lower risks to individuals by being in a Supported Living environment

How does the project support the key strategy requirements of the Council?

[Corporate Plan](#) (2019-22). The council's ambition is to invest in Housing which meets the need and requirements of the local communities. As we have a large number of people living out of county who would like to live near their family and friends and be part of their local community. Providing Supported Living accommodation would provide x8 homes in Shrewsbury and would help provide homes that the local community requires.

[Economic Growth Strategy](#) (2017-21). One of the main priorities of the strategy is to increase the availability of housing that is the right type, quality and cost in the right location to meet the needs of the population and ensure that Shropshire remains an attractive place to live. It also refers to the development of new innovative housing solutions to deliver the homes that meets identified needs. This project is a new innovative way that will help Shropshire Council future plan and reach higher standards for Supported Living which we can benchmark from in future Supported Living developments. The project supports building the right homes by Shropshire Council Commissioners working with housing providers to expand the housing options available for people with a learning disability, mental health problems, autism or those with dual diagnosis, who display behaviours that challenges.

The type of Supported Living accommodation provides good quality, sustainable housing of the right size, type and tenure of affordable housing. Vulnerable tenants will pay Social Rent, as described in the Economic Case below. This contributes towards the provision of affordable housing in accordance with [Core Strategy Policy CS11](#). The appropriateness and suitability of the site meets the exception rules under [CS5](#) of the Core Strategy for a new development in the countryside.

[Commercial Strategy](#) (2020-23). Provides the direction and framework for how we will mobilise Shropshire Council, more specifically taking control of our own destiny to become more commercially focussed and financially sustainable by investing in projects that ensures growth in housing and jobs. The Strategy also encourages the use of land in our ownership to build, promote and deliver housing and economic growth. Exception to normal type of building.

The project expands a programme of Supported Living housing development and Shropshire's [Local Offer](#) by providing opportunities for x8 people with disabilities to live independently by designing, developing and building Supported Living accommodation on [Greenacres](#) farm site, Walford Heath, Shrewsbury, therefore, moving them out of high cost residential placements out of county.

The project supports Shropshire's [Learning Disability Service Plan/Strategy](#) (2018) by planning for the future; reaching higher standards for Supported Living; housing opportunities; builds into and supports [Adult Social Care Strategy](#), Housing Strategy and [Transforming Care Partnership](#) work.

CASE 2 – Economic Case

Identify all option considerations and lay them out in detail – a minimum of three option considerations are to be included in the OBC – with the preferred option being summarised at the end of the content with clear rationale as to why it is the preferred option.

Option considerations should set out cost and benefit analysis for each option.

Option 1: Do Nothing

If we left the site undeveloped we would carry on placing individuals in highly specialised accommodation outside the County at significant cost and detrimental to the individual's wellbeing and family and social links. The council would continue to spend £1.171m on the five individuals identified, and be likely to incur further pressures of £0.918m on other identified individuals currently funded by CHC but likely to return to council responsibility.

Option 2: Do Minimum

Adapt one or a variety of other properties at alternative sites. This was deemed not as beneficial as having specialised accommodation (fit for purpose and future proofed) and specialist care under one roof. Using a variety of properties would entail higher individual social care and support costs, higher adaptation costs, limited adaptation options for current needs and future proofing as it would incur costs in multiple homes.

Alternative options, such as a smaller development for less than 8 people, or multiple sites were initially considered but they were not considered to provide the social or financial benefits.

Option 3: Right to develop and build x8 Supported Living apartments. It is our legislative duty to look at the accommodation needs for vulnerable people. Under the Mental Capacity Act, Supported Living is the least restrictive offer. This is our preferred option because Greenacres will meet that need, deliver better outcomes for individuals and families, improve social opportunities and reduced costs.

Current care cost of highly specialist accommodation for young people with complex needs are between £90,000-£320,000 per individual per year.

At Greenacres each individual's ratio of care will be lower as some care can be shared, in particular around the waking nights:

Of the eight identified individuals, five are currently funded by Shropshire Council with a further three likely to return to Council funding prior to the completion of this project.

Of the initial five, savings totalling £0.289 per annum could be realised through reductions of the care ratio.

With the vulnerable adults living in single units on their own they present a higher risk to themselves and others and require a ratio of 2:1 or 3:1 on a more regular basis.

Summary of project risks and benefits for each option

Option	NPV net present value	Risk	Quantifiable Benefit	Non-quantifiable benefit
Option 1 Do nothing	0	We would not meet our statutory duty to provide Supported Living accommodation	None	None
Option 2 Do minimum	0	Cost savings cannot be made to enable the project to be funded. Failure to meet statutory duty to provide Supported Living accommodation		
Option 3 Develop and build x8 Supported Living apartments		Not able to fill the units (this is mitigated as we already have a significant number of people waiting for accommodation)	X8 new Supported Living affordable social rent apartments. Expanded Supported Living property portfolio. Immediate annual saving to Shropshire Council of £0.418m per annum. Future preventative savings identified, estimated at £0.418m per annum.	This will be a flagship scheme for Shropshire Council, the first fully services self-build plots to be made available on Shropshire Council land. Other benefits during delivery include employment while the scheme is under way and the provision of paid and voluntary job opportunities.

Preferred Option rational and analysis – clearly identify the preferred option from the cases above and layout the reasoning.

Option 3 is a legislative duty and is considered the only option. It would utilise land in our ownership which we would retain for future use to develop and support bigger project initiatives by continuing to provide the type of Supported Living housing that is required by young people with complex needs. It is a statutory requirement for Shropshire ASC to meet the care and support needs of the individuals this property is designed for and to provide specialist accommodation.

Our partner approach has, and will, incorporate Corporate Landlord team/Property Services Group/Parish Councillors/local community and retailers/Adult Care Services and social workers/Service providers/Occupational therapists/contractors/Shropshire Council housing specialists and architects/Legal team and families.

This option will consider installing pre-fabricated modular housing, for example 'Pop-up' PassivHaus housing which delivers a permanent housing solution that can easily be relocated, if required. PassivHaus is generally assessed to be around 10-15% more to construct than conventional housing but is considerably cheaper to run and the additional cost is, therefore, offset quickly over the first few years of occupation. As future energy costs are predicted to rise, the 'payback period' for this higher initial outlay is expected to reduce significantly. A further advantage of such housing is that it generates significantly better internal air quality which benefits the health of occupants relative to a conventional design. One such example is Haus4one which is a relocatable one-person home. The units can be either fully manufactured offsite, delivered and installed ready for occupation within hours or delivered as a structural thermal envelope ready for your contractor to finish. Larger units are also available which would be applicable in 8 units proposed for Greenacres.

CASE 3 – Financial Case

This section is broken down into three sections and concentrates on the preferred option identified in Case 2.

Section 1: Whole project lifecycle costs – detail the cost of the project over the delivery timeframe and how is the project proposed to be funded.

Section 2: Summary of revenue implications post project completion – this is a summarised version of the Cashflow Appendix 1.

Section 3: Asks for consideration of VAT implications on the project – such as option to tax status on building acquisition/construction.

Care costs calculated using a cohort of x8 individuals who are currently in out of country placements. Of these 8 Shropshire Council are currently responsible for the funding of 5 of them, with the other 3 Health funded by likely to return to council funding at any point in time. Care costs are changeable over time and at completion of this project it might be different individuals or different costs, but the level of demand and growth in the social care sector gives a complete assurance that such a project will still be required and still deliver the level of savings as modelled.

Social Rent (Registered Providers)

Greenacre tenants will pay Social Rent, which is affordable housing and owned and managed by Registered Providers of affordable housing (eg: the Council and Housing Associations as defined in

section 80 of the [Housing and Regeneration Act 2008](#)). These organisations are regulated by [Homes England](#). Properties are let to people in need from the Council’s Housing Register on either a Secure or Assured tenancy with the tenant having security of tenure. Standards for management, maintenance and the provision of other services are set nationally.

Net rent levels for Social Housing are managed by a Registered Provider and will be calculated in accordance with a “Target Rent” formula set by the Homes England which takes account of the number of bedrooms in a dwelling, local property values as at 1999 and average earnings data. Applicable Service Charges may be added to the Target Rent figure resulting in the total Social Rent level. Social Rented Housing shall, wherever legally possible, be excluded (in perpetuity) from mechanisms that could result in such dwellings becoming available for rental or sale on the open housing market. Relevant Planning Conditions and/or Section 106.

The creation of social benefits through the Supported Living model brings an opportunity of sensible, stable, regular and reliable commercial returns. The end result is happier tenants, happier families, improved and more economical service delivery for commissioners and a stronger community. We plan to develop more in the future.

Agreements will also be used to ensure that controls on rent levels, local occupancy, cascade requirements, tenant selection, allocation and general management standards are agreed and honoured in perpetuity.

1. Estimated Project Costs (speak to finance- contact business partner capital)						
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Total Capital Project Costs	250	1,250	1,525			
Sources of finance:						
Capital Grants						
Usable Capital Receipts						
Borrowing	(250)	(1,250)	(1,525)			
Developer Contributions (S106)						
Developer Contributions (CIL)						
Revenue Contribution						
External Loans (Salix)						
Other						
Total Funding	(250)	(1,250)	(1,525)			

2. Ongoing Revenue Implications (contact business partner, revenue) (if appropriate to the scheme)		
	Part Year	Full Year

	£'000	£'000
Expenditure:		
Borrowing payback		179
Employees		
Premises		
Transport		
Supplies and Services		
Repairs & Maintenance		5
Income:		
Revenue Savings		(289)
New income generation		(60)
Total Net Revenue Implications		<u>(165)</u>

3. VAT Considerations

Please detail any VAT considerations of the project i.e. option to tax - contact finance for guidance if required

Further VAT advice is sought, around the council's partial exemption limit and whether this project would be within the limit, this will need to be clarified prior to the project starting. As the property would be classed as residential this cannot be Opted to Tax.

CASE 4 – Commercial Case

Outline below the procurement method to be used in project delivery and the intended evaluation criteria.

Property Services Group (PSG) have produced a brief of the works in order for the work to go out to tender (Feasibility Report 10.2). They will then analyse and advise on the returns and assist with contract discussions. PSG have also been commissioned to provide a Clerk of Works Service throughout the build period and the infrastructure stage providing streamlined project management facility to allow for a smooth delivery for this self-build project.

The scheme will be procured by competitive tender through Property Services Groups (PSG) current contractor framework using a JCT form of contract.

Shropshire Council currently purchase Support Living care packages for individuals with a Learning Disability through our Framework which is due to end September 2020. We have listened to recent feedback on the challenges in finding the right support provider for individuals with extremely complex needs and now feel this is the ideal opportunity to look at how we can purchase care for individuals with, both, Mental Health or learning needs within supported living differently.

Shropshire Council have been having discussions with our colleagues in our contracting team and we are considering purchasing future supported living services through a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) system which is a flexible purchasing procedure that will be set up to purchase support and care in the community through one contract. We are trying to commission more innovative and collaborative care for Supported Living that includes a range of assisted technology options. We would envisage the DPS to be able to source not only the care, but also the accommodation, this will enable us to have more formal arrangements with Housing Providers and developers and work with a wider variety of companies. It will also give care providers the opportunity to either develop as a housing provider also or form partnerships with housing providers.

Providers will be required to demonstrate their ability to deliver quality services in order to be placed on the DPS, which will be run on through our current web-based procurement portal called DELTA and will ensure the end-to-end procurement process is competitive, fair and transparent.

The chosen Social Housing Provider will be expected to bring necessary expertise from across their organisation, understand the sector and be willing to source and recover any available capital grants within the legislative framework.

CASE 5 – PROJECT MANAGEMENT CASE

This section is aimed to evidence the achievability of the project through to completion. Please detail the following levels of governance that will be put in place following approval:

Project Board Structure – please detail the Project Board Structure that will be in place to deliver the project:

Position	Responsible Officer
Project Executive	Michelle Davies
Project Manager	Catherine Smith-Ivory
Estates representative	Jane Kenyon, Keith Parry, Leela Cottey
Legal representative	Helen Powell, Tim Collard

Finance representative	Michaela Probert, Michael C Turner, Donna Payne
Procurement representative	Rod Ward
Clerk of Works	PSG
Property Services	Peter Allen, Harvey Gould
Please list the top 5 key risks identified in the Risk Management Appendix	
Risk	Action
1. Refused Planning permission	Prepare a watertight planning application. Advice will be sought prior to submission.
2. Local opposition at planning	Phase 2 will involve the people who will live and work at Greenacres, Local Councillor Nicolas Bardsley, Parish Council and full community interaction as co-production.
3. Unforeseen increases to the budget	Budgets will be tightly controlled and any increases will be communicated to the Project Board who will make formal decisions. Any changes will be reflected in associated plans and additional time will be scoped. A large contingency has been included in the estimate for the works to reduce the risk of more funding being requested.
4. Appointment of construction contractor delayed as a result of untoward circumstances or pandemic, such as Covid-19	Out of our control and would delay the build.
5. Breakdown in relationship with selected Housing Association	Any breakdown will require the Council to work with the individuals, carers and support network to support the individual. The Council would repeat the same end-to-end procurement process in order to ensure consistency, high level of quality and the process was fair. The new successful Housing Provider would enter into a formal contract with Shropshire Council.
Please list the main quantifiable project outcomes in order for them to be analysed as part of a post project brief:	
1. X8 Supported Living good quality homes provided to vulnerable tenants	
2. X8 sustainable housing with affordable social rents	
3. Jobs created for local building sector businesses and possible apprenticeships	
4. 30 + newly created care and support jobs created and volunteer opportunities onsite	
5. Reduction in x8 high cost out of county placements (currently £1,293 million per year)	
Identify any major stakeholders (including members where appropriate) and the impact the project may have and what consultation is proposed:	

Greenacres Farm

Cllr Nicolas Bardsley and Parish Council who will be contacted when PSG have confirmed the land is viable to build on.

Consultations with local residents will take place as part of the planning application process.

Local Community Groups

Property Services Group

Estates/surveyors/planning

Building Control/Regulations, Licensing and Planning Department

Preparing for Adulthood

Asset Management

Building Sector Businesses

Housing Associations/Registered Providers

Care Providers

Highways Agency

Severn Trent Water

Environment Agency

Capital and Corporate Budgets

Economic Growth/Finance

Commercial Investments

Procurement & Contracts

Communication and Engagement Summary

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Cash Flow Model

Appendix 2 – NPV Calculations for options analysis

Appendix 3 – Terms of Reference for Project Board

Appendix 4 – Risk Register

Appendix 5 – Project Delivery Timeframe (Gantt Chart)

Appendix 6 – Procurement Considerations

Appendix 7 – Project Closure Report

PROPERTY SERVICES GROUP

Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY2 6ND



GREENACRES FARM SUPPORTED LIVING SCHEME FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT June 2020

Property Services Group
Shirehall,
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury SY2 6ND



GREENACRES FARM

FENEMERE LANE, BASCHURCH SY4 2JA

SUPPORTED LIVING SCHEME

FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT

Contents:

- 1.0 Proposals
- 2.0 Instructions
- 3.0 Site Appraisal
- 4.0 Planning Consultation
- 5.0 Indicative Building Plans
- 6.0 Services
- 7.0 Sustainability
- 8.0 Cost Estimate & Procurement
- 9.0 Maintenance And Programmed Maintenance
- 10.0 Programme
- 11.0 Further Site Investigation
- Appendix 1: Drawings
- Appendix 2: Cost Estimate

Date: June 2020

1.0 **PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 This report contains a feasibility assessment of a proposal being put forward by Adult Services for a new build development to provide an 8-bed accommodation unit for adults with disabilities and learning difficulties. The scheme aims to facilitate independent living for service users and also supports Shropshire's Learning Disability Service Plan/Strategy (2018).

The residents of the unit may have very complex needs which can make finding suitable accommodation difficult. There is a shortage of such accommodation in Shropshire which leads to individuals being located in accommodation that does not always meet their needs. It is also can result in having to source it out of area and away from friends and family. This new facility in the county would reduce outsourcing and will also offer potential cost savings to the service.

The Greenacres Farm is a Shropshire Council owned site that provides day service support to adults with learning difficulties. Locating the supported living unit close to the farm would provide additional support and opportunities for the residents.

- 1.2 Discussions with officers within Adult Services have established a preliminary schedule of accommodation. The development should provide:

- 6 self-contained single bed apartments.
- 2 self-contained 2-bed apartments to accommodate sleep-in carers.
- A private garden space to each apartment.
- Disabled access to all apartments.
- A communal laundry area with 3no. washers and dryers.
- A communal courtyard space for recreation and exercise.
- Staff facilities with 2 bedrooms, shower, common room, etc.
- High levels of security (i.e. perimeter fencing & access control).
- Car parking for staff (up to 12) and visitors.
- External amenity areas for exercise, gardening, etc.

- 1.3 Adult Services have prepared a business case to demonstrate the benefits and savings the scheme could provide.

It is proposed that the development will be built and paid for by Shropshire Council and then leased to a Registered Provider who will act as landlord/housing provider to the residents. The development will be classed as 'affordable housing'.

- 1.4 To secure funding the proposal will be submitted to Shropshire Council Senior Programme Officer Group (SPOG), before progressing to the Capital Investment Board and finally full council.

This report provides an assessment of the suitability, advantages and disadvantages of the Greenacres Farm site for the scheme.

2.0 INSTRUCTIONS

2.1 Following discussions between Adult Services and PSG in early 2020, approval was given to proceed with a feasibility study for the project (ref. Peter Allen email to Catherine Ivory-Smith 3 February 2020).

2.2 The scope of the feasibility study is summarised below (ref. Lucy Fletcher email to Catherine Ivory-Smith 24 January 2020):

- 1) Meeting between PSG and Adult Services to develop the scope of works
- 2) Site visits to assess suitability
- 3) Feedback meetings / discussions
- 4) Desk top studies in relation to land use and historic constraints
- 5) Consultation with planning
- 6) Checking land ownership and any restrictive covenants
- 7) Topographical survey of the site
- 8) Indicative building plan and elevations
- 9) Highway and access arrangements
- 10) Service constraints
- 11) Cost appraisal
- 12) Sustainable enhancements
- 13) Indicative delivery programme

Delivery of the study was agreed to be by the end of June 2020.

3.0 SITE APPRAISAL

3.1 ECOLOGY

3.1.1 A planning application for a development on this site must be accompanied by an 'Ecological Impact Assessment' (EclA) performed by a suitably qualified consultant.

An Ecological Impact Assessment should consist of:

- A desk study of historical species records and local, regional or national wildlife designated sites.
- An initial habitat survey to identify significant biodiversity or geological features including species, habitats, designated wildlife or geological sites
- Supplementary detailed surveys should protected or priority species be identified (e.g. Great Crested Newts, bats, badgers, etc.).
- Evaluation of the importance of biodiversity or geological features present.
- Analysis of the direct and indirect impacts of the development.
- Any losses or gains to priority habitat.
- Proposed avoidance, mitigation or compensation measures.
- Legal implications such as the need for European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses.
- Proposed biodiversity or geodiversity enhancement measures.

- 3.1.2 The first stage in the ECIA is a desk study and initial on-site habitat survey. This work has been commissioned, but the results are not available for this report.
- 3.1.3 Of particular concern is the presence of Great Crested Newts (GCN). These are an endangered species and are afforded high levels of protection by both UK and European law. The penalties for harming GCN or their habitat can be very high. Consequently, it is important to establish if they are present on any development site.

Great Crested Newts (GCN) were found on the Greenfield Farm site during the course of building work in 2018. It is highly likely that they are still present, but to confirm this sampling of ponds within 500m of the site is being performed. These initial tests will confirm the presence of GCN, and if positive, further testing and sampling will be required to estimate the size and distribution of the colony. These tests can only be carried out during specific times of the year and so this issue can affect project programme.

Should GCN be present it will be necessary to prepare reports, mitigation plans and Natural England License applications along with physical protection measures on site. These can all become very costly and depending upon the size of the site could run into tens of thousands of pounds.

The initial presence survey is underway and results are awaited.

- 3.1.4 The presence of other wildlife such as bats and badgers should also be expected on a rural site such as Greenacres. These too may affect the proposals and demand that some features are avoided (e.g. if a tree is used as a bat roost) or that other allowances are made.
- 3.1.5 While these factors complicate the use of the site for development they are not uncommon and can be managed. However, the cost and time implications should be underestimated by the project team.

3.2 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 3.2.1 Records of archaeological sites, features, historic buildings, structures, etc. are held in Shropshire Council's Historic Environment Record (HER). Preliminary checks of the database do not show any features of archeological interest on the site.
- 3.2.2 Further enquiries have been made to Shropshire Council's Historic Environment Team to determine whether any further consideration or investigation should be made. Their comments are awaited.
- 3.2.3 Based on current information it is unlikely that the site has any historic features that will adversely affect the proposals.

3.3 FLOOD RISK

- 3.3.1 The site is within an area designated by the Environment Agency as 'Flood Zone 1'. This is an area where there is a low probability of flooding.
- 3.3.2 Flood risk must be considered as part of a planning application. The site is larger than 1 hectare and developments of this size must have a full 'flood risk assessment'. This report will have to be prepared by a suitably qualified engineer. It will examine the risk of flooding on the site and the possible impact of the development on the flood risk to surrounding areas.
- 3.3.3 The flood risk assessment has not been commissioned yet. It is recommended that it is carried out should the project progress to the next funding stage.

3.4 GROUND INVESTIGATION

- 3.4.1 Ground investigation will be needed to establish:
- The physical properties of the ground, load bearing capacity, soil type and variation
 - Drainage characteristics
- 3.4.2 The makeup of the soil will influence the design of the foundations of the building. The proposed development is for only a single-storey structure and traditional concrete strip footings may be adequate. However certain soil types may demand a different design is used such as a raft foundation.

As part of the investigation soil samples from across the site would be taken and subject to laboratory examination to accurately determine their properties. These will be used by the structural engineer when designing the foundations.

- 3.4.3 A 'percolation test' will be required to determine how well the soil will absorb water. This data is used to inform the design of soakaways on site. Some clay soil types do not absorb water well and managing storm water from the site can be more difficult.
- 3.4.4 The ground investigation works have not been commissioned yet. It is recommended they be carried out should the project progress to the next funding stage.

3.5 HIGHWAY AND ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.5.1 Enquiries have been made to Shropshire Council Highways to determine their views on the implications of the development.
- 3.5.2 Their comments will affect the location of the site access, design of visibility splays, etc. No significant obstacles are expected. Their comments are awaited.

3.6 TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY OF THE SITE

- 3.6.1 A detailed topographical survey of the site will be required to inform more detailed design of the proposals. It has not been needed for work to date, but will be necessary should the project proceed.

3.7 LAND OWNERSHIP AND RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS

- 3.7.1 Shropshire Council Estates department have confirmed that the site is entirely owned by Shropshire council.
- 3.7.2 They have also confirmed that no easements are known to exist over the site.

4.0 PLANNING CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Preliminary discussions have already been held between Adult Services and officers from Shropshire's Development Control.

The proposals do not comply with Policy CS5 of the Shropshire Core Strategy. This policy clearly states that unencumbered new build dwellings in the open countryside will not be supported. The development would have to be departure from the local plan.

- 4.2 A case is being prepared to justify the development on these grounds:
- The dwellings would be affordable housing.
 - The residents would benefit from the support of the Greenacres Farm service.
 - There is a shortage of similar suitable accommodation in Shropshire.
 - Savings to Shropshire tax payers by avoiding sourcing accommodation out of county.
- 4.3 Adult Services will continue to develop a case for the development. Comment and support will need to be sought from the local member, parish council and wider local community.

5.0 INDICATIVE BUILDING PLANS

- 5.1 PSG have investigated the options offered by the site and developed initial proposals to conform with the requirements of the client as discussed at Project Board meetings.
- 5.2 The proposal are more detailed than strictly necessary for a feasibility study, but will be useful to promote feedback and discussion to assist with development of the scheme.

- 5.3 For details see attached drawings (Appendix 1):
- 106-010-000-A-001 Location Plan
 - 106-010-000-A-002 Site Plan Overview
 - 106-010-000-A-004 Floor Plan
 - 106-010-000-A-005 Site Layout Options

6.0 **SERVICES**

6.1 Electricity Supply

The mains distribution runs down the road to a pole transformer which feeds the buildings (ex. chicken farm) behind the site. This has a 3-phase supply to it which could supply the development, however the transformer would probably need to be changed to a larger capacity unit for the additional load, especially since each apartment has its own cooking facility.

An application has been submitted to SP Energy Networks to establish the cost.

6.2 Foul Drainage

There is no public sewer and the distance and flatness of the ground across to the existing Greenacres site precludes connection of a foul drain because it would entail a pumping station, the cost of which is better spent on a local solution such as a bio-disc type treatment plant.

6.3 Storm Drainage

Mains storm drainage is not available.

Surface water will go to a soakaway, pending ground investigation and drainage design.

6.4 Water

There is no mains water supply in Fenemere Lane. The supply to Greenacres Farm and other nearby properties is all from a private supply that is already under-sized. It would not be adequate to also supply the new development.

The best solution is a new water supply taken from the mains supply in the Merrington Road some 800m away. There will be a significant cost to provide this connection.

6.5 Domestic Hot Water

A 'green' energy efficient solution would be central generation using heat from a 45kW air-to-water electrically powered 'heat pump' with pre-heating from a roof mounted solar thermal panel. This hot water would be circulated via a flow and return system around all the residences. A calorifier storage tank would also contain an immersion heater to "top-up" the temperature to achieve the 60°C necessary for circulation.

6.6 Space Heating

This can also be provided from the same heat pump that provided the hot water. It would be designed to cope with an external temperature of -5°C as CIBSE guidance with an electrical back up if required.

6.7 Cooling & Ventilation

Owing to the low occupation density and domestic nature, ventilation would be by trickle vents and openable windows for purge ventilation. Mechanical ventilation would only be provided to the kitchenettes and the bath/shower rooms and toilets.

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY

7.1 The project will have to comply with Shropshire Council's Sustainable Construction Policy. The cost of the development will exceed £1M and under the terms of the policy the project will have to undergo a BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) assessment.

The assessment will study the sustainability credentials of the project and will take into account a number of different factors including land use, ecology, building efficiency, access, along with many other criteria.

The policy states that a rating of 'excellent' should be achieved. This is a high standard and will require a genuine commitment from all members of the project team.

7.2 To further align with the Council's zero-carbon agenda a 'Passivhaus' approach could be taken with the project. This methodology is more focused on the design and construction of the building. It relies on good planning to take advantage of solar gain, very high levels of insulation, extreme attention to detail to restrict air loss and very efficient M&E services. Renewable energy systems such as photovoltaic cells to generate electricity, solar thermal systems to pre-heat water and electric 'heat pumps' would, in all likelihood, also be employed.

The result would be a property with very low running costs and excellent air quality.

7.3 The BREEAM process should assist the project in meeting the Council's requirements in terms of climate change and reaching a carbon neutral stance by 2030. PSG propose to aspiring to meet the Passivhaus standards, but as a minimum will be aiming for a BREEAM rating of Excellent with an EPC (energy performance certificate) rating of B and enhanced thermal performance with a 10% increase in the U value under the Building Regulations.

7.4 The cost and effort necessary to enhance the sustainability of the project will be significant, but the results will be of benefit to the service users, the Council and the wider community

8.0 COST ESTIMATE & PROCUREMENT

8.1 £ 3,125,669.40 excl. VAT, (incl. all professional fees, planning and building regulations fees, BREEAM and Passivhaus uplift, etc.)
See attached estimate (Appendix 2) for full details and exclusions

8.2 The scheme will be procured by competitive tender through Property Services Groups (PSG) current contractor framework using a JCT form of contract.

Either a 'traditional' (full in-house design) or 'design and build' (some design input by the contractor) approach could be taken. This will be subject to further discussion.

9.0 MAINTENANCE AND PROGRAMMED MAINTENANCE

9.1 Like any property the site will need a budget to cover maintenance cost for wear and tear, breakdowns, and damage, both accidental and deliberate. There will also be on-going servicing costs for mechanical systems, fire alarms, electrical equipment, etc.

9.2 In the first few years the costs should be relatively low, but will increase over time. PSG would suggest a working figure of £5,000 per annum is allowed.

10.0 PROGRAMME

10.1 Draft programme dates are suggested as below. These dates are considered realistic, but they are dependent on a number of factors including ecology issues, receipt of instructions to proceed, planning permission, meeting stage sign off dates, utilities suppliers, successful 'in budget' tender returns, etc.

10.2	• Feasibility Report & estimate	June 2020
	• SPOG meeting	9 July 2020
	• Capital Investment Board	22 July 2020
	• PSG topographic surveys	August 2021
	• Full Council meeting	24 September 2020
	• PSG appointment & consultation	October 2020
	• Scheme plans sign off by:	December 2020
	• Planning application submitted:	January 2020
	• Planning permission granted by:	March 2021(10 weeks)
	• Invitation to tender:	April 2021
	• tender return:	May 2021
	• tender reported:	May 2021
	• appoint contractor:	June 2021
	• Contractor mobilisation & design	June – August 2021 (10 weeks)
	• start on site:	August 2021
	• practical completion by:	May 2022 (10 months on site)

11.0 FURTHER SITE INVESTIGATION

11.1 Should the project proceed to the next stage the following will be required to further inform and develop the scheme design:

11.2 Ecology

- Assess results of GCN survey and take advice on next steps.
- Assess results of initial ECIA survey.
- Commission further ecology works as necessary.

Cost: TBC.

11.3 Flood Risk

- Proceed with flood risk assessment.

Cost: approx. £1,500 + VAT

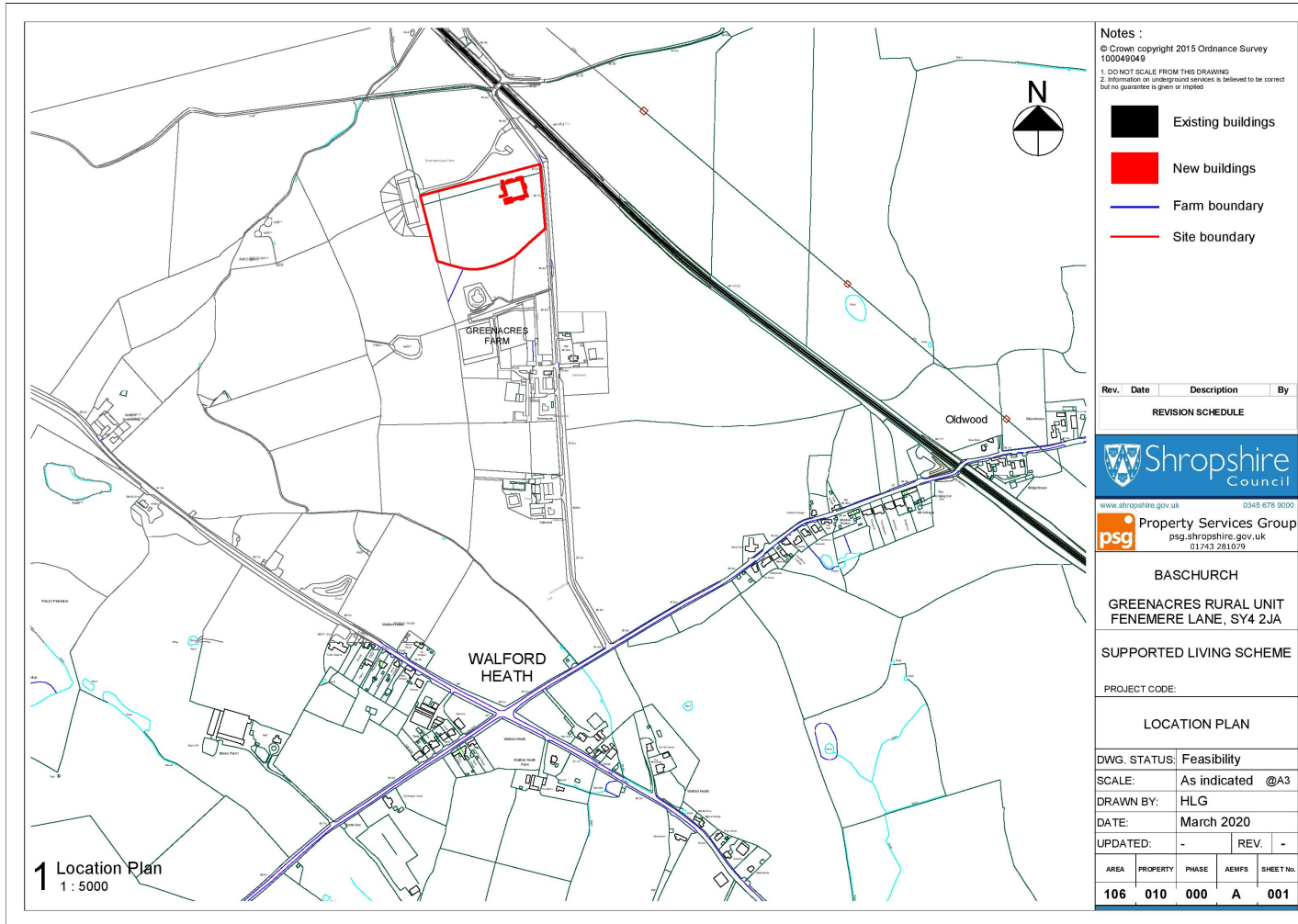
11.4 Ground Investigation

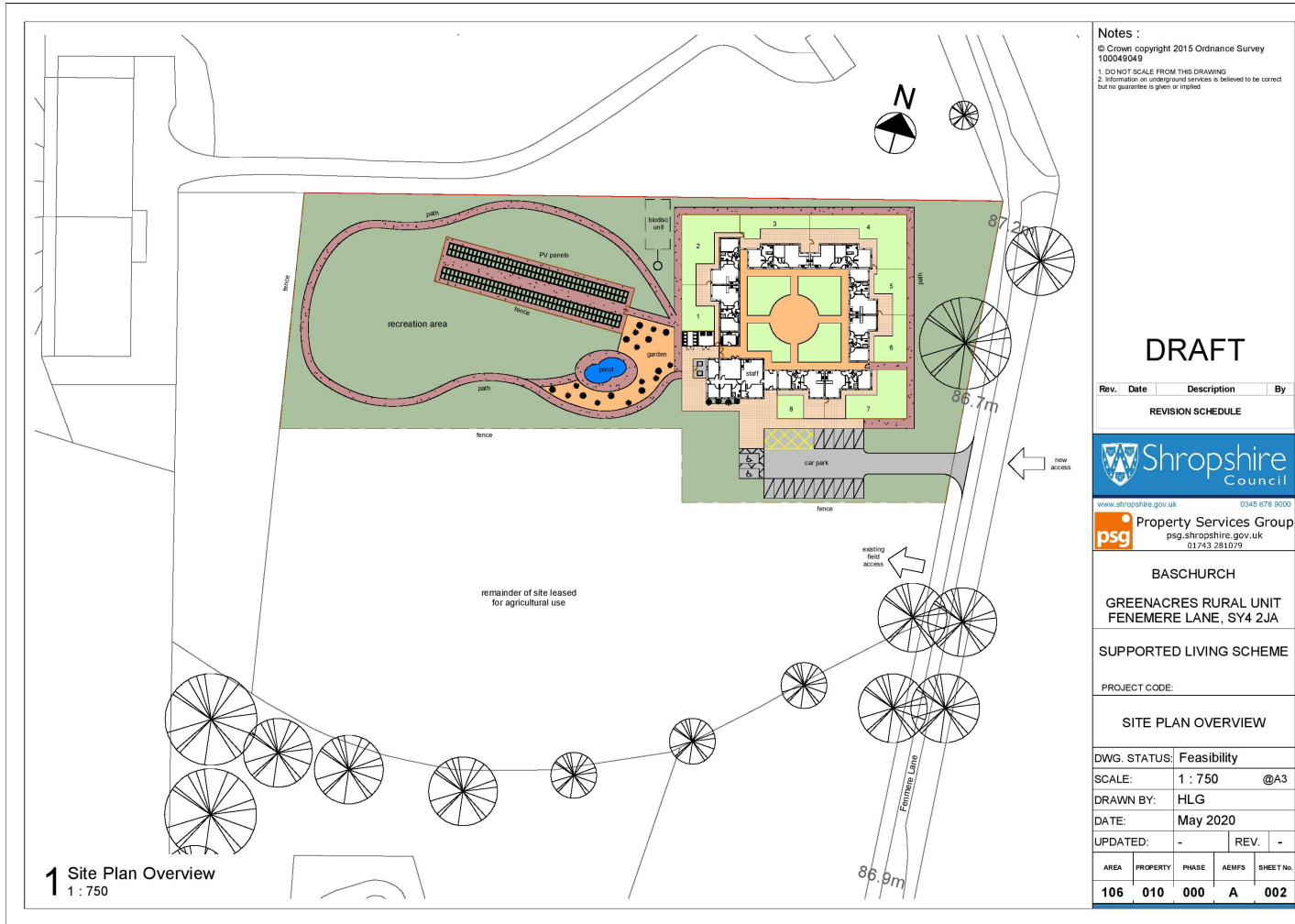
- Proceed with soil sampling and percolation tests.

Cost: £2,955 + VAT

APPENDIX 1: DRAWINGS

- 106-010-000-A-001 Location Plan
- 106-010-000-A-002 Site Plan Overview
- 106-010-000-A-004 Floor Plan
- 106-010-000-A-005 Site Layout Options







Notes :
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 100049049
 1. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING
 2. Information on underground services is believed to be correct
 but no guarantee is given or implied

DRAFT

Rev.	Date	Description	By
REVISION SCHEDULE			



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psg Property Services Group
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 01743 281079

BASCHURCH
GREENACRES RURAL UNIT
FENEMERE LANE, SY4 2JA

SUPPORTED LIVING SCHEME

PROJECT CODE:

FLOOR PLAN

DWG. STATUS: Feasibility

SCALE: 1 : 200 @A3

DRAWN BY: HLG

DATE: May 2020

UPDATED: - REV. -

AREA	PROPERTY	PHASE	AEMPS	SHEET No.
106	010	000	A	004



Notes :
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 100049049
 1. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING
 2. Information on underground services is believed to be correct but no guarantee is given or implied

Rev.	Date	Description	By
REVISION SCHEDULE			

Shropshire Council
 www.shropshire.gov.uk 0345 678 3000

psg Property Services Group
 psg.shropshire.gov.uk
 01743 281079

BASCHURCH
GREENACRES RURAL UNIT
FENEMERE LANE, SY4 2JA

SUPPORTED LIVING SCHEME

PROJECT CODE:

SITE LAYOUT OPTIONS

DWG. STATUS:	Feasibility		
SCALE:	1 : 1250	@A3	
DRAWN BY:	HLG		
DATE:	May 2020		
UPDATED:	-	REV.	-

AREA	PROPERTY	PHASE	AEMPS	SHEET No.
106	010	000	A	005

APPENDIX 2: COST ESTIMATE



Feasibility Estimate

Greenacres - Supported Living Scheme

June 2020

GREENACRES SUPPORTED LIVING
FEASIBILITY COST - JUNE 2020

Introduction

PSG have been requested to produce a Feasibility Budget for an updated scheme. Located at Greenacres Farm, Shropshire

The purpose of this report is to provide an estimate of cost for the proposed construction of a new standalone Supported Living located at Greenacres Farm, Shropshire.

The proposed development comprises the construction of a 6 one bedroom apartments, 2 two bedroom apartments, staff area with 2 bedrooms and associated common areas and external works.

Feasibility Cost Summary

	£	£ / m ²
New Build	1,182,315.00	1,587.00
External Works	315,985.00	424.14
Drainage	220,000.00	295.30
Services	338,100.00	453.83
Total Build Cost: (Exc Prelims, Contingencies, Design Fees & VAT)	2,056,400.00	2,760.27
Preliminaries @ 10%	205,640.00	276.03
Contingencies @ 5%	102,820.00	138.01
Total Construction Cost (Exc Fees):	2,364,860.00	3,174.31
PSG Professional Fees	212,837.40	285.69
Planning Fees	20,000.00	26.85
Building Regulation fees	10,000.00	13.42
Utility survey fees, GI etc	10,000.00	13.42
BREEAM Cost uplift @5%	118,243.00	158.72
Passivehaus cost uplift @15%	354,729.00	476.15
Ecology Surveys	10,000.00	13.42
Great Crested Newts	25,000.00	33.56
Total Feasibility Cost (Exc VAT)	3,125,669.40	4,195.53

The above initial feasibility costs (based on a gross floor area of 745m²) equated to:-

Cost per square meter (Total build cost only)	£2,760.27/m ²
Cost per square meter (Construction Cost)	£3,174.31/m ²
Cost per square meter (Feasibility Budget Cost)	£4,195.53/m ²

GREENACRES SUPPORTED LIVING

FEASIBILITY COST - JUNE 2020

Basis of Report

1.0 Information Used/ Assumptions

- 1.1 Harvey Gould Areas sent by e-mail totalling 743m²
- 1.2 The work will be undertaken in a single continuous uninterrupted operation (i.e. without the need for the works to be phased).
- 1.3 The Contractor's working areas will be vacant when he is undertaking the works.
- 1.4 The proposed works will be competitively tendered.
- 1.5 A provisional allowance of £80,000 has been included for photovoltaic panels located on the
- 1.6 A provisional allowance of £80,000 has been included for a new sewerage treatment plant
- 1.7 A provisional allowance of £35,000 has been included for a new mains water connection
- 1.8 The specification assumes that that building will achieve a BREEAM rating of 'Excellent'.

2.0 Inclusions

The following items are included in this estimate of costs:

- 2.1 PSG Design, Project Management, Quantity Surveyor, M&E Engineer and Principal Designer Fees
- 2.2 BREEAM Consultant Fees included in BREEAM uplift
- 2.3 A percentage cost to achieve the following:- BREEAM Excellent 5% uplift allowed, Passivehaus 15% uplift

3.0 Exclusions

- 3.1 Allowance for increased costs beyond the date of this report.
- 3.2 Removal of any contaminated material off site
- 3.3 Abnormal ground conditions
- 3.4 Diversion of any existing foul and storm water drains and flood alleviation works and services
- 3.5 Gas Connection charges
- 3.6 Ecological works (anything extra over the Newts)
- 3.7 Alterations to the existing drainage
- 3.8 Alterations to the existing Electrical Supply
- 3.9 Land purchase costs and associated acquisition/legal costs
- 3.10 VAT
- 3.11 Inflation (increase in building costs) past 4Q2021
- 3.12 Diversion of any existing foul and storm water drains and flood alleviation works
- 3.13 Internal and external CCTV
- 3.14 Works to neighbouring properties/boundary wall/rights of way/easement agreements
- 3.15 Any legal fees
- 3.16 Any marketing costs
- 3.17 Any extensive Acoustic requirements
- 3.18 Archaeology survey and impact on the programme of any finds
- 3.19 Obstructions in the ground
- 3.20 Temporary works and approvals
- 3.21 Excavating through rock
- 3.22 Ground improvement works

GREENACRES SUPPORTED LIVING

FEASIBILITY COST - JUNE 2020

3.0 Exclusions (Cont'd)

- 3.23 Ground water - dewatering and pumping
- 3.24 Section 104, 106 and 278 design and applications/payments
- 3.25 Highway improvement works
- 3.26 Secure by Design
- 3.27 Design and access statements and transport and traffic reports
- 3.28 Any infrastructure works (roads, drainage, main services etc) outside the boundary of the site
- 3.29 Enhanced specifications to comply with any onerous Planning Conditions.

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<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Council 24 th September 2020	<u>Public</u>

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

Responsible Officers

Rachel Robinson, Director of Public Health

Ian Kilby, Head of Planning Services

Hayley Owen, Interim Head of Economic Growth

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report is presented at a point in time when we have been dealing with a global health pandemic and we have all had to completely adapt the way we provide services to the public and businesses together with the significant social and economic changes we are facing. My portfolio has been impacted greatly and in the report we will cover the impacts and responses to Covid-19, how services have adapted successfully and the resource implications and uncertainties we now face.
- 1.2 We will also update on the progress with some key areas of work that were presented as forthcoming in the previous annual report to Council. This includes the preparation of our Community and Rural strategy in partnership with town and parish councils, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, business community and Elected Members. The strategy will provide a robust platform and framework for our county across a number of thematic priorities, these have been informed by and with our communities. It will act as the connecting strategy across many services we provide and reach into those services provided by our partners as well.
- 1.3 For the planning function of the Local Authority, the recently produced White Paper for consultation is a major document proposing some significant changes to our planning system.
- 1.4 Regulatory Services' environmental health team has been hugely involved in the response to the Covid-19 outbreak and their responsibilities for protecting the public has been invaluable to our

efforts locally. In addition, the Trading Standards & Licensing Service has played a key role in implementing national changes, particularly in relation to product safety, use of outdoor space and the supply of alcohol and entertainment. Officers have provided significant regulatory and enforcement expertise to guide and deliver our COVID-19 response. This has included working alongside other departments and services in the council, undertaking a range of enforcement and advisory functions and adopting a proportionate and pragmatic approach within businesses and the workplace for social distancing and covid-secure measures.

- 1.5 The report also picks up some cross-cutting priorities with Culture, Leisure and Tourism.
- 1.6 The report is separated into key service outcomes with further detailed performance data and challenges and priorities included in the appendices at the end of the report.

REPORT

2. Key Service Outcomes

- 2.1 Given the breadth of the portfolio, further detail is provided on each area of responsibility below and in the attached appendices.

3. Community and Rural Strategy

- 3.1 We have been developing the Community and Rural Strategy during 2019/20 building on a strong evidence base with the emerging intelligence and insights, and engagement with stakeholders including the Town and Parish Councils and Voluntary and Community and Social Enterprise sector, as well as with Members and senior managers. We used this work to develop the draft shared priorities. We have also listened to feedback and researched potential options during this work to inform proposals to deliver the shared priorities. Much of the development work had been completed before the flooding in February and the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown, and the opportunity was taken to consider and include the learning from this challenging time and recognising how resilient our communities are. We are planning for the draft strategy to come forward to Cabinet where we will be seeking agreement to consult on the shared priorities and the proposed approach. The delivery of the strategy will be underpinned by delivery plans which will set out what countywide strategic actions the Council will be taking to deliver the shared priorities, and if the approach is confirmed and adopted, there will also be plans at a local level that will set out what actions will be taken within communities.

- 3.2 Findings from the Community and Rural Strategy consultation have also fed into the development of the Leisure Strategy, which will be published for public consultation in September and the new Cultural Strategy for Shropshire, which is due for public consultation in October.

4. Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly

- 4.1 Shropshire Council's work with the Voluntary and Community Sector has grown over the last 12 months as Shropshire has responded to local emergency responses, including flooding and Covid-19. Shropshire VCS Assembly has increased its communication with the voluntary and community sector to ensure local groups and organisations have timely access to the information they need. Research has been undertaken by the VCS Assembly to better understand areas of pressure, with sector leaders supporting work to address concerns. Some of the key areas of development over the past year include:
- The local response to Covid-19 saw many new community groups being established to offer support to those in most need, and existing groups responding by quickly changing how they offer support. This has been supported by the work of the Community Reassurance Team, which continues to offer support and advice to the voluntary and community sector. A positive outcome has been stronger private sector partnerships and close working with and town and parish councils.
 - VCS organisations have increased their online and digital offers but remain concerned about the proportion of the population without the adequate equipment, skills or connectivity to benefit from online services.
 - Lobbying and influencing MPs on the provision of some financial support to the voluntary and community sector. Local MPs were very responsive and played a part in influencing the development of the national VCS Coronavirus Support Grant schemes.
 - The VCS Assembly has played a role in working with local and regional funders to influence the allocation of funds for flooding and coronavirus grant schemes, some ongoing partnership working is still in place.
 - Locally the VCS continues to play a key role in social prescribing and supports local health responses.
 - Shropshire VCS Assembly representatives have responded to the strategic discussions within Shropshire Council's Social Task Force. Three working groups have been established to focus on the following areas:
 - VCS infrastructure and back office support (to enable community responses to be sustained and make the best use of available expertise).
 - Poverty and Hardship (to prepare for community need generated as a result of economic and social changes following the pandemic).

- Commissioning (to review current arrangements and ensure local approaches to social value can be maximised).
- 4.2 As Portfolio Holder, I would like to take the opportunity to recognise and congratulate the voluntary and community sector, including the collective support from Shropshire VCS Assembly, and town and parish councils, including the work of Shropshire Association of Local Councils, in their response to Covid-19. I recognise how fortunate we are locally with the resilience of many of our communities. The Community and Rural Strategy will be important in working to endorse and enhance that resilience.

5. Place Plans

- 5.1 Following the series of place plan meeting held last spring/summer, we launched the new and revised Place Plans in November 2019. The Place Plan webpages on Shropshire Council's website have been updated
- 5.2 The published Place Plans continue to be 'live' documents which communities can update to reflect changing infrastructure needs. These updates can be made by working with the appropriate Place Plan Officer, who will be able to co-ordinate any necessary conversations with other council teams, and with relevant external partners.
- 5.3 We are looking to communicate to Parish Councils this Autumn the topic specific projects for Highways Infrastructure that have been prioritised for delivery.
- 5.4 The Place Plans continue to be the key documents for guiding the delivery of infrastructure in communities across the county.
- 5.5 Place Plan officers have been very busy in supporting the Community Reassurance work across the County as part of the Council's response to COVID and also played key role in supporting the Business Grants to thousands of businesses across Shropshire during this very challenging time for many local businesses.

6. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 6.1 In November 2018, Shropshire Council opened a call for Expressions of Interest (Eols) to the CIL Local fund. **25 have been supported so far** and the total CIL requested by these projects was over £1.3m. A number of the projects not supported focussed on highways and traffic management issues, ranging from speeding to parking. **We have been working on a Highway Framework package of projects that will support traffic management and other highways projects** in place plans areas. We are looking to communicate over the coming months with Elected Members and Towns and Parishes to move this forward.

Place Plan officers will be co-ordinating this activity alongside Highways colleagues.

- 6.2 We have appointed a CIL officer who has oversight of CIL, projects, EOI's and technical checks to ensure that the process works as efficiently and smoothly as possible. The table below details all CIL collected, spent and allocated to planned future projects at the end of March 2020.

TOTAL CIL COLLECTED AT 31 MARCH 2020	
ADMIN	£1,813,299
NEIGHBOURHOOD	£5,278,506
STRATEGIC	£2,919,611
LOCAL	£26,276,499
TOTAL	£36,287,915
TOTAL CIL LOCAL SPEND AT 31 MARCH 2020	£2,340,723
TOTAL CIL LOCAL ALLOCATION AT 31 MARCH 2020	£15,742,345
TOTAL CIL LOCAL SPEND AND ALLOCATION	£18,083,068

Balance of <u>Local and Strategic</u> funds available	£11,113,042
--	--------------------

- 6.3 Projects completed to date utilising CIL Local funding include:
- Classroom extensions at Baschurch Shifnal Primary Schools
 - Place Planning at Market Drayton Infants and Junior Primary Schools
 - Installation of a new drainage scheme at Birchmeadow Park, Broseley
 - New roundabout as part of the provision for 50 new homes in Shawbury
 - Construction of a Multi-Use Games Area at Dorrington
 - Replacement Sports Pavilion at Russell's Meadow, Church Stretton
- 6.4 The Government is currently consulting on significant changes to the planning system in a **white paper** published on 6th August – "Planning for the future". In this there are proposals to reconsider how infrastructure contributions are funded and to replace the existing s106 and CIL regime with a new Infrastructure Levy that could be spent on infrastructure projects. **A key change in the Government's proposals is that this would be payable at the end of a development rather than at commencement as is currently the case with CIL.**

7. Planning Services

- 7.1 Working with colleagues across the Council, other partners and stakeholders, Planning Services delivers time sensitive processes to a

large number of customer groups who will sometimes have different interests and objectives.

- 7.2 It has continued to do this through the Covid 19 pandemic working virtually across all teams. The Government has encouraged planning services to maintain service delivery and teams have adapted processes where required to support this. In particular Building Control has introduced a system of virtual inspections and an audit process utilising digital images and video inspections in place of face to face meetings. Working with colleagues from legal and democratic services the planning team has introduced a process for delivering virtual planning committees and I took a report to Council in July to provide members with feedback on this process to date.
- 7.3 The service provides an integrated approach to planning and development-related services, bringing together Regulatory Planning & Enforcement, Historic & Natural Environment Teams, Obligations Monitoring, Building Control and Systems Support, including Land Charges, Street Naming and Numbering and the Corporate Land and Property Gazetteer. Many of these teams generate income through statutory and discretionary fees providing around 70% of the service delivery cost overall, the income target for 2020/21 is almost £4 million (£3,936,400). In addition, it is responsible for monitoring and collecting developer contributions.
- 7.4 Income has inevitably been impacted by Covid 19 with the housing and development markets shutting down through the spring and income figures were revised down. The planning service continued to issue regulatory decisions through this period in order to support the economy and I can report with the re-opening of the housing market the bounce back is currently strong across the county, the land charges team for example recording an income level for July that equals that for the previous three months.
- 7.5 A full process review of the Development Management service was completed earlier this year and this has had the effect of improving performance from a customer perspective resulting in a 22% time saving for the processing of straightforward planning applications.
- 7.6 Key issues this year have been about development quality across the county, Shropshire engaged with the West Midlands Combined Authority in the production of a regional design charter which the Council has adopted as a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 7.7 As regulators the focus is getting the right development in the right place, ensuring that buildings and construction is safe and that the environmental impacts of development are properly considered through the process. There have been an increasing number of compliance and enforcement issues for both planning and building control teams that can be both time consuming and resource demanding in part due to

there being more development taking place on the ground generally. The Council was successful in drawing down £40,000 to fund additional resource to deal with planning enforcement issues in the greenbelt.

- 7.8 Building Control has continued to make gains in respect to its market share for July 2020 which is as follows:-

Shropshire Building Control	56%
Private Building Control	44%

- 7.9 This is another month where we have made gains over the private sector and we are more than 12% ahead in terms of applications in July, this is a 14% improvement on the lowest percentage of 42% which we experienced last year.
- 7.10 The Historic & Natural Environment Team continues to support other regulatory decision taking and has been instrumental in securing £653,000 of external funding to support a 4 year project to provide conservation led regeneration in Oswestry and a project officer is being recruited now to lead on this Heritage Action Zone.
- 7.11 The Government has recently launched a consultation on widespread changes to the planning system in a White Paper which it intends improve speed for plan making and decision taking, reduce complexity and increase quality of outcomes.
- 7.12 Planning Service functions and outcomes are evidenced based and performance is measured against this. With such a large geographic, quantitative and complex regulatory area involving a broad range of stakeholders with different interests perceptions about the service do not always align with the data. **See Appendix 1** for performance data.

8. Regulatory Services

- 8.1 **Overview:** Regulatory Services delivers a diverse range of statutory functions focussed on environmental factors which impact on health. The Service delivers environmental health functions such as Food Safety, Health and Safety, Private Rented Housing, Environmental Protection, Pest Control; Ecology and some of the trading standards functions such as Animal Health, Feed Hygiene, Food Standards, Scam Prevention and Petroleum Licensing. Key Performance indicators are presented in **Appendix 2**. Regulatory Services' key achievements and challenges for 2019/20 to the present time are presented in **Appendix 3**.
- 8.2 **Contribution to Public Health:** The focus of Regulatory Services' Environmental Health work since the inception of the profession in the early 19th century, has been on ensuring the health and well-being of individuals and the communities we serve. Environmental health has

been at the heart of the 19th and 20th century public health movement and health improvement. Our Environmental Health Practitioners, who have gone through broad-based, public health-focused education and training, are referred to as the original public health professionals. These skills have proved to be invaluable to respond to and tackle the challenges COVID-19 has presented.

- 8.3 **Capacity:** Last year's report highlighted the risks regarding capacity for the Service to fulfil all its complex, high risk statutory duties. This has been compounded by the additional duties and priorities in relation to COVID-19 that the Service has had to respond to. This has been a significant challenge and the hard work, commitment, skill and expertise of the Regulatory Services team is recognised and commended.
- 8.4 **COVID-19:** Regulatory Services' Environmental Health functions have had a vital role in protecting the public during the pandemic. A significant amount of work has taken place by the service behind the scenes to protect the health of people in Shropshire. The service was already set up to work from home and was already set up with Microsoft Teams so was able to quickly and seamlessly transition to home working as lockdown was introduced. The service has taken a lead role in protecting the public through a range of enforcement and advisory functions, adopting a proportionate and pragmatic approach to enforcing business restrictions and social distancing in the workplace. This work has included:
- **Protecting the Food Chain: Maintaining safe and hygienic practices which ensure food is safe to eat.** At the start of the pandemic, Regulatory Services proactively contacted volunteers and businesses, particularly those who were diversifying their operations, to offer expert advice and guidance so that they could continue to provide food which is safe to eat. The team worked with voluntary, community and business sectors to support them with food hygiene and food standards advice to help them respond to the increasing demand to provide food for some of the most vulnerable residents in Shropshire. Allergic reactions to food ingredients can be fatal and changes in food operations also posed that additional risk which needed to be identified and controlled.
 - **Business Closures:** Regulatory Services has had a vital role in protecting the public and employees, we provided advice on the recent COVID-19 business closure regulations during our interactions with food businesses and premises that we are the enforcing authority for health and safety legislation.
 - **COVID Secure Workplaces:** Regulatory Service are responsible for health and safety regulation in shops, offices, warehouses, residential care homes, restaurants, pubs, hotels and leisure premises. This work includes ensuring that these workplaces are COVID secure so that employees returning to work and members of the public are protected as much as possible.

- **Outbreak Management:** Since the start of the pandemic four officers were embedded in Shropshire Council's Health Protection Cell, initially supporting the work with Care Homes and then later to deliver the requirements of the Outbreak Plan. Regulatory Services' highly skilled and competent public health specialists' knowledge, skills and competency base have been crucial to supporting the Director of Public Health and wider public health community. Regulatory Services has been flexible and proactive in joining forces with the Health Protection Cell at a time of national emergency. The Director of Public Health has recognised that she has access to a highly trained and competent public health workforce in Regulatory Services and has utilised this offer of support.
- **Environmental and Community Protection:** Lockdown created an environment where levels of tolerance and consideration were tested and there was an increase in complaints about both noise nuisance and smoke from bonfires. Officers found that some neighbours gave little consideration to the impact of their actions on others, whilst other neighbours became more sensitive to sources of annoyance. Increased public anxiety contributed to individuals lack of resilience to deal with causes of annoyance. As lockdown restrictions eased and the hospitality sector has adapted to provide more outdoor provision, this has introduced further complaints relating to noise nuisance. Complaint levels have increased since March 2020 and we have seen a 44% increase in noise compared to last year.

9. Trading Standards and Licensing Service

- 9.1 **Overview:** The Trading Standards and Licensing Service aims to drive forward protection of the public and safeguarding of businesses through six strategic priorities. The Service administers the Blue Badge Scheme, provides the full range of licensing functions, undertakes parking enforcement, and delivers those trading standards functions that relate to product safety and fair trading. These are all essential statutory functions that are designed to protect residents, the environment, animals and the local economy from unacceptable harm. Key issues and achievements in 2019/20 are detailed below, with further details available in **Appendix 4**.
- 9.2 **Capacity:** Whilst there has and continues to be capacity issues across the Service to deliver the required range of statutory functions to an adequate level, Covid-19 has significantly compounded this position, particularly in relation to the lack of multi-skilled professionally qualified officers with the necessary level of regulatory knowledge and investigative skills to respond to high risk and challenging enforcement situations.

- 9.3 **Covid-19:** The Service has and continues to provide a key role in protecting communities from Covid-19 through advice to the public and businesses, particularly licensed premises such as pubs and those responsible for licensed temporary events, in respect of the ever-changing business closure requirements and other restrictions that have been in force since March 2020. Whilst a proportionate and pragmatic approach to enforcement has been adopted, there has been the need for robust enforcement interventions where businesses have failed to comply with the restrictions.
- 9.4 As lockdown has eased, the Service has been instrumental in providing support to businesses through the implementation and enforcement of the pavement licence scheme, which has facilitated an increased use of outdoor space for trading purposes. Key advice has also been provided on the use of powers that have more recently been granted to the Council to prevent and manage outbreaks, specifically in relation to the outbreak in Craven Arms.
- 9.5 Certain licensing and penalty charge notice processing steps have had to be adapted to take account of the impact of Covid-19 and there is now a back-log of administrative and inspection work that will require additional resources to complete over the forthcoming months. The recruitment of two additional Civil Enforcement Officers has been delayed and this has and will continue to impact on the effectiveness and resilience of the parking enforcement function.
- 9.6 **Key achievements:**
- Almost 7,000 Blue Badge applications were received in 2019/20, and between August 2019 and July 2020, there were 304 applications submitted under the 'non-physical/hidden' disabilities criteria that came into effect at the beginning of August 2019.
 - Almost 6,000 licences, permits registrations, notices and consents have been administered and enforced.
 - In tackling unfair and fraudulent trading, consumer detriment prevented, together with fines, costs, compensation and direct prevention of financial loss, has totalled £142,348.
 - Fifty suspected unsafe products (cosmetics and baby/child related items) were prevented from entering the market place.
 - Sales of age-restricted products (tobacco, alcohol, fireworks, knives, nicotine inhaling products) in test-purchasing operations was 18%, compared with 28% in 2018/19; although sales of nicotine inhaling products (e-cigarettes) saw an increase, and this will continue to be a focus of future enforcement activity.
 - Nearly 9,000 hours of 'on the beat' parking enforcement was undertaken in relation to on street parking and in Council car parks to ensure the safety of the highway and to protect the public and motorists.

10 Key priorities for forthcoming year

- Bring forward the draft Community and Rural Strategy for consultation.
- Continue to deliver infrastructure supported with CIL funding based on the Place Plans, particularly to include highways schemes.
- Respond to the Government's consultation on the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper August 2020.
- Respond to Governments Consultation on changes to planning policy and regulations published August 2020.
- As well as the statutory ongoing priorities in Planning Services, there is a focus on supporting a number of major projects that are coming forward including the former Ironbridge Power Station and Sustainable Urban Extension West in Shrewsbury.
- Revise the Council's Regulation of Investigatory Powers Policy and set out formally the manner in which the Council will use social media in regulatory and other related work.
- There are a number of competing demands placed on the Licensing Service that will be difficult to balance; however, it will be necessary to commence the review of the Gambling Act 2005 Policy Statement in the early part of 2021 to ensure a revised policy is ready to be implemented by the end of 2021. The review and revision is a legal requirement within the Gambling Act 2005
- Review and revise the Council's Street Trading Policy to address issues that have arisen over the operation of the policy over the previous two years.
- Resolve the impact of existing vacancies on delivery of the statutory Trading Standards functions.
- Increase the capacity in the Parking Enforcement Team to further support the Council's Parking Strategy.

11 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 11.1 The key risks within the portfolio relate to insufficient resources to fulfil complex, high risk statutory duties and to respond to and deal with new legislation. This has been particularly relevant this year with the unprecedented challenges we have faced with the Covid-19 pandemic. There is also a risk regarding failure of the Council to carry out the full programme of food interventions.

- 11.2 There are a number of risks and cost pressures around trading standards and licensing services due to changing legislation, nationally set fees and rising demand that members have been advised are included in risk registers.

12 Financial Implications

- 12.1 Income received by the Council for Planning Services functions is directly linked to activity in the development sector and subject to market and seasonal fluctuation. This will continue to be closely monitored by officers and has been impacted by Covid-19 and the slowing of the development market.
- 12.2 In 19/20 planning services achieved £4.382m of income, due to the impact of Covid-19 this income is estimated to fall to £3.231m, the shortfall will be made up to some extent (around £0.25m) by co-funding from central government, but there will remain a reduction compared to previous years.
- 12.3 Up until the end of March 2020, £2,340,723 of the CIL local funds have been spent on approved projects, with a further **£15,742,345 having been allocated to projects at the end of March 2020**. Further work is being undertaken on highways projects across place plan areas to explore further spend in this area.
- 12.4 All of the parts of Planning Services are a key contributor to the delivery of new homes which is closely monitored by Central Government and determines the amount of New Homes Bonus (NHB) that the Council receives. NHB incentivises housing delivery with a particular emphasis on affordable housing and reuse of empty properties. NHB has been used to help support further activities in these areas, although it is not ring-fenced.
- 12.5 Income received by the Council for licensing purposes is directly linked to activity in the leisure and hospitality industries and, therefore, it has and will continue to be impacted by COVID-19. In 2019/20 the income was not significantly impacted because it was close to year end before the COVID-19 restrictions took effect. However, the licence fee income position for 2020/21 is anticipated to return a shortfall of £190,000 against a target of £708,000. One-off funding from MHCLG is expected to substantially mitigate the impact of the lost income and, therefore, the licensing budget will be left to bear 25% of the total losses incurred as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions.
- 12.6 Fees from penalty charge notices is clearly directly linked to motorists travelling and parking vehicles. This was significantly impacted during lockdown and the position is that 2020/21 is anticipated to return a shortfall of £188,000 against a target of £630,000; as with licence fee income, one-off funding from MHCLG is expected to reduce this impact

and the parking enforcement budget will incur only 25% of these losses.

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

Corporate and Service Plans

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

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

Local Member : All Shropshire Council Members

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Planning Services Performance Highlights

Appendix 2 - Regulatory Services' Key Performance Indicators 2019/20 and 2018/19

Appendix 3 – Regulatory Services' Key Achievements and Challenges for 2019/20 to 31st July 2020

Appendix 4 - Trading Standards and Licensing Service

Appendix 1 PLANNING SERVICES Performance Highlights 2019/20

- Largest planning authority in West Midlands region outside Birmingham with a geography larger than Luxembourg, over 5,500 regulatory decisions issued each year
- Agile and flexible paperless process with self-serve options complementing face to face
- Planning applications approved – Q1 92.60%, Q2 91.48%, Q3 90.84%, Q4 91.75% (91.68%)
- Major applications approved - Q1 88.46%, Q2 87.50%, Q3 80.%, Q4 95% (87.76%)
- Over 11,000 outstanding planning permissions for residential development
- 96% of planning applications are delegated to officers for consideration – Q1 95.96%, Q2 95.44%, Q3 96.85%, Q4 97.66 (96.43%)
- Applications (overall) determined in timeframe agreed with applicant – Q1 89.64%, Q2 89.68%, Q3 87.54%, Q4 89.41%, (89.12%)
- Strong community alignment - 88% of decisions align with view of parish or town council – Q1 89.79%, Q2 88.30%, Q3 87.29%, Q4 90.70%, (89.03%)
- Appeals dismissed – Q1 71.43%, Q2 75%, Q3 56%, Q4 85.71% (71.11%)

- S106 contributions collected in 2019/20 - £3.6M (of which £1.48M relates to Affordable Housing)
- £17.8M S106 contributions outstanding of which £4.5M relates to Affordable Housing to be collected when development commences/trigger point met
- Enforcement cases received - Q1 148, Q2 152, Q3 130, Q4 178, (608)
- Enforcement Cases Closed - Q1 146, Q2 169, Q3 149, Q4 166 (630)
- Extensive Rich and Diverse Historic & Natural Environment 441 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 6904 Listed Buildings, 127 Conservation Areas, 34 Registered Parks, 1 Registered Battlefield, 2 World Heritage Sites, 35,000 non-designated heritage assets, 972 confirmed tree preservation orders
- Over 5,500 land charges searches dispatched annually on average
- On average 60 streets, 200 residential properties and 500 commercial properties added to the gazetteer annually
- Building Control inspections carried out within 24 hours of required date – Q1 95.88%, Q2 95.90%, Q3 91.60%, Q4 95.29% (94.73%)
- Q1 – April / June 2019, Q2 July / September 2019, Q3 October / December 2019, Q4 January / March 2020

Appendix 2

Regulatory Services' Key Performance Indicators 2019/20 and 2018/19

Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators	2018/19 Performance	2019/20
Private Rented Sector Housing is safe for tenants	Number of service requests	316	247
	Number of serious hazards identified during inspection	99	80
	Number of serious hazards removed.	31 (out of 64 possible to resolve)	29 (out of 50 possible to resolve)
	Total number of HMOs licensed	61	66
	Public Health Outcome 1.17 Fuel Poverty	12.3%	Not available
	LAHS annual return		No

Empty Properties are not detrimental to communities	Number of properties returned to use	11	12
	Number of empty homes service requests	71	81
Clean Air	Number of Air Quality Management Areas	2	2
	Number of Permitted Processes Inspected (% of required programme completed)	72 (95%)	54 (To follow)
	Annual Screening Review Submitted to DEFRA	Yes May 2020	No
	Public Health Outcome 3:01	3.7% (2017)	3.8% (2018)
Residents' health and the use and enjoyment of their home is not affected by a statutory nuisance	Number of domestic noise nuisance service requests	561	514
	Number of domestic nuisance service requests (other than noise)	145	134
	Number of commercial noise nuisance service requests	282	262
	Number of commercial nuisance (other than noise) service requests	320	125
	Number of anti-social behaviour risk assessment conferences	3	1
	Public Health Outcome 1.14	2.7 per 1000 population (modelled value for 2015/16)	2.7 (2018/19)
	CIEH Noise Survey	Yes	Yes
Workplaces are safe	Number of accidents reported	173	173
	Number of Health and Safety Service Requests	82	127
	Number of Health and Safety Interventions	54	To follow
	LAE1 return		-
	Number of petroleum inspections	35	32
	Sportsground Safety Certificate issued and reviewed on time	3	3
Historic Land Contamination does not cause ill health	Planning Applications reviewed for contaminated land	240	226
	Number of Contaminated Land Environmental Information Requests (EIR)	68	57

Private Water Supplies are safe for residents and visitors to drink	No of samples taken	454	460	
	% of samples Pass	69%	62%	
	Number of risk assessment carried	232 overall programme	294 overall programme (not in year)	
	% of required programme completed	34%	36%	
	No of Section 18 notices issued	31	19	
	No of Section 18 notices revoked	23	2	
	DWI Return		Yes	
Food is safe to eat	Number of interventions carried out (% of required programme completed)	1689 out of 3131 (54%)	2441 out of 4055 (60%)	
	Number of food service requests	178	190	
	Number of food hygiene service requests	174	155	
	Number of food outbreaks	1	0	
	% of broadly compliant food premises	94%	94.7%	
	Food Standards Agency Performance Food Hygiene Indicator	0.82	0.84	
	Food Standards Interventions carried out	415	251	
	Feed Standards interventions carried out	83	To follow	
		LAEMS Return		Yes
		FSA Feed Return		Yes
The natural environment is protected and maximised for future generations	Public Health Outcome 1.16: utilisation of outdoor space	16.5% (2015/16)	16.5% (2015/16)	
	Number of planning applications reviewed for ecology	2671	2179	
Environmental health statutory functions which benefit health are fulfilled	Total No of pest control treatment visits carried out (charged for service)	3774	3297	
	No of service requests reporting rats/mice requiring action under Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949	240	271	
	BPCA Annual Return	Yes	-	
	Number of Public Health act funerals carried out	15	20	
	Number of Filthy and Verminous service requests	19	11	

	Number of complaints of insecure buildings requiring action to secure against unauthorised access	15	7
	Number of Private drainage service requests	78	47
Animal Health	Animal Health risk rated interventions	108	To follow
	Animal Health non-risk Rated Intervention	233	To follow
	AH Service requests	307	305
	AH134 DEFRA return		To follow
	DEFRA welfare in transit return		To follow

Appendix 3:

Regulatory Services' Key Achievements and Challenges for 2019/20 to 31st July 2020.

Below are the key achievements and challenges for the service which are set out against the relevant Service Strategic Priority.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Clean Air

- An unintended but welcome consequence of the COVID-19 lockdown has been a widely reported significant reduction across the world in the levels of air pollution. As journeys were limited to those which were deemed essential during the lockdown restrictions to control the spread of Covid-19, the reduction in traffic, which is a major source of pollution, had a positive impact on air quality. Air quality, of course, is also dependant on the weather which can for example, disperse or concentrate it in an area.
- Poor air quality is a significant health issue. There is strong evidence associating air pollution with increased mortality and ill-health, including exacerbation of asthma, effects on lung function, increases in respiratory and cardiovascular

hospital admissions, and even the onset of dementia. Older people, children and those with pre-existing illness are more vulnerable to the adverse health effects of air pollution.

- In 2019, DEFRA awarded Shropshire Council's Regulatory Services Team with £50,000 grant funding to improve our understanding and knowledge of the air quality in the County and raise awareness of any air quality challenges. As part of this work we are using Zephyr sensors to measure air pollutant concentrations in real time. The zephyr monitors are currently located in our two air quality management areas of Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury; additionally, another zephyr monitor is temporarily located in Much Wenlock.
- We are also developing a public website so that the zephyr monitoring data is accessible to everyone and we hope this will be available soon.
- Inspections of industrial sites which are operated under Environmental Permits regulated by the Council have not been possible during lockdown so there is a backlog of these inspections building up. However, the risk to the environment from this is relatively low as the responsibility to comply lies with the operators and, in many cases, non-compliance would result in complaints giving us the intelligence that something might be wrong. However, the government has not relaxed the statutory duty to undertake these inspections so they will have to be done later in the year.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Residents' health and the use and enjoyment of their home is not affected by a statutory nuisance.

- During lockdown, the team attempted to resolve more nuisance complaints remotely. Where resolution could not be achieved remotely, visits for monitoring and escalated enforcement are still required. This and the increase in complaints has created a backlog which will affect response times and service quality for customers.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Historic land contamination does not cause ill health

- In line with the Government's stated policy we continue to assess planning applications for contaminated land issues making sure that land is cleaned up as necessary as it is redeveloped. However, due to the government ceasing all grant aided funding of proactive part IIA work a few years ago, no work to comply with the statutory duty to inspect and deal with existing sites in a prioritised manner is currently being undertaken.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Private Water Supplies are safe to drink

- There are approximately 2500 private water supplies in Shropshire, providing drinking water from wells, boreholes and springs rather than from mains water supply to approximately 14,000 people. The Council has a duty to assess the risks from these supplies and advise the owners of the precautions to take to prevent illness in themselves and others who they supply. The service carries out a programme of sampling and risk assessment of private water supplies.
- In 2019 Public Health England updated their advice in relation to nitrate in drinking water following new information from the World Health Organization

and Health Canada on the potential effects on the thyroid and because total intake from water and diet could exceed the European Food Safety Authority Acceptable Daily Intake for adults above a water concentration of 50 mg/l. As a result, PHE does not recommend anyone should regularly consume water above 50 mg/l. Therefore, Local Authorities can no longer grant relaxations for nitrate above 50 mg/l. Many supplies in Shropshire contain levels of nitrates which exceed the nitrate standard. If a supply fails to meet the nitrate standard in 2020, a Regulation 18 Notice must be served due to the ongoing and potential danger to health.

- During 2019/20, 460 water samples were taken of which 62% were safe for human consumption. Due to limited resources, only 35% of the risk assessment programme required by the Drinking Water Inspectorate has been completed. In 2019/20, 19 notices have been served on private water supplies of which 2 have been revoked after suitable works have been carried out to protect the private water supply.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Human food chain is safe

- Last year, it was reported that the Food Standards Agency had raised concerns about the failure of the Council to carry out the full programme of food interventions required by the Food Law Code of Practice.
- During 2019/20 the Service was on target to achieve 100% of all high and medium risk interventions in line with the Food Law Code of Practice.
- Our programme of interventions was deferred in early March 2020 with agreement of the Food Standards Agency to enable us to divert diminished resources to urgent reactive work required during the COVID-19 emergency and this was also implemented so that footfall in food business establishments was minimal to reduce risks of transmitting COVID-19. As a result, we were unable to complete our planned programme.
- During 2019/20 we employed two additional temporary officers to help clear the backlog of due interventions in relation to E-rated premises (which are the lowest risk premises) and premises outside the inspection programme, as required by the Food Standards Agency. Progress is being made in relation to ensuring that all premises receive an appropriate intervention but this has been temporarily suspended due to COVID pressures.
- A concerted effort has also been made to reduce the number of Unrated premises and over 600 interventions have been undertaken in this category, which highlights the elevated throughput of premises registrations in Shropshire. At the end of March 2020 there were just over 100 unrated premises.
- A total of 4132 food establishments were registered in Shropshire at 30th June 2020. (This has reduced from 4260 registered at 31 March 2019).
- 2441 food hygiene interventions were carried out which represents 60% of the food hygiene interventions required by the Food Standards Agency Code of Practice(1689 intervention in 2018/19 representing 54%).
- The percentage of food establishments across Shropshire achieving Broad compliance has seen a marginal increase to 94.7% (94% in 2018/19). Food

establishments which are 'broadly compliant' achieve an equivalent to the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) rating of 3 'generally satisfactory' or better.

- There was a slight decrease in the total number of complaints about the safety and quality of food and the hygiene standards of food establishments which we investigated from 352 in 2018/19 to 345 in 2019/20. The number of complaints investigated about the safety and quality of food (190) increased from 178 in the previous year and the number of complaints investigated about the hygiene standards of food premises (155) decreased from 174 in 2018/19.
- A Journal report co-authored by two of our Environmental Health Professionals and Public Health England was published in "Epidemiology and Infection" in February 2020 describing an outbreak of *Clostridium perfringens* food poisoning in Shropshire which was linked to leeks in cheese sauce.
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/epidemiology-and-infection/article/outbreak-of-clostridium-perfringens-food-poisoning-linked-to-leeks-in-cheese-sauce-an-unusual-source/1816EF5763B5435E72B88E09266A9177>

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: The natural environment is protected and maximised for future generations

- 52 Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs) were completed to protect Shropshire's wildlife sites of international importance and to help reduce the risk of legal challenge to planning permissions and are a legal requirement for Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2179 planning consultations were responded to on ecological matters to protect important habitats and species to help discharge the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty.
- Produced the Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report for the Strategic Sites consultation as part of the Local Plan Review.
- Officer looked at 102 new SLAA sites and provided more detailed comments on 45 preferred sites.
- On average, 73% of planning consultations are completed within the deadline. There are a number of reasons behind the delays in those which were not completed within the deadline which the Service has been working with Planning colleagues to address. This includes Ecology Officers providing training sessions for Planning Officers, so they are able to use standing advice for the lower risk applications in order for the Ecologists to focus on the more complex cases. An average of 18% of consultations each month lack essential information required by Ecology to assess the issue and advice has been provided about how this could be addressed through the validation stage. The main cause for delay centres around the need to address case law and technical and legal aspects of the more complex cases. A briefing on Poultry Units was given to members of the Planning Committee in November 2019.
- Consideration of 76 '3 derogation tests' under the Habitats Regulations for applications where a European Protected Species licence is required (for bats and GCN).

- 69 Ecological Clerk of Works conditions recommended to protect European and UK protected species where a licence isn't required but Reasonable Avoidance Measures are necessary to ensure no criminal offence.
- Working with Planning Policy to provide expert strategic and technical support throughout the process of developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy. Ecology Officers have worked collaboratively with the consultant (Land Use Consultants) including reviewing, updating and expanding Shropshire Council's Open Space data – 1500 GIS data records for open space sites have been individually checked and reviewed, 1059 new records added to the Open Space dataset and 150 sites that were missing entirely from the data records added and classified. Alongside this Officers have reviewed ongoing work by the consultant and provided constructive critical oversight on the progress and direction of the commission. We have been actively seeking inter-team collaboration and have provided expert support on incorporating best practice for Green Infrastructure to the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan, Place Plan Review, and Shropshire Active Travel Strategy. We are coordinating the integration of Green Infrastructure policies with Biodiversity Net Gain, Active Travel and the revised Planning for the Future strategy.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Farm animals and livestock are healthy, protected from cruelty and the spread of disease is prevented

Regulatory Services' Animal Health Officers carry out regular checks to ensure animal welfare legislation is adhered to. The following cases were found to be in breach of the legislation to protect animals will be investigated and required escalated enforcement action in line with the Council's Better Regulation and Enforcement Policy:

- In June 2019, a farmer was issued with a community punishment order of 100 hours unpaid work and to pay legal costs of £4,306 by Shrewsbury Crown Court following proceedings against him for causing unnecessary suffering to multiple bovines. Officers witnessed down bovines unable to stand, insufficient dry bedding, exposed remains and inappropriate medical care.
- In July 2019, a livestock transporter was fined by Telford Magistrates Court £2100 for causing unnecessary suffering to a bovine which had fallen whilst unloading and was unable to stand. The defendant kicked the cow numerous times to get it to stand up and released other bovines from the vehicle causing the down cow to be trodden on.

In August 2019, a Simple Caution was issued by the courts to a Farmer who caused unnecessary suffering to sheep stock. He had failed to provide medical care to the animals for sheep scab and had failed to remove skeletal sheep carcasses and remains in timely manner allowing other animal access which is a disease risk.

Appendix 4 Trading Standards and Licensing Service

The Trading Standards and Licensing Service aims to **drive forward protection of the public and safeguarding of businesses** through the following strategic priorities:

- Protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- Preventing harm, detriment and financial loss to individuals, communities and businesses.
- Promoting equality and social inclusion for individuals.
- Protecting the welfare of companion animals.
- Protecting the local environment to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Supporting businesses to thrive by maintaining a fair commercial environment.

The Service delivers essential statutory services that are designed to protect residents, animals, the environment and the local economy from unacceptable harm. The Service is committed to an intelligence led and risk-based approach to determine the most effective ways to respond to the demands placed upon it and has continued to work with a range of partners, both internally and externally, in order to ensure the Council complies with its consumer protection and business-related statutory duties in line with the strategic priorities set out above.

The Service administers the Blue Badge Scheme across Shropshire on behalf of the Department for Transport (DfT), provides the full range of licensing functions, undertakes parking enforcement, including the first stage of the associated penalty charge notice processing, and delivers those trading standards functions that relate specifically to safety and fair trading.

The 2019/20 key achievements of the Trading Standards and Licensing Service, together with the current and future concerns are set out below.

Blue Badge Administration

Blue Badges help people to more readily access goods, services and other facilities and in doing so increases independence and improved health and well-being of individual badge holders and, where relevant, also that of their carers.

A total of 6,991 Blue Badge applications were received and 5,727 (82%) were granted to Shropshire residents who have a disability that severely impacts their mobility. A total of 14,206 people in Shropshire currently hold a Blue Badge.

From August 2019, individuals with 'non-physical/hidden' disabilities became eligible to apply for a Blue Badge. These are people with an enduring and substantial disability that causes them, during the course of a journey to be unable to walk, experience very considerable difficulty whilst walking, which may include very considerable psychological distress, or be at risk of serious harm whilst walking, or pose, whilst walking, a risk of serious harm to any other person. In the period from 30 August 2019 to 31 July 2020, the Service has received 304 applications from individuals with 'non-physical/hidden' disabilities and 230 (76%) have been granted.

To increase the ability to respond to applications overall, the Blue Badge service underwent a digital transformation step change in late 2019. This has enabled Blue Badge administration to continue throughout the response to Covid-19 with little need for any additional changes. Certain applications that require evidence from an 'expert assessor' (who will be one or more medical and/or healthcare professionals) have, however, been subject to delays; these delays have been outside the control of the Service and is in part the reason for the slightly lower percentage that have been granted compared with the overall figure.

Parking Enforcement

The work of the Parking Enforcement Team continues to support, the Council's Parking Strategy by encouraging motorists to pay to park in the most appropriate carpark or on-street in those streets controlled by Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). For parking enforcement to be at its most effective, it is crucial that all relevant 'signs and lines' are maintained in good condition. The lockdown period at the start of the Covid-19 response enabled a programme of 'signs and lines' maintenance, which has improved the enforcement of the TROs; however, it is vital that this continues to ensure enforcement remains effective. The nationally set penalty charge notice fees remain unchanged and continue to be too low to act as an effective deterrent. This undermines the Parking Strategy objectives and the reputation of the Council.

Parking enforcement also plays an important role in reducing congestion on Shropshire's roads and in town centres which, together with other strategic development and transport plans, helps to tackle poor air quality. It reduces the risk of blocked bus lanes/major traffic routes and increases the ability of emergency services to gain access to incidents across the county making roads safer and protecting drivers and pedestrians from the risk of injury and death.

The Parking Enforcement Team undertook 8,962 hours of 'on the beat' enforcement (84% for on-street parking and 16% in Council car parks) and issued 18,391 parking contravention notices (PCNs) to encourage compliant, sensible and safe parking; this includes checks to ensure only valid Blue Badges are used and fraudulent use is minimised. In 2019/20, two cases of Blue Badge misuse/fraud and a case where a Blue Badge holder failed to produce their Badge for inspection were successfully prosecuted.

To put the number of PCNs issued into perspective and to allay concerns about 'over-zealous' enforcement, information available over the previous 5 years indicates that for each enforcement hour undertaken, on average, two PCNs are issued.

Further prosecutions for using/leaving vehicles in The Square in Shrewsbury have also reached successful conclusions. These cases were part of an overall campaign to prevent motorists using The Square as a car park and, to date, the campaign has had a lasting effect, with little enforcement now required to maintain the area free from vehicles and safe for pedestrians.

Licensing

Almost 6,000 licences, permits, registrations, notices and consents were administered and enforced to protect the health, safety and welfare of people, animals and the environment and to prevent financial loss and fraud. These involve controls over premises supplying alcohol, late night refreshment and certain types of entertainment, together with personal licences, hackney carriages (taxis) and private hire, gambling premises and small society

lotteries, skin piercing, explosives and fireworks, caravan sites, pavement permits, pleasure boats and vessels, sex establishments, activities involving animals, dangerous wild animals, scrap metal and the distribution of free printed matter. A significant proportion of the work undertaken by the Licensing Team relates to premises for the supply of alcohol, including temporary events, together with taxi and private hire licensing and gambling permits.

Gambling

The preparatory work for reviewing the Council's current Gambling Act 2005 Policy Statement will commence in the final quarter of the 2020/21 financial year.

Street Trading

The current Street Trading Policy has been in force for a little over 2 years and has provided a sound basis upon which to undertake the administration and enforcement of street trading activities; however, issues that have arisen during this period now need to be addressed and it is proposed that a review will be undertaken over the next 12 months. Pragmatic interim steps will be taken to respond to any pressing concerns in conjunction with the Chair and Members of the Strategic Licensing Committee.

Alcohol, late night refreshment and entertainment

The work to monitor the effectiveness of the Licensing Act regime included 212 inspections to existing licensed premises to ensure compliance with premises licences; this included proactive joint partnership visits with the police. In addition, 88% (256) (77% in 2018/19) of all new designated premises supervisors and businesses were provided with an advisory visit to ensure they understood their legal responsibilities and to build working professional relationships to promote effective management of the evening and night-time economy.

Taxis and private hire

In July 2020, the Department for Transport (DfT) issued Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards to licensing authorities aimed at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Work has recently commenced to assess the implications of these Standards on the Council's current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2019 – 2023. The outcome of this assessment will be reported to the Strategic Licensing Committee with any recommendations to revise the Council's Policy as necessary.

As was raised in last year's report, the ongoing impact of the Deregulation Act 2015, which has led to a significant increase in cross-border hiring, remains a concern. Regrettably, the DfT chose not to address this issue as part of the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards. Cross-border hiring,

therefore, continues to create an increasing risk to the hackney carriage and private hire licensing function undertaken by the Council.

This situation continues to pose a potential risk to public safety, undermines the work being undertaken to reduce harmful vehicle emissions, and impacts the reputation of local government as a whole. The existing legislative framework makes it extremely difficult to have any meaningful influence over this risk; consequently, it is important to recognise the significant responsibility that the Council has to use all appropriate mechanisms and opportunities, particularly those that ensure close working arrangements are in place with other local authorities, to support and protect communities outside of its immediate responsibility.

Proactive hackney carriage and private hire enforcement checks (2019/20 207; 2018/19 197) aimed at ensuring public safety and compliance with the Council's conditions were undertaken. This has included checks to ensure private hire drivers did not pick up passengers in the street without an existing booking ('plying for hire'), for which two prosecutions are currently waiting to be heard in the Magistrates' Court; one relates to a Shropshire licensed driver and the other to a Wolverhampton licensed driver. We have also following up on complaints about dangerous driving and compliance inspections of private hire operators, fleets and vehicles as well as checks on hackney carriages. This included multi-agency operations with neighbouring local authorities, police and VOSA.

Whilst the majority of licence applications are granted, the Council does not do so lightly and there are robust criteria in place that must be satisfied before licences are granted; in addition, licences were refused, revoked and warnings and suspensions issued in relation to 52 cases. This compares with 57 in 2018/19 and 102 in 2017/18 and is an indication that standards of compliance for those licensed by Shropshire Council have improved.

Trading Standards

The most significant concern relating to consumer and business protection statutory duties, including product safety, age-restricted sales, fair-trading regulation, and more, is the limited work that can be undertaken by the small number of professional practitioners and controllable operational budget available. The in-post core staffing (front-line, support and management) resource in 2019/20 equated to 5.5 FTE (2018/19 5.38 FTE) and the controllable operational budget available to directly support front-line enforcement was less than £25,000. To put this into perspective, the cost of a basic suite of safety tests on a toy or an electrical product will start at £1,000 and a report from an expert witness in a 'rogue trader' investigation is normally upwards of £750. Where the Service institutes legal proceedings and the case is heard in Crown Court, the barrister fees will start at £5,000 and escalate significantly if the case is in court for more than one day.

Long-standing vacancies of 1.46 FTE remained unfilled in 2019/20, as recruitment into these posts was to be considered as part of a service wide

peer review; this has continued to adversely impact on our 'business as usual' work and the impact has been further brought into sharp focus as a result of Covid-19. Whilst recruitment must always be balanced against the challenging financial pressures that continue to be placed on the Council, it has become ever more evident that these vacancies increase the risk to the Council to deliver its statutory responsibilities and to respond to emerging risks.

Alcohol and tobacco

The work undertaken round alcohol and tobacco recognises the harmful effects on the health and well-being of people and specifically aims to reduce the availability and supply of these products to children and young people. In the short-term, the work highlights the adverse impacts of the consumption of alcohol and tobacco and targets those individuals who are prepared to act illegally with robust enforcement. In the long-term, it aims to normalise reduction and cessation of the consumption of these products in order to significantly improve the health of future generations.

A programme of market surveillance and intelligence led age-restricted products test-purchasing exercises were undertaken in relation to the supply of alcohol, tobacco, nicotine inhaling products (e-cigarettes), knives and fireworks. A total of 62 retail premises were visited with 11 (18%) of those selling products to under 18-year-old volunteers. This compares with 28% (17 out of 60) that sold in the previous year. To address these offences, a range of enforcement actions have been utilised against businesses and individuals including written warnings, fixed penalties, simple cautions, prosecutions and licence reviews in accordance with the Council's Better Regulation and Enforcement Policy.

Unfair and fraudulent trading

The service has responded to complaints and other intelligence concerning unfair and fraudulent business practices that have adversely impacted on individuals and communities, particularly those involving doorstep crime and rogue traders where older and more vulnerable people, as well as small businesses, are more likely to be targeted and are at risk of becoming repeat victims suffering substantial financial losses.

Interventions by Trading Standards prevented consumers losing a total of £8,800 to criminals; in addition, fines, costs and compensation for victims totalled £27,880. Furthermore, the consumer detriment prevented over the following 12 months was estimated to be £105,668.

The impact of unfair and fraudulent practices is not only financial; it has a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of victims, particularly as those individuals who are targeted are often socially isolated and in declining mental health, or are businesses where resources are limited and resilience to the impact of any crime is lower.

Two significant prosecutions in relation to these types of practices were concluded in 2019/20; both involved elderly and vulnerable consumers. The first involved failures to provide cancellation paperwork and undertaking aggressive and fraudulent commercial practices on a range of home improvements, which led to a prison sentence for the defendant of 27 months; and a second case involved misleading commercial practices that were aimed at removing the consumer's rights to cancel the contracts and selling reclining armchairs at significantly inflated and false prices; the defendant was fined and ordered to pay compensation to the victims totalling almost £18,000.

Product safety

Unsafe products directly affect the health and wellbeing of consumers. Poorer consumers, who are likely to be more vulnerable as a result of this, are also at greater risk of being injured or suffering a fatality as a result of an unsafe product as they are more likely to buy cheap products that have not been subject to robust design and testing processes required by national and international safety legislation and standards.

Market surveillance activities have continued, and the service has responded to intelligence concerning unsafe consumer products. Action was taken to prevent 50 suspected unsafe products (cosmetics and baby/child related items) from entering the market place with proportionate enforcement action taken against those responsible.

An inspection of a home-based cosmetics producer identified non-compliant product labelling, incomplete product information files, no evidence of good manufacturing processes, and issues were identified with batch numbering and traceability. Following advice on all safety requirements for the sale and supply of cosmetics, re-visits identified significant improvements and products previously considered non-compliant had been removed from sale.

As a result of a referral from the national ports and borders team, officers engaged with a large cosmetics manufacturer regarding non-compliant nail varnish that had been imported from China. This led to an inspection across the whole business to look at the products manufactured as well as those imported and then own-branded. There were a lack of safety assessments and batch testing as well as labelling inadequacies, yet the business exported goods and offered beauty treatments (using its products) to places such as Hong Kong, South Africa, Australia, Dubai and America. Following advice across a range of issues including compliance with safety requirements for cosmetics and unfair commercial practices the company significantly improved and became broadly compliant.

The Service purchased and arranged safety tests on 19 consumer products including toys and other child related products and a range of items from markets across the county to assess for compliance with product safety requirements. Cosmetics were also purchased and tested as part of a

national surveillance operation co-ordinated by the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS). There was a 79% failure rate with 15 of the 19 items found to give rise to a range of safety and technical non-compliances. Referrals to the relevant local authorities under the Primary/Home Authority principles have been made for the lesser technical breaches and investigations are ongoing in relation to those that had safety concerns.

Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)

The Service has worked in partnership with West Mercia Police to enforce the PSPO, which has been in force in Shrewsbury Town centre since August 2017. The outcomes of the PSPO were considered by Cabinet in June 2020 and it was resolved to extend the Order from 1 August 2020 for a further period not exceeding 3 years. The Order continues to provide a further tool to address anti-social behaviour.

Overall the work undertaken in 2019/20 is summarised below:

Total number of requirements: 29 (2 cease drinking alcohol, 27 leave restricted area)

Total number of breaches: 9 (3 personal effects unattended, 1 refusal to leave restricted area, 5 returned to restricted area)

Outcomes in relation to the breaches:

- Police ASB letter: 5
- Warning (LA): 2
- FPN: 1
- NFA: 6 (i.e. insufficient evidence, etc.)
- Prosecutions undertaken following failure to pay FPN

Prosecutions

Across the Service 16 prosecutions have been successfully completed; a further 14 were initiated with informations laid against defendants; and 3 have accepted simple cautions.

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Planning Service Performance Highlights 2019/2020



- **Largest planning authority in west midlands region outside Birmingham with a geography larger than Luxembourg, over 5,500 regulatory decisions issued each year**
- **Agile and flexible paperless process with self serve options complementing face to face**
- **Planning applications approved – Q1 92.60%, Q2 91.48%, Q3 90.84%, Q4 91.75% (91.68%)**
- **Major applications approved - Q1 88.46%, Q2 87.50%, Q3 80.%, Q4 95% (87.76%)**
- **Over 11,000 outstanding planning permissions for residential development**
- **96% of planning applications are delegated to officers for consideration – Q1 95.96%, Q2 95.44%, Q3 96.85%, Q4 97.66 (96.43%)**
- **Applications (overall) determined in timeframe agreed with applicant – Q1 89.64%, Q2 89.68%, Q3 87.54%, Q4 89.41%, (89.12%)**
- **Strong community alignment - 88% of decisions align with view of parish or town council – Q1 89.79%, Q2 88.30%, Q3 87.29%, Q4 90.70%, (89.03%)**
- **Appeals dismissed – Q1 71.43%, Q2 75%, Q3 56%, Q4 85.71% (71.11%)**
- S106 contributions collected in 2019/20 - £3.6M (of which £1.48M relates to Affordable Housing)
- £17.8M S106 contributions outstanding of which £4.5M relates to Affordable Housing to be collected when development commences/trigger point met
- **Enforcement cases received - Q1 148, Q2 152, Q3 130, Q4 178, (608)**
- **Enforcement Cases Closed - Q1 146, Q2 169, Q3 149, Q4 166 (630)**
- **Extensive Rich and Diverse Historic & Natural Environment 441 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 6904 Listed Buildings, 127 Conservation Areas, 34 Registered Parks, 1 Registered Battlefield, 2 World Heritage Sites, 35,000 non-designated heritage assets, 972 confirmed tree preservation orders**
- **Over 5,500 land charges searches dispatched annually on average**
- **68 streets, 1351 residential properties and 292 commercial properties added to the gazetteer**
- **Building Control inspections carried out within 24 hours of required date – Q1 95.88%, Q2 95.90%, Q3 91.60%, Q4 95.29% (94.73%)**
- **Q1 – April / June 2019, Q2 July / September 2019, Q3 October / December 2019, Q4 January / March 2020**

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<u>Committee</u>	<u>Item</u>
Council 24 th September 2020	<u>Public</u>

ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2020 COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

1.0 Summary

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

2.0 Communities Overview Committee

2.1 During two-year period 2018-2020 the Communities Overview Committee has looked at topics from across its remit. The following have been the main areas of focus:

- **Burials capacity in Shropshire**
The committee held Shropshire Council to account for its burial strategy, recognising the challenges it faced in meeting increased demand for space. The committee will continue to look at this matter on a regular basis.
- **Emergency planning**
Officers from emergency planning provided members with an overview of emergency planning arrangements in Shropshire. The committee scrutinised arrangements and agreed that look at the role of the rural and community strategy in helping town and parish councils to support emergency planning.
- **Community safety strategy**
The committee received an annual update of the council's partnership work to tackle crime and build community resilience. The committee agreed to work with the People Overview Committee to look at emerging structures to tackle cross-cutting issues such as exploitation and anti-social behaviour.
- **Community Transport**
The committee has managed a task and finish group to look at the challenges facing public transport, and how to fund a transport network that meets the needs of people in Shropshire. It will invite officers to a meeting later in early 2021 to receive an update on emerging proposals.
- **Public rights of way**
The committee has looked at both how Shropshire Council supports developing open green space for public recreation, and ensuring as much of the county's public rights of way are openly accessible.

- **Empty Homes**

The People Overview Committee has referred the matter of empty homes to the Communities Overview Committee, to ensure that the service remains able to carry out its function effectively. It will receive a regular update from officers on the extent of the issue in Shropshire.

- **Food Poverty**

The committee explored options for Shropshire Council to use its physical resources to support third sector organisation within the Shropshire Food Poverty Alliance. It called on the alliance to explore other factors affecting food poverty, such as rural isolation and poor transport links, and asked how it could work with community transport groups to support vulnerable adults.

3.0 2020-2021 onwards

3.1 Significant topics emerging for the coming year include:

- Rough sleeping
- Homepoint
- Climate change action plan
- Flood risk management
- Libraries
- Community transport
- Rural and Communities Strategy
- Cornovii
- Warmer homes and empty homes

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

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

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

<p>Risk Management Appraisal</p>

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

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

Cabinet Members

Cllr Gwilym Butler

Cllr Lezley Picton

Cllr Steve Davenport

Local Member/s

All

Appendices

None

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