



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

Wednesday, 9 December 2020

**Committee: Council**

**Date: Thursday, 17 December 2020**

**Time: 10.00 am**

**Venue: THIS IS A VIRTUAL MEETING - PLEASE USE THE LINK ON THE AGENDA TO LISTEN TO THE MEETING**

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

[www.shropshire.gov.uk/council17dec2020](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/council17dec2020)

Please note that this meeting will be made available through Microsoft Teams Live Events - your device will need to meet the minimum specification as detailed on the Microsoft website at this link: [Device Specification](#)

- You will need to download MS Teams (free) and click on the link to listen to the meeting if you are using a PC
- If using a mobile device, you will need to download the MS Teams app (free) before clicking the link
- Use the link at 10.00am on the day of the meeting and click on 'Join as Guest'
- You may receive an error message or a request for login details if you try to gain access before 10.00am

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

Claire Porter  
Director 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 Aspinnall

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 Shington  
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](mailto:julie.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk)

# AGENDA

**1 Apologies for Absence**

**2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

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

**3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 12)**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

**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 is 10am on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

**6 Setting the Council Taxbase for 2021/2022 (Pages 13 - 36)**

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

Contact James Walton Tel 01743 258915

**7 Treasury Strategy 2020/21 - Mid Year Review (Pages 37 - 58)**

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

Contact James Walton Tel 01743 258915

**8 Shifnal Town Centre Improvement and Transport Plan (Pages 59 - 78)**

The report of the Head of Transport and Environment is attached.

Contact Steve Brown Tel 01743 257802

**9 Draft Climate Strategy and Action Plan (Pages 79 - 118)**

Report of Director of Place is attached

Contact Mark Barrow 01743 258916

**10 Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support (Pages 119 - 132)**

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

Portfolio Holder: Councillor David Minnery

**11 Questions on Notice from Members (Amendment to the Constitution) (Pages 133 - 134)**

Report of the Leader of the Council is attached.

**12 Motions**

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

**1. 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:

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

**2. The following motion has been received from Councillor David Evans and is supported by the Conservative Group**

This Council recognises the concerns expressed by members of the public and animal welfare groups about the impact on animals and vulnerable people by loud fireworks in residential areas, whilst also accepting the enjoyment fireworks bring to many people.

Therefore, Council resolves to ask Scrutiny to investigate this issue and report back"

**3. The following motion has been received from Councillor Dave Tremellen and is supported by the Councillors Kevin Parry, Pauline Dee, Madge Shingleton, Heather Kidd, Chris Mellings, Tony Parsons, Andy Boddington, Ted Clark, Pam Moseley, Jane MacKenzie, Nigel Hartin and Kate Halliday.**

**Fireworks control.**

A significant number of people believe the law regarding the sale and use of fireworks does not prevent or sufficiently reduce the risk of fireworks causing injury or distress to



animals or humans.

Many believe that further research is needed to fully appreciate the impact of noise on animals, but in the interim a number of things can be done to improve the situation by:

- introducing a limit on the public use of fireworks in the celebration of family events not associated with traditional Bonfire night (on or around the 5<sup>th</sup> November)
- tightening restrictions on the sale of fireworks in the run up to Bonfire night (on or around the 5<sup>th</sup> November)
- asking the government to work towards legislation to reduce the maximum noise level of fireworks, ensuring they are labelled accurately to indicate the level of noise generated and their compliance with that law
- restricting the importation from outside the UK of fireworks that do not comply with UK law
- licensing all public firework displays and ensuring displays are better promoted to the public as being compliant.
- requiring person(s) wishing to purchase fireworks for domestic displays to apply to their local authority for a temporary users' licence that makes clear the penalties for failing to comply with regulations regarding the display of fireworks within a domestic environment, specifically restricting the display only of fireworks within Classes 1 and 2.

But at the very least...

## **MOTION**

This Council resolves:

- to require all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people
- to actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks
- for fireworks sold to the public for private displays, to write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB and restricting such private sales to fireworks within Classes 1 and 2.
- to encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock 'quieter' fireworks for public display.

**4. The following motion has been received from Councillor Andy Boddington and is supported by Councillors Ruth Houghton, Chris Mellings, Roger Hughes and David Vasmer.**

Motion for Shropshire Council on the role of local media during the 2020 pandemic

This has been the toughest of years for our county, our country and much of the world. A novel virus and novel solutions have meant rapid innovation in service provision and also effective communication. Shropshire Council's media team and our local media have been central to explaining what is happening and directing people to the support and options available in unprecedented times.

This council gives its thanks to:

- The members of the council's communications team for their work during the

emergency.

- Local media, including BBC Radio Shropshire, the Shropshire Star and our local newspapers on the progress of Covid-19 and the challenges of combating it's spread.

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

Shopping Centres.

- A. This council notes with concern the present value of the Shopping Centres compared with the amount that was paid for them. It also notes comments made by Grant Thornton our Council Auditors concerning the original valuation and consequently the price that was paid to the previous owners. It also notes that the ownership details still show that it is registered in the Channel Islands and still has not been brought over and registered in mainland UK.
- B. Considering all these and the history of the centres it requests officers prepare a report to be presented to February's council which will include
  1. The information it received regarding its then current value.
  2. The amount it is estimated that will be needed to carry out any upgrades and alterations.

**6. The following motion has been received from Councillor Dean Carroll and is supported by Councillors Rob Gittins, Lezley Picton, Steve Davenport and Paul Milner.**

At the meeting of Full Council of Shropshire Council on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019 this Council moved a motion to plant a new tree for every Shropshire resident by 2050. Thanks to the efforts of this authority and external funding that has been secured from DEFRA we are now in a far stronger position than imagined.

Therefore this Council resolves to:

1. Plant a new tree for every resident in Shropshire by 2030
2. Ask the Chief Executive to place on record the thanks of this Council for the efforts of the officers responsible
3. To reiterate its commitment to developing a 'Tree Bank'.

**13 Questions from Members (Pages 135 - 142)**

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

**14 Appointments to Committees**

Place Overview Committee

Cllr Claire Wild to replace Cllr Matt Lee as a substitute member of the Place Overview Committee.

**15 Report of the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority (Pages 143 - 146)**

To receive the report of the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority arising from its meetings held on 28 September 2020 and 14 October 2020. Report attached.

**16 Exclusion of Public and Press**

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

**17 Exempt Minutes (Pages 147 - 148)**

To approve as a correct record the exempt minutes of the Council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

**18 Shrewsbury School Place Planning**

Exempt Report of the Director of Children's Services is to follow.

Contact Karen Bradshaw Tel: 01743 252401

**19 Delivery of a Business Park Programme for Shropshire 2021-36 and approval for Phase I (Pages 149 - 168)**

Exempt report of the Director of Place is attached

Contact Mark Barrow Tel 01743 258919

**20 Addressing Unmet Housing Need - Site Disposals To The Housing Company**

Exempt report of the Director of Place is to follow.

Contact Mark Barrow Tel 01743 258919

**21 Strategic Property Acquisition Shrewsbury**

Exempt report of the Director of Place is to follow.

Contact Mark Barrow Tel 01743 258919

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## Committee and Date

Council

17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2020

#### Virtual Meeting

10.00 am - 2.10 pm

**Responsible Officer:** Julie Fildes

Email: julie.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257723

### Present

Councillors Ann Hartley and Peter Nutting (Leader)

Councillors Vince Hunt (Speaker), Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader), Peter Adams, Roy Aldcroft, Nicholas Bardsley, Joyce Barrow, Thomas Biggins, Ed Bird, Gwendoline Burgess, Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll, Lee Chapman, Ted Clarke, Gerald Dakin, Steve Davenport, Julian Dean, David Evans, Roger Evans, Hannah Fraser, Rob Gittins, Nat Green, Kate Halliday, Simon Harris, Nigel Hartin, Nick Hignett, Ruth Houghton, Tracey Huffer, Ioan Jones, Simon Jones, Mark Jones, Heather Kidd, Christian Lea, 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, Madge Shingleton, Robert Tindall, Dave Tremellen, Kevin Turley, David Turner, David Vasmer, Claire Wild, Brian Williams, Leslie Winwood, Michael Wood, Tina Woodward and Paul Wynn

### 134 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andy Boddington, Pauline Dee, Richard Huffer and Keith Roberts.

### 135 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

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

Councillor Ruth Houghton asked that it be noted that in relation to item 11, she was a Trustee of a Supported Living Care Provider.

### 136 Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th July 2020

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

### 137 Announcements (Pages 98 - 99)

The Chairman referred Members to the list of official engagements carried out by himself and the Speaker since the last meeting of the Council on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020, which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

### 138 Public Questions

#### Public Questions

The Speaker advised that five public questions had been received from Mr Rob Wilson, Dr Graham Tate, Ms Claire Kirby, Ms Joanne Blackman and Dr Jamie Russell. All questions were read aloud on the questioners' behalf by the Director of Legal and Democratic Services and received answers from the respective Portfolio Holders.

It was noted that a copy of the questions and answers would be included with the formal record of the meeting.

#### Petition

The Speaker advised that a petition bearing more than 1,000 signatures to retain the statue of Clive in Shrewsbury town centre had been received from Ms Emma Dolphin requesting a debate. Ms Dolphin did not provide a written submission.

The Portfolio Holder outlined the actions taken since this item was debated at the meeting of Council on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

**RESOLVED:** That no action be taken.

### 139 Appointment of the Chief Executive

It was proposed by the Leader, Councillor P Nutting and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration, Councillor S Charmley that the report of the Director of Workforce and Transformation, Appointment of the Chief Executive, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

**RESOLVED:** That it be confirmed that Andy Begley be permanently appointed to the Chief Executive position with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

### 140 Annual Treasury Report 2019/20

It was proposed by Councillor D Minnery, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support, and seconded by Councillor B Williams that the report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance, Annual Treasury Report 2019/20, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

**RESOLVED:** That the position as set out in the attached report be agreed.

**141 Annual Assurance Report of Audit Committee to Council**

It was proposed by Councillor P Adams, Chair of the Audit Committee, and seconded by Councillor B Williams that the report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance, Annual Assurance Report of Audit Committee to Council, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

**RESOLVED:** that the contents of the Annual Assurance report for 2019/20 be noted and agreed.

**142 Review of the Constitution to Permit the Audit Committee to Approve the Final Accounts Pack Including the Annual Statement of Accounts**

It was proposed by Councillor D Minnery, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support, and seconded by the Leader, Councillor P Nutting that the report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance, Review of the Constitution to Permit the Audit Committee to Approve the Final Accounts Pack Including the Annual Statement of Accounts, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

**RESOLVED:** 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 of the attached report be adopted.

**143 20mph Speed Restrictions Outside Schools**

It was proposed by Councillor S Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport, and seconded by Councillor P Nutting that the report of the Director of Place, 20mph Speed Restrictions Outside Schools, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

Councillor Davenport proposed that an addition recommendation be added to the recommendations set out in the report, that the scheme be completed by May 2025.

Councillor T Parsons proposed the following amendment, which was duly Seconded by Councillor P Mosley.

Council welcomes this Report to consider how the principle of a 20mph speed limit outside all schools in Shropshire can be implemented and agrees with recommendations (a) to (d) inclusive and recommendation (f).

However, the proposed timescale for the implementation of agreed proposals and the method of financing them is not appropriate in the circumstances. Once School Governing Bodies, Senior Leaders and local members have agreed on what schools require a programme of implementation concluding in 2028/2029 is not sufficient. During that period children would remain at risk.

Council is committed to agreed measures being implemented by the end of 2022/2023 and that Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) finance should be used to pay for this project. Based on the estimate to pay for the Greenacres Farm Supported Living Scheme in Agenda Item 11 section 4.4, then the annual cost to fund the Schools programme would range between £0.103M and £0.166M per annum.

Council agrees that this is a small price to pay for the speedy implementation of these necessary safety measures

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost by the majority voting against it.

Councillor D Vasmer proposed the following amendment, which was duly Seconded by Councillor R Evans.

Council requests Cabinet to allocate capital monies to implement the following initial programme:

Time-limited road closures at drop-off and pick-up times (otherwise known as "School Streets") not only improve road safety, but also enable active travel, improve air quality and social distancing. Therefore, they can be implemented using emergency COVID-19 traffic regulation orders.

- a) 20mph zones outside schools where "School Streets" measures are not possible will also encourage active travel, improve air quality and, with the addition of other measures, improve social distancing.
- b) Immediately identify three primary schools suitable for School Streets and three for 20mph zones utilising the knowledge of local members and in consultation with local councils and other representative organisations such as Parent Teacher Associations
- c) These initial locations should represent different types of location including rural and urban.
- d) Within 7 days issue ETROs for these locations. Allowing work to commence 7 days later.
- e) Install School Streets at the three agreed locations at the end of the 7-day notice period. The "installation" can be as simple as appropriate signage and a demountable barrier which is installed and removed by the school caretaker at the appropriate times.
- f) Erect 20mph signs at the three agreed locations at the end of the 7-day notice period and commission relevant build-outs, pavement widening and cycle provision as a top priority.
- g) Monitor these locations for a month from when they become operational and then identify as many locations as possible for "School Streets" measures or 20mph zones outside schools for implementation after asking for comments by local members and local organisations.

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost by the majority voting against it.

Members debated the substantive recommendation.



**RESOLVED:**

**That it be approved:**

- i) That a consultation process that engages with School Governing Bodies and Senior Leaders, local Member's and communities be implemented to ensure the appropriateness of specific interventions for each school are identified as required.**
- ii) That the Council commits to preliminary investment in traffic data collection and design advice to ensure appropriate options with defined benefits be selected for any future programme of work.**
- iii) That parking behaviour and existing traffic regulations near schools be reviewed and, where appropriate, new enforceable parking measures be introduced to complement any introduction of 20mph speed restrictions outside schools, as part of programmed work.**
- iv) Delegated authority be granted 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.**
- v) That it be noted that resources 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) be investigated.**
- vi) That the programme of review, design and delivery be reported to the Communities Overview Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.**
- v) That the scheme be completed by May 2025.**

The meeting was adjourned at 12.00noon and reconvened at 12.10pm.

#### **144 Greenacres Farm Supported Living Scheme**

It was proposed by Councillor D Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services and Climate Control, and seconded by Councillor N Bardsley that the report of the Director of Adult Services, Greenacres Farm Supported Living Scheme, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That 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 be approved.
- ii) That the use of Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) investment to finance the development of the Greenacres Farm Supported Living project be approved.
- iii) That the submission of a suitable application for planning permission to build 8 Supported Living apartments be approved.
- iv) That delegated authority be granted 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.

#### 145 **Portfolio Holder Report for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services**

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

Councillor Butler presented and amplified his report and responded to questions, concerns and comments.

**RESOLVED:** That the contents of the report be noted and approved.

#### 146 **Annual Report 2019/20 Communities Overview Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor Motley that the annual report of the Annual Report of the Communities Overview Committee, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes be received and agreed.

Councillor Motley presented the report and outlined the work undertaken by the Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That that Annual Report of the Communities Scrutiny Committee be noted and approved.

#### 147 **Motions**

##### **1. The following motion was proposed by Councillor Kate Halliday and duly seconded by Councillor David Vasmer**

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.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Julian Dean and duly seconded by Councillor David Vasmer.

To add to the motion:

In order to pursue the intentions of 'Gear Change' and the latest guidance from government on cycling and walking (LTN 1/20) council agrees to:

- 1) Develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, including targets for increased cycling and reduced short car journeys for our towns and settlements, as recommended in LTN 1/20, to be brought to council prior to the May 2021 elections.
- 2) Engage with local cycling groups to understand where people cycle and to design infrastructure collaboratively.
- 3) Develop pilot schemes for low-traffic neighbourhoods and streets in consultation with local members, providing high quality supporting evidence and presentations to the public to support such schemes; with a view to having schemes to present to the public in the early Spring 2021.

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost by the majority of Members voting against.

Members debated the substantive motion.

**RESOLVED:** that the motion be supported.

**2. The following motion was proposed by Councillor Roger Evans and duly seconded by Heather Kidd.**

## 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.

**RESOLVED:** that the motion be not supported.

**3. The following motion was proposed by Councillor Ruth Houghton and duly seconded by Councillor Heather Kidd.**

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 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:

- 1) 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”).
- 2) A description of support measures for both homeworkers and those unable to work from home.
- 3) The council’s plans for office and home working in the short-term and its ideas for the longer term.
- 4) The impact of home working on the council’s ambition to become carbon neutral

**RESOLVED:** that the motion be not supported.

**4. The following motion was proposed by Councillor Nigel Hartin and duly seconded by Councillor Ruth Houghton.**

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, Town and Parish Councils, the voluntary community sector, 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 local communities’ volunteers have made during one of the most challenging years of our lifetimes.

Councillor G Butler proposed the following amendment which was duly seconded by Councillor D Turner.

This council gives 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, Town and Parish councils and the Voluntary and Community

Sector have made to support and strengthen our communities. This council in particular recognises the immense contributions and sacrifices the people of Shropshire have made during one of the most challenging years of our lifetime.

On being put to the vote the amendment was supported by the majority of Councillors.

Following discussion by Members the following motion was proposed:

This Council gives 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, Town and Parish councils and the Voluntary and Community Sector and local community groups have made to support and strengthen our communities. This council in particular recognises the immense contributions and sacrifices the people of Shropshire have made during one of the most challenging years of our lifetime.

**RESOLVED:** that the motion as amended be supported.

## **5. The Motion from Councillor A Boddington was withdrawn prior to the meeting.**

### **148 Questions from Members**

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

Received from Councillor David Vasmer and answered by Councillor S Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport in relation to the work of the Highways Consultant. By way of supplementary question, Councillor Vasmer asked what value the Highways' Consultant brought to the Council in light of what he was paid and whether the process of appointing consultants could be reviewed. Councillor S Davenport advised that he would provide a written response.

Received from Councillor David Vasmer and answered by Councillor S Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport in relation to pedestrian safety. Councillor Vasmer did not ask a supplementary question.

Received from Councillor Heather Kidd and answered by Councillor S Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport in relation to school transport. By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Kidd asked if it could be taken into account that police do not register all accidents when providing statistics for reports and requested that junctions could be re-white lined where the road markings were missing. Councillor Davenport replied that the white lining should be registered with the online Highways Members' Portal.

Received from Councillor Roger Evans and answered by Councillor S Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport in relation to the management of the Highways contract. By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Evans asked whether the information given to the Scrutiny Committee regarding the completion of

Highways work was correct. The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport responded that the work was still to be signed off by the new Assistant Director for Highways.

Received from Councillor Pam Moseley and answered by Councillor S Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport in relation to cycling. By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Moseley asked when the existing cycling network would be brought up to an acceptable standard. The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport responded that funding for the maintenance of cycle paths was dependent on the funding received from Central Government and once funding was received the work would be undertaken.

Received from Councillor Ruth Houghton and answered by Councillor S Charmley, Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration in relation to support for businesses. By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Houghton referring to the identification of employment land ready for investment across the county referred to in the response to her question, asked when the Portfolio Holder would provide a full plan for this with actions across the county with timescales. The Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration stated that a written response would be provided.

Received from Councillor Ruth Houghton and answered by Councillor L Picton, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Waste and Communications in relation to the impact of Covid-19 on the local economy. By way of supplementary question Councillor Houghton asked would the Council monitor the effectiveness of the media campaign mentioned in the response. The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Waste and Communications responded that this would be monitored by the customer service centre and through feedback received through the MyShropshire portal. She added that feedback via members would be welcomed to assist with targeting specific campaigns to areas where they would be most effective.

#### 149 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

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

#### 150 **Exempt Minutes of 16th July 2020**

Members noted that there were no exempt minutes to consider.

#### 151 **Alverley Industrial Estate [EXEMPT]**

It was proposed by the Deputy Leader, Councillor S Charmley, Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration, and seconded by Councillor P Nutting, that the report of the Director of Place, Alveley Industrial Estate, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

**RESOLVED:** that the exempt recommendation be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....





On the assumption that the changes to the discount policy in relation to vacant dwellings detailed in Sections 2.1 and 8.3 of this report have been approved, members are asked:

- 2.3 To approve, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Shropshire Council as it's Council Tax taxbase for the year 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix A, totalling 113,688.99 Band D equivalents.
- 2.4 To note continuation of the Council's localised Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme in 2021/22. The scheme is attached at Appendix B.
- 2.5 To note the exclusion of 8,917.40 Band D equivalents from the taxbase as a result of localised Council Tax Support.
- 2.6 To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy of 0% in respect of second homes (other than those that retain a 50% discount through regulation as a result of job related protection) and note the inclusion of 715.06 Band D equivalents in the Council Tax taxbase as a result of this discount policy.
- 2.7 To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy to not award a discount in respect of vacant dwellings undergoing major repair, i.e. former Class A exempt properties.
- 2.8 To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy in respect of vacant dwellings, i.e. former Class C exempt properties, of 100% for one month i.e. effectively reinstating the exemption and the resulting exclusion of 172.56 band D equivalents from the taxbase.
- 2.9 To note continuation of the "six week rule" in respect of vacant dwellings, i.e. former Class C exempt properties.
- 2.10 To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy to levy a Council Tax premium of 100% in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years (but less than five years) and the resulting inclusion of an additional 320.56 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.
- 2.11 To note continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount policy to levy a Council Tax premium of 200% in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years (but less than ten years) and the resulting inclusion of an additional 212.00 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.
- 2.12 To approve a collection rate for the year 2021/22 of 97.7%.

## REPORT

### 3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 Expression of Council Tax Support in terms of Band D equivalents results in a higher potential for inaccuracies in the determination process as Council Tax Support is a significantly more volatile discount element.
- 3.2 Details of the potential risk in relation to establishing a collection rate allowance is detailed within this report in Section 10.

### 4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Council Tax taxbase figure impacts on the Council Tax that will be levied by the Council for 2021/22.
- 4.2 The implication of the Council's localised Council Tax Support scheme are detailed in Section 7.
- 4.3 The implications of maintaining the discount in respect of second homes at 0% are detailed in Section 8.1.
- 4.4 The implications of maintaining the discount in respect of vacant dwellings are detailed in Section 8.2.
- 4.5 The implications of maintaining the premium of 100% in respect of properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years, maintaining the premium of 200% in respect of properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years and increasing the premium from 200% to 300% in respect of properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than ten years are detailed in Section 8.3.
- 4.6 The implications regarding the determined collection rate are detailed in Section 10.

### 5. Climate Change Appraisal

- 5.1 The Setting the Council Tax Taxbase 2021/22 report and recommendations have no direct effect on climate change.

### 6. Background

- 6.1 Shropshire Council has responsibility for determining the Council Tax taxbase for the Council's geographical area.

- 6.2 The taxbase for Council Tax must be set between 1 December 2020 and 31 January 2021 in relation to 2021/22 as prescribed by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012.
- 6.3 The Council is also required to inform the major precepting authorities, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority, of the taxbase in order to enable the calculation of Council Tax for the following year. Each town and parish council is also notified of its own Council Tax taxbase.
- 6.4 The purpose of this report, therefore, is to determine and approve the Council Tax taxbase for Shropshire Council for 2021/22.

## **7. Council Tax Support**

- 7.1 The 2010 Spending Review announced the localisation of council tax support and The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit from 31 March 2013 and required that Local Government created a localised Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme effective from 1 April 2013, accommodating a reduction in funding of 10%.
- 7.2 Shropshire Council's localised CTS scheme was approved in December 2018 with minor changes to the scheme taking effect from 1 April 2020. The current scheme summary is attached at Appendix B.
- 7.3 From 2013, therefore, council tax support has taken the form of reductions within the council tax system, replacing national council tax benefit. Making reductions as part of the council tax system reduces a billing authority's Council Tax taxbase. Billing and major precepting authorities receive funding (Council Tax Support Grant) which reduce their council tax requirement and, depending on the design of the local council tax scheme, can help offset the council tax revenue foregone through reductions.
- 7.4 An estimate of the effect of the local Council Tax Support Scheme on the Council Tax taxbase has been determined for Shropshire. It is estimated that the Council Tax Support Scheme will reduce the Council Tax taxbase by 8,917.40 Band D equivalents.
- 7.5 As Council Tax Support entitlement will vary throughout the year and this will affect the taxbase it is more likely that the amount of Council Tax collected in 2021/22 will vary from the estimate.
- 7.6 A link to the full scheme for 2020/21 is below.

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/14979/ctrs-scheme-2020-21-final.pdf>

## **8. Discretionary Discount Policies**

### **8.1 *Second Homes***

8.1.1 Second homes are defined as furnished properties which are not occupied as a person's main residence and include furnished properties that are unoccupied between tenancies.

8.1.2 The Local Government Act 2003 gave councils new discretionary powers to reduce the 50% Council Tax discount previously awarded in respect of second homes to between 10% and 50% with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004. Councils retain the additional income raised by reducing the second homes Council Tax discount.

8.1.3 The Local Government Act 2012 further extended billing authorities' discretion over the second homes discount to between 0% and 50%. On 17 October 2012 Cabinet approved the reduction of the second homes Council Tax discount from 10% to 0%.

8.1.4 The figures used for the 2021/22 Council Tax taxbase incorporate a 0% Council Tax discount in respect of second homes (other than those that retain a 50% discount through regulation as a result of job-related protection). Implementation of this policy results in the inclusion of 715.06 Band D equivalents in the taxbase.

### ***Vacant Properties***

### **8.2 *Former Class A & Class C Exempt Properties***

8.2.1 The Local Government Act 2012 abolished both Class A and Class C exemptions and gave billing authorities' discretion to give discounts of between 0% and 100%. Class A exemptions were previously available for up to 12 months in respect of a vacant property which required, was undergoing, or had recently undergone major repair work to render it habitable, or a structural alteration. Class C exemptions were previously available for up to six months after a dwelling became vacant.

8.2.2 On 14 December 2017 Council approved the removal of a 50% Council Tax discount in respect of vacant dwellings undergoing major repair, i.e. former Class A exempt properties.

8.2.3 In respect of former Class A exempt properties the figures used for the 2021/22 Council Tax taxbase allow for the continuation of the decision previously approved by Council, i.e. to award no discount.

8.2.4 On 17 October 2012 Cabinet approved the award of a 25% Council Tax discount in respect of vacant dwellings, i.e. former Class C exempt properties.

- 8.2.5 Implementation of this policy resulted in a large number of low value Council Tax demands being raised primarily in relation to landlords whose properties are between tenants. A significant number of landlord complaints were received in relation to these Council Tax demands and these small amounts proved to be very difficult to collect. It was, therefore, proposed and approved that a 100% discount be awarded for one month, i.e. effectively reinstating the exemption, and then a 25% discount be awarded for the remaining five months.
- 8.2.6 In order to avoid fraudulent 100% claims in respect of these types of properties it was also proposed and approved that the “six week rule” be applied, i.e. if a dwelling which is unoccupied and unfurnished is either exempt or entitled to a discount, becomes occupied or substantially furnished for a period of less than six weeks, after which it falls empty again, it will only resume exemption or discount for any of the original exemption or discount period which remains.
- 8.2.7 On 14 December 2017 Council approved the continuation of the policy to award one month exemption when a property becomes unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (subject to the six week rule) and approved a revised policy to remove the 25% for the following five months. This means that when a property becomes unoccupied and substantially unfurnished it would attract one month exemption, then pay full charge for the following twenty three months, then attract an additional 100% council tax premium after two years.
- 8.2.8 In respect of former Class C exempt properties the figures used for the 2021/22 Council Tax taxbase incorporate a discount of 100% for one month. Continuation of this policy to award the one month exemption results in the exclusion of 172.56 Band D equivalents from the taxbase.

### 8.3 ***Empty Homes Premium***

- 8.3.1 The Local Government Act 2012 amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and also gave billing authorities’ discretion to levy an empty homes premium of 50% after a dwelling has been empty and substantially unfurnished for at least two years. In December 2013 Shropshire Council chose to enact this discretionary power with effect from April 2014.
- 8.3.2 On 1 November 2018 the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 was passed which further amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992. This gave billing authorities’ discretion to levy an empty homes premium of 100% from 1 April 2019 after a dwelling has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least two years and a 200% premium from 1 April 2020 for properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least 5 years. The Act also allows for a 300% premium from 1 April 2021 for properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least 10 years.

8.3.3 Members are asked to approve a revised policy to levy an empty homes premium of 300% after a dwelling has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least ten years.

8.3.4 The figures used for the 2021/22 Council Tax taxbase incorporate a 100% Council Tax premium in respect of dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years, a 200% Council Tax premium in respect of dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years and a 300% Council Tax premium in respect of dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than ten years. Implementation of this policy results in the inclusion of 320.56 Band D equivalents in the taxbase in relation to properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than two years, 212.00 Band D equivalents in the taxbase in relation to properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than five years and 197.00 Band D equivalents in the taxbase in relation to properties unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than ten years.

## 9. Taxbase Calculation

9.1 Based on the valuation list, the Council Tax taxbase is the number of properties in the area falling within each council tax property valuation band, modified to take account of the adjustments set out below. Taxbase is expressed as a Band D equivalent.

9.2 An analysis of Council Tax bands within Shropshire Council is detailed below:

Property Band	House Value	Ratio to Band D	Analysis of Dwellings on the Valuation List (%) (as at 14 September 2020)	% Increase / (Decrease) over 2019/20
A	Under £40,000	6/9	18.4	0.3
B	40,001 - 52,000	7/9	25.6	0.4
C	52,001 - 68,000	8/9	20.8	1.1
D	68,001 - 88,000	9/9	14.4	1.2
E	88,001 - 120,000	11/9	11.3	1.8
F	120,001 - 160,000	13/9	6.1	2.0
G	160,001 - 320,000	15/9	3.2	0.8
H	Over 320,000	18/9	0.2	1.2

9.3 There are 145,953 properties in the valuation list for the Shropshire Council area. This compares with a figure of 144,653 in the list at the same time last year. There has been an increase of 1,300 properties overall, which equates to 0.90%. The number of properties in property bands A – G has increased.

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

- Ascertain the number of properties in each Council Tax band (A to H) shown in the valuation list as at 14 September 2020.
- Adjust for estimated changes in the number of properties through new build, demolitions and exemptions.
- The number of discounts and disabled relief allowances which apply as at 5 October 2020.
- Convert the number of properties in each Council Tax band to Band D equivalents by using the ratio of each band to Band D and so arrive at the total number of Band D equivalents for the Council.
- Adjust the total number of Band D equivalents by the estimated Council Tax collection rate for the year

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

## 10. Collection Rate

- 10.1 In determining the taxbase, an allowance has to be made to provide for changes to the taxbase during the year (e.g. due to new properties, appeals against banding, additional discounts, Council Tax Support award changes, etc.) as well as losses on collection arising from non-payment. This is achieved by estimating a Council Tax collection rate for the year and must be common for the whole of Shropshire.
- 10.2 A collection rate of 98.3% was assumed for the 2020/21 financial year and it is recommended that a collection rate of 97.7% should be assumed for the purpose of determining the Council Tax taxbase in 2021/22.
- 10.3 Actual in year collection rates in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 were 98.4%, 98.2% and 98.2% respectively. The collection rate for 2020/21 is currently projected to outturn at around 96.7%.
- 10.4 The reduction in the Collection Rate for 2018/19 was mainly due to the changes to the Council Tax Support scheme that were implemented in 2018/19. A reduction in the collection rate was expected as a result of these changes with a gradual improvement in subsequent years.
- 10.5 The reduction in the projected Collection Rate for 2020/21 is due to the impact of Covid-19. It is expected that the collection rate will improve however it is projected that Covid-19 will continue to have an impact in 2021/22.
- 10.6 A rate of 97.7% is considered prudent given the current level of recovery, the collection rates of the last 3 years and the continued impact of Covid-19.



10.7 If the actual rate exceeds 97.7% a surplus is generated, which is shared between the Unitary Council, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority, pro rata to their demand on the Collection Fund for the relevant year. Conversely, any shortfall in the collection rate results in a deficit, which is shared in a similar manner. The surplus or deficit is taken into account in setting the Council Tax in the following year.

## 11. Council Tax Base

11.1 The estimated Council Tax taxbase for the whole of the area will be used by this Council to calculate its Council Tax Levy. It will also be used by West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner and Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority to calculate the levy in respect of their precepts.

11.2 The Council Tax taxbase for this purpose in 2021/22 is 113,688.99 Band D equivalents, an increase of 0.12% from 2020/21. The detailed build of this figure analysed by both parish and town council and Environment Agency region is shown in Appendix A.

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

N/A

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

David Minnery

**Local Member**

N/A

**Appendices**

Appendix A: 2021/22 Parish and Town Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council.

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

2021/22 Parish and Town Council Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council	APPENDIX A
Parish / Town Council	Council Tax Taxbase (Band D Equivalents)
Abdon & Heath	106.56
Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley & Langley	254.53
Acton Scott	40.71
Adderley	206.80
Alberbury with Cardeston	401.83
Albrighton	1,560.82
All Stretton, Smethcott & Woolstaston	178.37
Alveley & Romsley	853.30
Ashford Bowdler	35.67
Ashford Carbonel	183.53
Astley	206.99
Astley Abbots	247.00
Aston Bottrell, Burwarton & Cleobury North	112.49
Atcham	226.18
Badger	57.05
Barrow	263.24
Baschurch	1,122.24
Bayston Hill	1,798.43
Beckbury	151.61
Bedstone & Bucknell	314.64
Berrington	455.26
Bettws-Y-Crwyn	91.33
Bicton	413.62
Billingsley, Deuxhill, Glazeley & Middleton Scriven	163.37
Bishops Castle Town	654.71
Bitterley	353.24
Bomere Heath & District	872.75
Boningale	140.22
Boraston	75.33
Bridgnorth Town	4,543.64
Bromfield	121.01
Broseley Town	1,523.01
Buildwas	108.28
Burford	428.83
Cardington	205.99
Caynham	528.58
Chelmarsh	223.24
Cheswardine	385.59
Chetton	158.47
Childs Ercall	294.78
Chirbury with Brompton	337.33
Church Preen, Hughley & Kenley	131.53
Church Pulverbatch	165.47
Church Stretton & Little Stretton Town	2,157.95
Claverley	872.85
Clee St. Margaret	67.83
Cleobury Mortimer	1,174.38
Clive	239.81
Clun Town with Chapel Lawn	521.30
Clunbury	245.06

2021/22 Parish and Town Council Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council		APPENDIX A
Parish / Town Council		Council Tax Taxbase (Band D Equivalents)
Clungunford		152.97
Cockshutt-cum-Petton		307.13
Condover		890.75
Coreley		135.96
Cound		210.61
Craven Arms Town		804.31
Cressage, Harley & Sheinton		407.74
Culmington		163.81
Diddlebury		272.56
Ditton Priors		336.33
Donington & Boscobel		592.42
Eardington		240.86
Easthope, Shipton & Stanton Long		198.02
Eaton-Under-Heywood & Hope Bowdler		181.29
Edgton		46.35
Ellesmere Rural		952.78
Ellesmere Town		1,482.04
Farlow		180.37
Ford		326.80
Great Hanwood		429.23
Great Ness & Little Ness		535.06
Greete		47.48
Grinshill		112.84
Hadnall		369.41
Highley		1,093.56
Hinstock		530.92
Hodnet		584.32
Hope Bagot		28.79
Hopesay		239.17
Hopton Cangeford & Stoke St. Milborough		161.10
Hopton Castle		39.53
Hopton Wafers		290.42
Hordley		102.98
Ightfield		198.26
Kemberton		114.49
Kinlet		407.25
Kinnerley		520.46
Knockin		138.49
Leebotwood & Longnor		202.85
Leighton & Eaton Constantine		206.62
Llanfairwaterdine		104.81
Llanyblodwel		258.24
Llanymynech & Pant		679.61
Longden		532.60
Loppington		282.33
Ludford		244.05
Ludlow Town		3,490.42
Lydbury North		224.38
Lydham & More		127.82
Mainstone & Colebatch		87.61

2021/22 Parish and Town Council Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council	APPENDIX A
Parish / Town Council	Council Tax Taxbase (Band D Equivalents)
Market Drayton Town	3,920.02
Melverley	52.47
Milson & Neen Sollars	122.97
Minsterley	586.84
Montford	255.81
Moreton Corbett & Lee Brockhurst	133.54
Moreton Say	203.05
Morville, Acton Round, Aston Eyre, Monkhopton & Upton Cressett	373.40
Much Wenlock Town	1,203.50
Munslow	174.89
Myddle & Broughton	632.46
Myndtown, Norbury, Ratlinghope & Wentnor	264.90
Nash	141.94
Neen Savage	159.28
Neenton	62.49
Newcastle	130.48
Norton-In-Hales	316.70
Onibury	130.74
Oswestry Rural	1,635.03
Oswestry Town	5,309.46
Pontesbury	1,307.70
Prees	1,113.67
Quatt Malvern	99.72
Richards Castle	143.78
Rushbury	271.39
Ruyton-XI-Towns	450.06
Ryton & Grindle	78.51
Selattyn & Gobowen	1,278.74
Shawbury	900.69
Sheriffhales	328.08
Shifnal Town	3,375.85
Shrewsbury Town	25,320.49
Sibdon Carwood	48.46
St. Martins	920.66
Stanton Lacy	164.39
Stanton-Upon-Hine Heath	242.49
Stockton	130.01
Stoke-Upon-Tern	474.73
Stottesdon & Sidbury	324.53
Stowe	47.63
Sutton Maddock	108.36
Sutton-Upon-Tern	399.65
Tasley	415.32
Tong	124.19
Uffington	124.01
Upton Magna	154.28
Welshampton & Lyneal	376.35
Wem Rural	673.42
Wem Town	1,975.47
West Felton	561.57

<b>2021/22 Parish and Town Council Council Tax Taxbase Summary for Shropshire Council</b>		<b>APPENDIX A</b>
<b>Parish / Town Council</b>		<b>Council Tax Taxbase (Band D Equivalents)</b>
Westbury		519.28
Weston Rhyn		852.97
Weston-Under-Redcastle		120.18
Wheathill		73.09
Whitchurch Rural		603.30
Whitchurch Town		3,329.59
Whittington		889.23
Whitton		71.81
Whixall		336.20
Wistanstow		333.37
Withington		103.35
Woore		597.80
Worfield & Rudge		913.64
Worthen with Shelve		795.26
Wroxeter & Uppington		160.80
<b>Shropshire Council Total</b>		<b>113,688.99</b>
Environment Agency - Severn Trent Region		106,828.48
Environment Agency - Welsh Region		4,371.08
Environment Agency - North West Region		2,489.43
<b>Shropshire Council Total</b>		<b>113,688.99</b>

**SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL – BENEFITS SERVICE**

**COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT (CTS)**

**Introduction**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Removal of Second Adult Rebate**

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

**Reduction of the capital limit**

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

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

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

**Removal of Earnings disregards**

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

**Removal of Child Benefit disregards**

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

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

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

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

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

**Non-dependant earned income deductions (pension age only)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

- **2 child cap**  
The Government has announced that they will limit benefit support by only taking into account a maximum of two dependent children per family. It affects all claims where new children are born after April 2017. This will apply in Housing Benefit to families that make a new claim from April 2017
- **Loss of the family premium**  
The Government removed the family premium for new claims within the assessment of Housing Benefit with effect from May 2016
- **Bereavement Support Payments to be disregarded in full**  
This was introduced into Housing Benefit with effect from April 2017
- **Any payments from the 'We love Manchester Fund' and the 'London Emergency Trust' to be disregarded in full**
- **Maximum backdate period of 1 month**
- **Absence from home limited to 4 weeks when outside GB**  
The temporary absence rules for Housing Benefit were amended in 2015 reducing the allowable period of temporary absence outside Great Britain from 13 weeks to 4 weeks.  
  
The limit applies to new periods of absence only. Exceptions are when an absence is in relation to
  - Death of a partner, child or close relative
  - Receiving medical treatment
  - A person who has fled their home due to fear of violence
  - A member of Her Majesty's forces posted overseas
- **Beneficial changes in circumstances to be reported within one month of the change in order for the claim to be updated from the date of change, otherwise changes will take effect from the Monday following date notified.**
- **All working aged claimants who receive Council Tax Support (unless they are a pensioner or classed as vulnerable) will pay 20% of their council tax liability, (after appropriate discounts have been awarded)**

An example of this change is as follows:

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

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

2) Proposed new scheme (20% minimum payment)

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

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

Criteria to be awarded for the severe disability premium:

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

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

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

Criteria to qualify for the war pension's exemption

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

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

### **Changes with effect from 1 April 2019**

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

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

### **Changes with effect from 1 April 2020**

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

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

## SUMMARY OF CHANGES FROM 01.04.13

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

## APPEALS

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

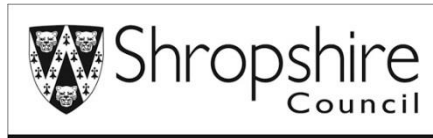
The legislation is contained within the Local Government Finance Act. Appeals against the local Council Tax Support Scheme will be covered by Regulation 16(b).

### Process:

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

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





<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Audit Committee 10 December 2020	
Cabinet 14 December 2020	
Council 17 December 2020	<u>Public</u>

## TREASURY STRATEGY 2020/21 – MID YEAR REVIEW

**Responsible Officer** James Walton

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### 1. Summary

1.1 This mid year Treasury Strategy report has been prepared in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2017 and covers the following:-

- An economic update for the first six months of 2020/21
- A review of the Treasury Strategy 2020/21 and Annual Investment Strategy
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2020/21
- A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2020/21
- A review of any debt rescheduling undertaken
- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential limits for 2020/21

1.2 The key points to note are:-

- The internal treasury team achieved a return of 0.62% on the Council's cash balances outperforming the benchmark by 0.68%. This amounts to additional income of £603,800 for the first six months of the year which is included within the Council's projected outturn position.
- In the first six months all treasury management activities have been in accordance with the approved limits and prudential indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Strategy.
- On 11 March 2020, the Government partially reversed the additional 1% margin over gilts it set in October 2019, to all PWLB rates for certain types of borrowing e.g. Infrastructure projects.
- The Government announced that there would be a consultation with local authorities on possibly further amending these margins. The consultation ended 31 July. The Council submitted its response in line with this deadline and is awaiting a response of the outcome from Government later this year.

### 2. Recommendations

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

2.2 Members note that any changes required to the Treasury Strategy including the Annual Investment Strategy or prudential and treasury indicators as a result of decisions made by the Capital Investment Board will be reported to Council for approval.

## 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 the 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 six month performance is above benchmark and has delivered additional income of £603,800 which will be reflected in the Period 6 Revenue Monitor.
- 4.3 The Council currently has £162m held in investments as detailed in Appendix A and borrowing of £304m at fixed interest rates.

### **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 operates a balanced budget, which broadly means cash raised during the year will meet its cash expenditure. Part of the Treasury Management operations ensure this cash flow is adequately planned, with surplus monies being invested in low risk counterparties, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering optimising investment return.
- 6.2 The second main function of the Treasury Management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning to ensure the Council can meet its capital spending operations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses, and on occasion any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.

6.3 The Council defines its treasury management activities as “the management of the authority’s borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions, the effective control of the risks associated with the activities, and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks”. The report informs Members of the treasury activities of the Council for the first six months of the financial year.

6.4 In December 2017, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, (CIPFA), issued revised Prudential and Treasury Management Codes. As from 2019/20, all local authorities are required to prepare a Capital Strategy which is intended to provide the following: -

- a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services
- an overview of how the associated risk is managed
- the implications for future financial sustainability

A report setting out the Council’s Capital Strategy was taken to full Council in February 2020.

6.5 This report has been written in accordance with the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2017.

## 7. Economic update

7.1 UK Economy – As expected, the Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee kept Bank Rate unchanged on 6<sup>th</sup> August. It also kept unchanged the level of quantitative easing at £745bn. Its forecasts were optimistic in terms of three areas:

- The fall in GDP in the first half of 2020 was revised from -28% to -23% (subsequently revised to -21.8%). This is still one of the largest falls in output of any developed nation. However, it is only to be expected as the UK economy is heavily skewed towards consumer-facing services – an area which was particularly vulnerable to being damaged by lockdown.
- The peak in the unemployment rate was revised down from 9% in Q2 to 7.5% by Q4 2020.
- It forecast that there would be excess demand in the economy by Q3 2022 causing CPI inflation to rise above the 2% target in Q3 2022. Nevertheless, even if the MPC were to leave policy unchanged, inflation was still projected to be above 2% in 2023.

7.2 The MPC also decided against any idea of using negative interest rates, at least in the next six months or so. The MPC suggested that while negative rates can work in some circumstances, it would be less effective as a tool to stimulate the economy at this time when banks are worried about future loan losses. It also has other instruments available, including QE and the use of forward guidance.

7.3 The MPC expected the £300bn of quantitative easing purchases announced between its March and June meetings to continue until the turn of the year. This implies that the pace of purchases will slow further to about £4bn a week, down from £14bn a week at the height of the crisis and £7bn more recently.

7.4 In conclusion, this would indicate that the Bank now expected the economy to recover better than expected. However, the MPC acknowledged that the medium-term projections were a less informative guide than usual and the minutes had multiple

references to downside risks, which were judged to persist both in the short and medium term. One has only to look at the way in which second waves of the virus are now impacting many countries including the UK, to see the dangers. However, rather than a national lockdown, as in March, any spikes in virus infections are now likely to be dealt with by localised measures and this should limit the amount of economic damage caused.

- 7.5 In addition, Brexit uncertainties ahead of the year-end deadline are likely to be a drag on recovery. The wind down of the initial generous furlough scheme through to the end of October is another development that could cause the Bank of England (BoE) to review the need for more support for the economy later in the year. Admittedly, the Chancellor announced in late September a second six-month package from 1 November of government support for jobs whereby it will pay up to 22% of the costs of retaining an employee working a minimum of one third of their normal hours. There was further help for the self-employed, freelancers and the hospitality industry. However, this is a much less generous scheme than the furlough package and will inevitably mean there will be further job losses from the 11% of the workforce still on furlough in mid-September. However, the furlough scheme has been revisited and the decision has been made to extend it until the end of March 2021.
- 7.6 Overall, the pace of recovery is not expected to be in the form of a rapid V shape, but a more elongated and prolonged one after a sharp recovery in June through to August which left the economy 11.7% smaller than in February. The last three months of 2020 are now likely to show no growth as consumers will probably remain cautious in spending and uncertainty over the outcome of the UK/EU trade negotiations concluding at the end of the year will also be a headwind. If the Bank felt it did need to provide further support to recovery, then it is likely that the tool of choice would be more QE.
- 7.7 There will be some painful longer-term adjustments as e.g. office space and travel by planes, trains and buses may not recover to their previous level of use for several years, or possibly ever. There is also likely to be a reversal of globalisation as this crisis has shown up how vulnerable long-distance supply chains are. On the other hand, digital services are one area that has already seen huge growth.
- 7.8 One key addition to the BoE forward guidance was a new phrase in the policy statement, namely that it does not intend to tighten monetary policy until there is clear evidence that significant progress is being made in eliminating spare capacity and achieving the 2% target sustainably. That seems designed to say, in effect, that even if inflation rises to 2% in a couple of years' time, do not expect any action from the MPC to raise Bank Rate – until they can clearly see that level of inflation is going to be persistently above target if it takes no action to raise Bank Rate.
- 7.9 In the US, the incoming sets of data during the first week of August were almost universally stronger than expected. With the number of new daily coronavirus infections beginning to abate, recovery from its contraction this year of 10.2% should continue over the coming months and employment growth should also pick up again. However, growth will be dampened by continuing outbreaks of the virus in some states leading to fresh localised restrictions. At its end of August meeting, the Fed revised its inflation target from 2% to maintaining an average of 2% over an unspecified time period i.e. following periods when inflation has been running persistently below 2%, appropriate monetary policy will likely aim to achieve inflation moderately above 2% for some time. This change is aimed to provide more stimulus for economic growth and higher levels of employment. It is to be noted that inflation has actually been under-shooting the 2% target significantly for most of the last

decade so financial markets took note that higher levels of inflation are likely to be in the pipeline; long-term bond yields duly rose after the meeting.

- 7.10 The Fed also called on Congress to end its political disagreement over providing more support for the unemployed as there is a limit to what monetary policy can do compared to more directed central government fiscal policy. The Federal Open Market Committee’s updated economic and rate projections in mid-September showed that officials expect to leave the fed funds rate at near-zero until at least end-2023 and probably for another year or two beyond that. There is now some expectation that where the Fed has led in changing its inflation target, other major central banks will follow. The increase in tension over the last year between the US and China is likely to lead to a lack of momentum in progressing the initial positive moves to agree a phase one trade deal.
- 7.11 The Eurozone economy was recovering well towards the end of Q2 after a sharp drop in GDP, (e.g. France 18.9%, Italy 17.6%). However, the second wave of the virus affecting some countries could cause a significant slowdown in the pace of recovery, especially in countries more dependent on tourism. The fiscal support package, eventually agreed by the EU after prolonged disagreement between various countries, is unlikely to provide significant support and quickly enough to make an appreciable difference in weaker countries. The ECB has been struggling to get inflation up to its 2% target and it is therefore expected that it will have to provide more monetary policy support through more quantitative easing purchases of bonds in the absence of sufficient fiscal support.
- 7.12 In China, after a concerted effort to get on top of the virus outbreak in Q1, economic recovery was strong in Q2 and has enabled it to recover all of the contraction in Q1. However, this was achieved by major central government funding of yet more infrastructure spending. After years of growth having been focused on this same area, any further spending in this area is likely to lead to increasingly weaker economic returns. This could, therefore, lead to a further misallocation of resources which will weigh on growth in future years.

## 8. Economic Forecast

- 8.1 The Council receives its treasury advice from Link Asset Services. Their latest interest rate forecasts are shown below:

Link Group Interest Rate View 11.8.20		Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23
Bank Rate View		0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
3 month average earnings		0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	-	-	-	-	-
6 month average earnings		0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	-	-	-	-	-
12 month average earnings		0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	-	-	-	-	-
5yr PWLB Rate		1.90	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10
10yr PWLB Rate		2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.30	2.30	2.30
25yr PWLB Rate		2.50	2.50	2.50	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.70	2.70	2.70	2.70
50yr PWLB Rate		2.30	2.30	2.30	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50

- 8.2. The coronavirus outbreak has done huge economic damage to the UK and to economies around the world. After the Bank of England took emergency action in March to cut Bank Rate to first 0.25%, and then to 0.10%, it left Bank Rate unchanged at its last meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> August, although some forecasters had suggested that a cut

into negative territory could happen. However, the Governor of the Bank of England has made it clear that he currently thinks that such a move would do more damage than good and that more quantitative easing is the favoured tool if further action becomes necessary. As shown in the forecast table above, no increase in Bank Rate is expected within the forecast horizon ending on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 as economic recovery is expected to be only gradual and, therefore, prolonged.

- 8.3. Link's central assumption is that there will be some form of agreement on a reasonable form of Brexit trade deal but the coronavirus outbreak could affect the timing of reaching a deal.
- 8.4. The overall balance of risks to economic growth in the UK is probably relatively even but is subject to major uncertainty due to the virus. There is relatively little UK domestic risk of increases or decreases in Bank Rate and significant changes in shorter term PWLB rates. The Bank of England has effectively ruled out the use of negative interest rates in the near term and increases in Bank Rate are likely to be some years away given the underlying economic expectations. However, it is always possible that safe haven flows, due to unexpected domestic developments and those in other major economies, could impact gilt yields, (and so PWLB rates), in the UK.
- 8.5. Long term PWLB rates are expected to rise to 2.4% in September 2021 before increasing to reach 2.5% by June 2022.

## **9. Treasury Strategy update**

- 9.1 The Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) for 2020/21 was approved by Full Council on 27 February 2020. This Treasury Strategy does not require updating as there are no policy changes or any changes required to the prudential and treasury indicators previously approved. The details in this report update the position in the light of the updated economic position.

## **10. Annual Investment Strategy**

- 10.1 The Council's Annual Investment Strategy, which is incorporated in the TMS, outlines the Council's investment priorities as the security and liquidity of its capital. As shown by forecasts in section 8.1, it is a very difficult investment market in terms of earning the level of interest rates commonly seen in previous decades as rates are very low and in line with the current 0.10% bank rate.
- 10.2 The continuing potential for a re-emergence of a Eurozone sovereign debt crisis, and its impact on banks, plus the ongoing issues surrounding the global pandemic, prompts a low risk and short-term strategy. Given this risk environment and the fact that increases in Bank Rate are likely to be gradual and unlikely to return to the levels seen in previous decades, investment returns are likely to remain low.
- 10.3 The Council aims to achieve the optimum return on investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity. In the current economic climate it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term (up to 1 year), and only invest with highly credit rated financial institutions using Link's suggested creditworthiness approach, including sovereign credit rating and Credit Default Swap (CDS) overlay information provided by Link. The Treasury Team continue to take a prudent approach keeping investments short term and with the most highly credit rated organisations.

- 10.3 In the first six months of 2020/21 the internal treasury team outperformed its benchmark by 0.68%. The investment return was 0.62% compared to the benchmark of -0.06%. This amounts to additional income of £603,800 during the first six months which is included within the Council's projected outturn position.
- 10.4 A full list of investments held as at 30 September 2020, compared to Link's counterparty list, and changes to Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's credit ratings are shown in **Appendix A**. None of the approved limits within the Annual Investment Strategy were breached during the first six months of 2020/21 and have not been previously breached. Officers continue to monitor the credit ratings of institutions on a daily basis. Delegated authority has been put in place to make any amendments to the approved lending list.
- 10.5 As illustrated in the economic background section above, investment rates available in the market have decreased significantly due to the bank rate decrease to 0.10% in March 2020. The average level of funds available for investment purposes in the first six months of 2020/21 was £180 million.
- 10.6 The Council's interest receivable/payable budgets are currently projecting a surplus of £2.5 million as reported in the monthly revenue monitoring reports due to no long-term borrowing being undertaken, changes to the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) calculation previously approved by Council and investment returns achieved being higher than anticipated.

## 11. Borrowing

- 11.1 It is a statutory duty for the Council to determine and keep under review the "Affordable Borrowing Limits". Council's approved Prudential Indicators (affordability limits) are outlined in the TMS. A list of the approved limits is shown in **Appendix B**. The schedule at **Appendix C** details the Prudential Borrowing approved and utilised to date.
- 11.2 Officers can confirm that the Prudential Indicators were not breached during the first six months of 2020/21 and have not been previously breached.
- 11.3 No new external borrowing has currently been undertaken to date in 2020/21, although discussions are currently being held at the Capital Investment Board where outline business cases are being considered. The schemes being considered are already within the current authorised borrowing limits in place. In the event the authorised borrowing limits need to be amended, this will be reported to Council for approval. The table below illustrates the low and high points across different maturity bands for borrowing rates for the first six months of the financial year.

	1 Year	5 Year	10 Year	25 Year	50 Year
Low	1.70%	1.67%	1.91%	2.40%	2.13%
Date	18/09/2020	30/07/2020	31/07/2020	18/06/2020	24/04/2020
High	1.94%	1.99%	2.19%	2.80%	2.65%
Date	08/04/2020	08/04/2020	08/04/2020	28/08/2020	28/08/2020
Average	1.80%	1.80%	2.04%	2.54%	2.33%

- 11.4 HM Treasury imposed two changes of margins over gilt yields for PWLB rates in 2019-20 without any prior warning. The first took place on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019, adding an additional 1% margin over gilts to all PWLB rates. That increase was then at least

partially reversed for some forms of borrowing on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020, but not for mainstream General Fund capital schemes, at the same time as the Government announced in the Budget a programme of increased infrastructure expenditure.

- 11.5 Government also announced that there would be a consultation with local authorities on possibly further amending these margins; this was to end on 4<sup>th</sup> June, but that date was subsequently put back to 31<sup>st</sup> July. The Council responded prior to the deadline and is awaiting a response from the Government. It is not clear as to whether HM Treasury will allow local authorities to borrow money from the PWLB to purchase commercial property if the aim is solely to generate an income stream (assets for yield).

## 12. Debt Rescheduling

- 12.1 Debt rescheduling opportunities have been limited in the current economic climate and consequent structure of interest rates. During the first six months of the year no debt rescheduling was undertaken.

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

Council, 27 February 2020, Treasury Strategy 2020/21

Council, 27 February 2020, Capital Strategy 20/21 – 24/25

Council, 20 September 2018, Revised Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2018/19

**Cabinet Member:**

David Minnery, Portfolio Holder for Finance

**Local Member**

N/A

**Appendices**

A. Investment Report as at 30th September 2020

B. Prudential Limits

C. Prudential Borrowing Schedule





# Shropshire Council

## Monthly Investment Analysis Review

September 2020

## Monthly Economic Summary

**General Economy**

The UK Flash (i.e. provisional) Manufacturing PMI fell to 54.3 in September from August's final release of 55.2, as both output and new business growth slowed from August's recent peak. Similarly, the Flash Services PMI eased to 55.1 in September from 58.8 in August, signifying the slowest growth in the sector for three months. In turn, these releases led to the Flash Composite PMI (which incorporates both sectors), falling to 55.7 in September from 59.1 in August. Meanwhile, the construction PMI, which is released one month behind the others, fell to 54.6 in August from 58.1 in July, as a lack of new contracts to replace completed contracts acted as a brake on the speed of expansion. In spite of the recent reduction in activity levels, all sectors remained comfortably in "expansion" territory – i.e. a reading in excess of 50 – as the economy continued to recover.

The final reading of second quarter GDP confirmed that the UK contracted by 19.8% q/q and 21.5% y/y, which were both marginally lower than preliminary estimates (of 20.4% and 21.7% respectively). However, more timely monthly GDP data for July confirmed that the economy grew by 6.6% m/m compared to June, registering its third consecutive month of growth since April's 20.4% m/m contraction. During this time the UK economy has grown by 18.6%, although it remains 11.7% smaller than in February, prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. Elsewhere, data showed that imports rose 7.5% m/m in July, outpacing a 3.5% rise in exports, causing the UK's trade surplus to narrow to £1.1 billion from a downwardly revised £3.9 billion in June.

Although the economy grew during July, the unemployment rate rose to 4.1% in the three months to July from 3.9% in the three months to June, as the number of people in work fell by 12,000. Since this data related to the period before the furlough scheme started to be unwound in August however, arguably of greater significance was the fact that the number of people claiming unemployment benefits rose by 73,700 in August, little changed from July's 69,900 rise – perhaps suggesting that the overwhelming majority of the estimated 3 million workers that have come off furlough since June have, to date, gone back to their jobs rather than into unemployment or inactivity. This may, in turn, explain July's upturn in average earnings (including bonuses), which contracted just 1% y/y in the three months to July compared to a 1.2% y/y fall in the three months to June - as many of those workers would have gone from receiving 80% of their salaries on the furlough to 100% upon returning to work.

UK inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, fell to just 0.2% y/y in August compared to 1% in July, but was slightly higher than market expectations of a flat reading. This was the lowest reading since December 2015, driven largely by big price falls from restaurants and cafes due to the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme which was live throughout the month. This scheme had also had a positive impact on service sector activity in August and its conclusion can account for the last part of the fall in the PMI in September. As a result, consumer prices fell by 0.4% m/m in August, recording their biggest drop since January 2019. Similarly, the core inflation rate – which strips out the more volatile components like energy, food and alcoholic beverages – fell to 0.9% y/y in August, down from 1.8% in July, recording its lowest reading since June 2015. With inflation so far below target, it was no surprise to see the Monetary Policy Committee leave monetary policy unchanged during its September meeting - although the market did note that the Committee had been briefed on how a negative Bank Rate might be implemented effectively. As detailed in our forecast below, Link Group continues to expect Bank Rate to remain at 0.1%.

Buoyed partly by the impact of the Eat Out to Help Out scheme, retail sales rose by 0.8% m/m in August, slightly outperforming

market expectations of a 0.7% rise. Retail sales are now 4% higher than their pre-pandemic level in February and up 2.8% y/y. The GfK Consumer Confidence Index, meanwhile, rose to -25 in September from -27 in August, but remains considerably lower than the -7 reading in February, prior to the pandemic. Reflecting the impact of public health measures and government policies to support the economy during the coronavirus pandemic, the UK reported a record public sector current budget deficit (excluding public sector banks) of £32.0 billion in August, compared July's £13.6 billion deficit. August's deficit compares to a deficit of just £3.1 billion a year earlier. Excluding public sector-owned banks, borrowing was a record £35.9 billion, roughly seven times more than in August 2019.

In the US, the economy added another 1.4 million jobs in August, which was slightly below both market expectations and the downwardly revised 1.7 million jobs added in July. Nevertheless, the unemployment rate fell further as a result, to 8.4% from July's 10.2% rate, and below market expectations of 9.8% rate. With prices (as measured by the Fed's preferred core Personal Consumption Expenditure deflator) having fallen by 0.8% in Q2, it was no surprise to see the Federal Reserve maintain their current monetary policy stance during September's meeting. In so doing however, they also noted that the Federal Funds Rate target range is expected to remain between 0-0.25% until labour market conditions are consistent with their assessment of maximum employment and that inflation is above 2% and on track to moderately exceed it for some time.

In Europe, the final estimate for GDP confirmed that the Eurozone economy shrank by 11.8% q/q in Q2, compared to a 3.6% contraction in the previous quarter, and slightly lower than initial estimates of a 12.1% contraction. While better than the initial estimates, two consecutive periods of contraction meant that the bloc's economy was now in recession. In addition, this figure meant that, for the second quarter in a row, the bloc has suffered its steepest ever contraction. With the final estimate of Eurozone inflation showing that prices fell by 0.2% y/y in August, the ECB decided again to leave both policy rates and its coronavirus stimulus programme unchanged during its September meeting.

### Housing

Both the Halifax and Nationwide house price indices rose during August, by 1.6% m/m and 2% m/m respectively. As such, prices are now 5.2% and 3.7% higher than a year ago respectively, their recent gains partly driven by the stamp duty holiday announced by the Chancellor earlier this year.

### Currency

The prospect of a no deal Brexit undermined Sterling this month, which fell against both the Dollar and the Euro.

September	Start	End	High	Low
GBP/USD	\$1.1241	\$1.1025	\$1.1241	\$1.0805
GBP/EUR	€ 1.34	€ 1.29	€ 1.34	€ 1.27

### Forecast

Both Link Group and Capital Economics have maintained their interest rate forecasts amid the coronavirus outbreak. Bank Rate is forecast to remain unchanged at 0.1% throughout 2020 and 2021.

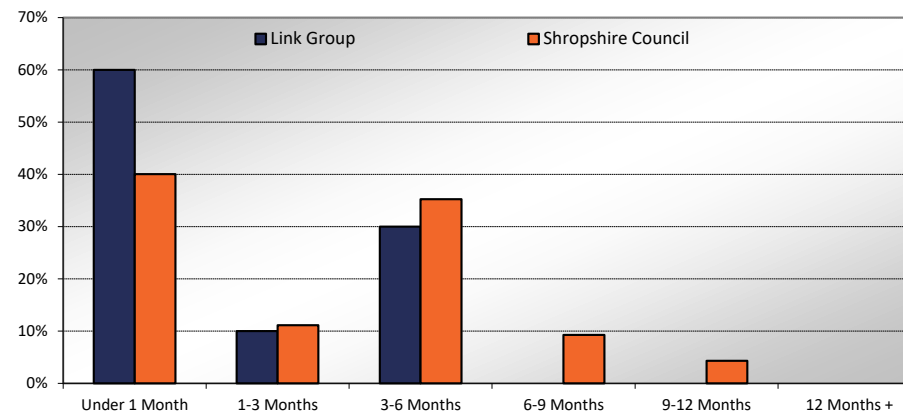
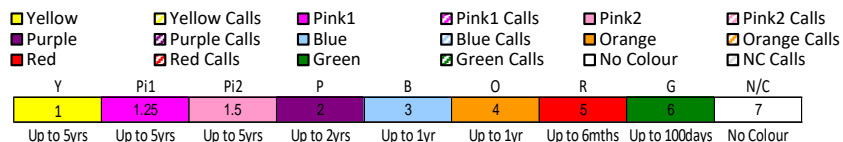
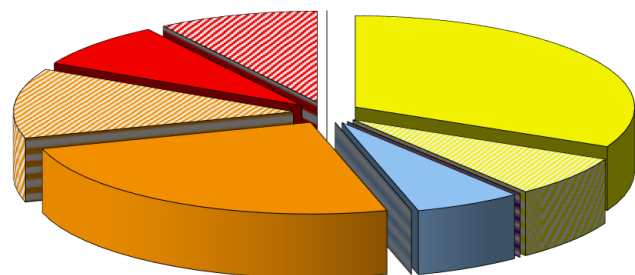
Bank Rate	Now	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23
Link Group	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%
Capital Economics	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	-	-	-	-	-

## Shropshire Council

### Current Investment List

Borrower	Principal (£)	Interest Rate	Start Date	Maturity Date	Lowest Long Term Rating	Historic Risk of Default
MMF Aberdeen Standard Investments	11,800,000	0.09%		MMF	AAA	0.000%
Handelsbanken Plc	20,000,000	0.25%		Call	AA-	0.000%
Thurrock Borough Council	5,000,000	0.41%	01/07/2020	01/10/2020	AA-	0.000%
Lloyds Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	0.10%	13/07/2020	13/10/2020	A+	0.002%
Plymouth City Council	5,000,000	0.97%	14/02/2020	14/10/2020	AA-	0.001%
Slough Borough Council	5,000,000	0.85%	20/04/2020	20/10/2020	AA-	0.001%
South Somerset District Council	5,000,000	0.85%	20/04/2020	20/10/2020	AA-	0.001%
Nationwide Building Society	3,000,000	0.17%	01/07/2020	30/10/2020	A	0.004%
Lloyds Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	0.10%	10/07/2020	30/10/2020	A+	0.004%
Plymouth City Council	5,000,000	0.33%	26/06/2020	20/11/2020	AA-	0.003%
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	0.14%	08/07/2020	20/11/2020	A	0.007%
North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council	3,000,000	0.95%	25/11/2019	23/11/2020	AA-	0.004%
Suffolk County Council	5,000,000	0.40%	09/06/2020	09/12/2020	AA-	0.005%
Santander UK Plc	15,000,000	0.45%		Call95	A	0.014%
Lloyds Bank Plc (RFB)	3,000,000	0.15%	24/07/2020	25/01/2021	A+	0.017%
HSBC UK Bank Plc (RFB)	20,000,000	0.17%	25/09/2020	29/01/2021	A+	0.017%
Surrey Heath Borough Council	4,000,000	0.18%	17/08/2020	17/02/2021	AA-	0.009%
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	0.12%	05/08/2020	19/02/2021	A	0.021%
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	10,000,000	0.26%	01/09/2020	01/03/2021	A	0.022%
Thurrock Borough Council	5,000,000	0.70%	10/07/2020	10/05/2021	AA-	0.015%
Kingston Upon Hull City Council	5,000,000	0.30%	20/08/2020	20/05/2021	AA-	0.015%
Woking Borough Council	5,000,000	0.70%	17/06/2020	09/06/2021	AA-	0.017%
Lloyds Bank Plc (RFB)	2,000,000	0.30%	07/07/2020	06/07/2021	A+	0.040%
Lloyds Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	0.30%	24/07/2020	23/07/2021	A+	0.043%
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>£161,800,000</b>	<b>0.34%</b>				<b>0.010%</b>

Portfolio Composition by Link Group's Suggested Lending Criteria



Portfolios weighted average risk number = 2.93

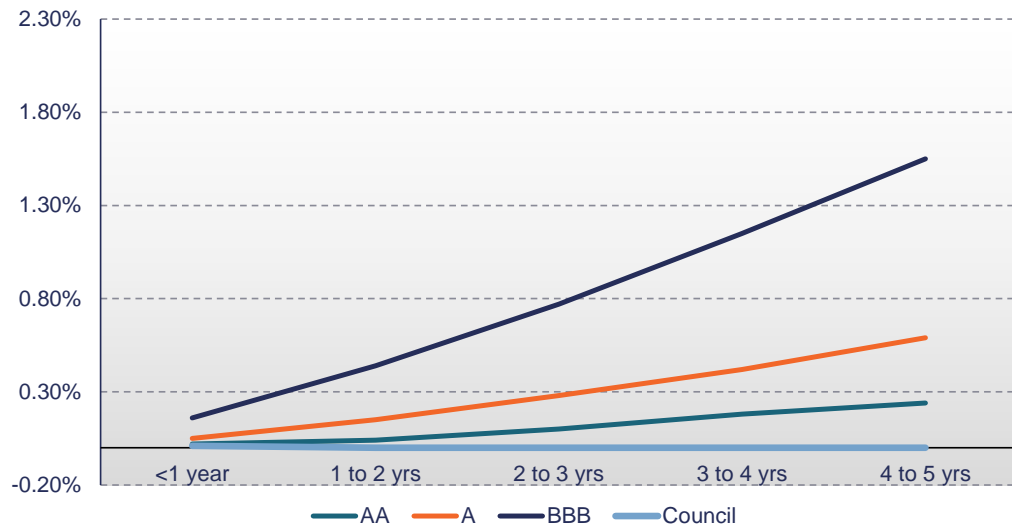
WARoR = Weighted Average Rate of Return  
WAM = Weighted Average Time to Maturity

	% of Portfolio	Amount	% of Colour in Calls	Amount of Colour in Calls	% of Call in Portfolio	WARoR	WAM	WAM at Execution	Excluding Calls/MMFs/USDBFs	
									WAM	WAM at Execution
Yellow	39.43%	£63,800,000	18.50%	£11,800,000	7.29%	0.50%	80	183	99	224
Pink1	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Pink2	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Purple	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Blue	6.18%	£10,000,000	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.13%	97	167	97	167
Orange	37.08%	£60,000,000	33.33%	£20,000,000	12.36%	0.20%	84	111	126	166
Red	17.31%	£28,000,000	53.57%	£15,000,000	9.27%	0.35%	108	129	124	167
Green	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
No Colour	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>£161,800,000</b>	<b>28.92%</b>	<b>£46,800,000</b>	<b>28.92%</b>	<b>0.34%</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>192</b>

# Shropshire Council

## Investment Risk and Rating Exposure

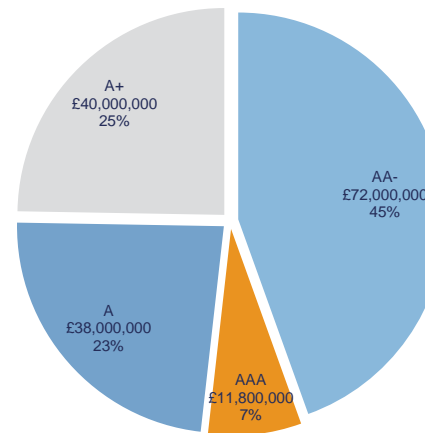
Investment Risk Vs. Rating Categories



Historic Risk of Default

Rating/Years	<1 year	1 to 2 yrs	2 to 3 yrs	3 to 4 yrs	4 to 5 yrs
AA	0.02%	0.04%	0.10%	0.18%	0.24%
A	0.05%	0.15%	0.28%	0.42%	0.59%
BBB	0.16%	0.44%	0.77%	1.15%	1.55%
Council	0.010%	0.000%	0.000%	0.000%	0.000%

Rating Exposure



### Historic Risk of Default

This is a proxy for the average % risk for each investment based on over 30 years of data provided by Fitch, Moody's and S&P. It simply provides a calculation of the possibility of average default against the historical default rates, adjusted for the time period within each year according to the maturity of the investment.

### Chart Relative Risk

This is the authority's risk weightings compared to the average % risk of default for "AA", "A" and "BBB" rated investments.

### Rating Exposures

This pie chart provides a clear view of your investment exposures to particular ratings.

## Shropshire Council

### Monthly Credit Rating Changes FITCH

Date	Update Number	Institution	Country	Rating Action
15/09/2020	1772	Cooperatieve Rabobank U.A.	Netherlands	The Long Term and Short Term ratings were downgraded to 'A+' from 'AA'- and 'F1' from 'F1+' respectively. At the same time, the Negative Watch on the Long Term, Short Term and Viability ratings were removed. The Long Term Rating was placed on Negative Outlook.
15/09/2020	1773	ABN AMRO Bank N.V.	Netherlands	The Long Term Rating was downgraded to 'A' from 'A+'.
16/09/2020	1774	ING Bank N.V.	Netherlands	The Long Term, Short Term and Viability Ratings were removed from Negative Watch. At the same time, the bank's Long Term Rating was placed on Negative Outlook.
18/09/2020	1775	Svenska Handelsbanken AB	Sweden	The Long Term and Viability Rating were removed from Negative Watch. At the same time, the Long Term Rating was placed on Negative Outlook.
18/09/2020	1776	Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken AB	Sweden	The Long Term, Short Term and Viability Ratings were removed from Negative Watch. At the same time, the bank's Long Term Rating was placed on Negative Outlook.
18/09/2020	1777	Nordea Bank Abp	Finland	The Long Term, Short Term and Viability ratings were removed from Negative Watch. At the same time, the bank's Long Term Rating was placed on Negative Outlook.
28/09/2020	1779	DBS Bank Ltd.	Singapore	The Long Term and Viability Ratings were removed from Negative Watch. At the same time, the bank's Long Term Rating was placed on Negative Outlook.
28/09/2020	1779	United Overseas Bank Ltd	Singapore	The Long Term and Viability Ratings were removed from Negative Watch. At the same time, the bank's Long Term Rating was placed on Negative Outlook.
28/09/2020	1779	Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation Ltd	Singapore	The Long Term and Viability Ratings were removed from Negative Watch. At the same time, the bank's Long Term Rating was placed on Negative Outlook.

## Shropshire Council

### Monthly Credit Rating Changes MOODY'S

Date	Update Number	Institution	Country	Rating Action
03/09/2020	1771	Wells Fargo Bank, NA	United States	The Outlook on the Long Term Rating was changed to Negative from Stable.
21/092020	1778	West Bromwich Building Society	United Kingdom	The Outlook on the Long Term Rating was changed to Negative from Stable.



# Shropshire Council

## Monthly Credit Rating Changes S&P

Date	Update Number	Institution	Country	Rating Action
				No rating changes to report.

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## Appendix B

### Prudential Indicators – Quarter 2 2020/21

Prudential Indicator	2020/21 Indicator £m	Quarter 1 – Actual £m	Quarter 2 – Actual £m	Quarter 3 – Actual £m	Quarter 4 – Actual £m
Non HRA Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	390*	393	390		
HRA CFR	95	95	95		
Gross borrowing	304	304	304		
Investments	110	164	162		
Net borrowing	194	140	142		
Authorised limit for external debt	531	304	304		
Operational boundary for external debt	438	304	304		
Limit of fixed interest rates (borrowing)	531	304	304		
HRA debt Limit	96**	0	0		
Limit of variable interest rates (borrowing)	266	0	0		
Internal Team Principal sums invested > 364 days	50	0	0		
Maturity structure of borrowing limits	%	%	%	%	%
Under 12 months	15	0	0		
12 months to 2 years	15	4	4		
2 years to 5 years	45	2	2		
5 years to 10 years	75	4	4		
10 years to 20 years	100	36	36		
20 years to 30 years	100	25	25		
30 years to 40 years	100	13	13		
40 years to 50 years	100	7	7		
50 years and above	100	9	9		

\* Based on period 3 Capital Monitoring report including Shrewsbury Shopping Centres. \*\*removed following Budget announcement Oct 2018

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**Capital Financing Summary**

Prudential Borrowing Approvals	Date Approved	Amount Approved £	Applied (Spent) 2006/07 £	Applied (Spent) 2007/08 £	Applied Outturn 08/09 2008/09 £	Applied Outturn 09/10 2009/10 £	Applied Outturn 10/11 2010/11 £	Applied Outturn 11/12 2011/12 £	Applied Outturn 12/13 2012/13 £	Applied Outturn 13/14 2013/14 £	Applied Outturn 14/15 2014/15 £	Applied Outturn 15/16 2015/16 £	Applied Outturn 16/17 2016/17 £	Applied Outturn 17/18 2017/18 £	Applied Outturn 18/19 2018/19 £	Applied Outturn 19/20 2019/20 £	Budgeted 2020/21 £	Budgeted 2021/22 £	Budgeted 2022/23 £	First year MRP Charged	Asset Life	Final year MRP Charged	
Monkmoor Campus	24/02/06	3,580,000																					
Capital Receipts Shortfall -Cashflow	24/02/06	5,000,000																					
Applied:																							
Monkmoor Campus			3,000,000		0																		
William Brooks					0					3,580,000													
Tem Valley					2,000,000																		
		<b>8,580,000</b>	<b>3,000,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,580,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>			
Highways	24/02/06	2,000,000	2,000,000																				
Accommodation Changes	24/02/06	650,000	410,200	39,800																			
Accommodation Changes - Saving	31/03/07	(200,000)																					
		<b>450,000</b>	<b>410,200</b>	<b>39,800</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>			
The Ptarmigan Building	05/11/09	3,744,000				3,744,000																	
The Mount McKinley Building	05/11/09	2,782,000				2,782,000																	
The Mount McKinley Building	05/11/09	0																					
Capital Strategy Schemes - Potential Capital Receipts shortfall - Desktop Virtualisation	25/02/10	187,600				187,600									0.00								
Carbon Efficiency Schemes/Self Financing	25/02/10	1,512,442					115,656	1,312,810	83,976														
Transformation schemes		92,635						92,635															
Renewables - Biomass - Self Financing	14/09/11	92,996						82,408	98,258	(87,670)													
Solar PV Council Buildings - Self Financing	11/05/11	56,342						1,283,959	124,584	(1,352,202)													
Depot Redevelopment - Self Financing	23/02/12	0																					
Oswestry Leisure Centre Equipment - Self Financing	04/04/12	124,521						124,521															
Leisure Services - Self Financing	01/08/12	711,197							711,197														
Mardol House Acquisition	26/02/15	4,160,000									4,160,000												
Mardol House Adaptation and Refit	26/02/15	3,340,000									167,640.84	3,172,358.86											
Oswestry Leisure Centre Equipment - Self Financing	01/08/12	290,274											274,239			16,035							
Car Parking Strategy Implementation		590,021													588,497.06	1,524	0						
JPUT - Investment in Units re Shrewsbury Shopping Centres		77,563,255												52,204,603	(208,569.18)	2,791,967	5,291,576	9,414,289	8,069,390				
JPUT - SSC No 1 Ltd		527,319												527,319									
Children's Residential Care		2,000,000														1,381,539	618,461						
Whitchurch Medical Practice (Pauls Moss Development)	26/07/18	3,778,000																3,778,000					
Oswestry Castleview - Site Acquisition	19/12/19	3,256,241														3,256,241							
DVSA Site Acquisition		1,200,000																1,200,000					
Former Morrisons Site, Oswestry	19/09/19	3,364,805															3,364,805						
Commercial Investment Fund	Fin Strat 19/20	60,380,954																40,380,954	20,000,000				
The Tannery Development - Student Block		8,020,000													3,677,843.83	3,456,019	886,137						
Previous NSDC Borrowing		955,595		821,138	134,457																		
		<b>189,760,196</b>	<b>5,410,200</b>	<b>39,800</b>	<b>2,821,138</b>	<b>6,848,057</b>	<b>3,695,656</b>	<b>2,896,333</b>	<b>1,018,015</b>	<b>(1,439,872)</b>	<b>4,327,641</b>	<b>3,172,359</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53,006,161</b>	<b>4,057,772</b>	<b>10,903,325</b>	<b>10,160,979</b>	<b>54,773,243</b>	<b>28,069,390</b>				
									0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	(1)	(1)						
<b>£80m investment fund</b>		80,000,000																					

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<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
17th December 2020

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

## Shifnal Town Centre and Highways Improvement Scheme.

**Responsible Officer Steve Brown, Head of Transport and Environment**

e-mail: Steve.brown@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257802

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. This report seeks the approval of Council to proceed with the Shifnal Town Centre and Highway Improvement Scheme, noting that Cabinet approved this report and all associated recommendations at its 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 meeting due to the project costs exceeding one million (£1m+) and in accordance with the Councils Financial Rules, as laid out within this report.
- 1.2. The town's location in Shropshire in relation to Shrewsbury, Telford and Wrekin and the West Midlands provides an attractive mix for developers and house buyers. The geographical area of Shifnal has been subject to extensive housing development over previous years, circa 1100 dwellings have been built to date with a further 400 dwellings planned.
- 1.3. In response to the development opportunities allocated to Shifnal through Shropshire Council's Site Allocation and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan for construction between 2006 and 2026, Shropshire Council developed a Transport Strategy for Shifnal that considers cumulative impact and effect of all the proposed developments in Shifnal on the local highway network and determines a range of proposals for further investigation and development that will serve to manage the growth of vehicular and sustainable travel within the town.
- 1.4. The growth in development has created local concern in respect of the ability of the current infrastructure to support town growth. The town centre improvement project and improvements to the layout and positioning of town centre junctions will enhance the town centre about presentation, public realm in respect of its materials and town centre design.
- 1.5. The improvements to the town centre and public realm will enhance the existing infrastructure, by improving and in some areas reducing traffic flow and creating a more pedestrian friendly area, that can be utilised for community events and support local businesses. The work scheduled is: -
  - Realigning and improving capacity at key town centre road junctions
  - Highways resurfacing
  - Improving levels of footway surfaces
  - Hard and soft landscaping
  - Tree planting
    - Improved town centre materials and colour palette

- Public Realm furniture

1.6. It should be noted that the intent (subject to approval) to proceed has received the support of:

- Highways and Transport
- Internal Infrastructure Group (IIG)
- Shifnal Town Council
- Shifnal Members
- Cabinet approval (7<sup>th</sup> December 2020)
- The project is a Category A project in the current Shifnal Place plan. The scheme has been subject to public consultation, public meetings and the scheme design and its intended improvement for Shifnal has been agreed by all parties.

1.7 Shifnal has been subject to significant housing development. This has raised local concern relating to the wider impact upon the town and its associated infrastructure. Several integral internal groups such as IIG have supported this project and the project is a Category A project in the current Shifnal Place plan.

1.8 The summary cost of the scheme is:

<b>Total cost of scheme</b>	<b>£2,716,779.00 (estimate, subject to tender).</b>
<b>Total CIL required</b>	£1,887,779
<b>Section 106 contribution</b>	£ 829,000
<b>Total cost of scheme</b>	<b>£2,716,779.00 (estimate, subject to tender).</b>

The Section 106 contribution is already received and will fund junction improvements and redesigned highway layout in the town centre. CIL funding will improve the town centre, public realm as detailed on the attached design and is considered an appropriate use of CIL funding in accordance with national legislation and guidance.

## 2. . Recommendations

- 2.1. That Council approve the Shifnal Town Centre and Highways Improvement Scheme and allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy funds for the Shifnal area of £1,887,779.00 and £829,000 of Section 106 funds for highway junction improvements for project delivery.
- 2.2. That Council approve a tender process and subsequent mobilisation to facilitate delivery of the Shifnal Town Centre Improvement Plan as supported with all parties
- 2.3. That Council approve a delegation to the Assistant Director of Infrastructure to amend the project as required in response to the tender outcome.
- 2.4. That Council approve the necessary engagement and information process to deliver this project in association with Shifnal Town Council and wider Town groups as required.



## REPORT

### 3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal.

- 3.1. This report seeks approval to deliver the Shifnal Town Centre Improvement Project. The project has support of been all parties (town council, local members and internally at Shropshire Council). The project is designed and has an indicative budget to proceed, the scheme will be submitted for tender for delivery and therefore the budget contingent upon the tender being received. How Covid will impact upon tender process is currently unclear and this aspect will require management and liaison with all parties as required, once the tenders are received.
- 3.2 The work is anticipated to begin in Summer 2021, and will last for approximately a year, the work will cause significant disruption to the town centre, and local members and the town council have been advised of this. A working group of town councillors, the town clerk and Shropshire Highways and transport staff has agreed to be developed to inform the engagement and information plan to support the town whilst this project is developed and delivered to plan, communicate the works effectively and deal with operational issues that arise.
- 3.3 The improvements to the town centre and public realm will enhance the existing infrastructure, by improving and in some areas reducing traffic flow and creating a more pedestrian friendly area, that can be utilised for community events and support local businesses. This will provide a safer environment, once work is complete, for people with physical and sensory disabilities, for older people, and for people with caring responsibilities such as families with small children, and people looking after adults with learning disabilities.
- 3.4 An Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) has been carried out for this project. Please see Appendix A. The screening, for positive, neutral or negative impacts of this project for people in Protected Characteristic groupings as set out by the Equality Act 2010, and regarding social inclusion, has indicated the following.
- As per the above planned physical improvements to the public realm, there is an anticipated positive impact, once complete, for people with physical and sensory disabilities, for older people, and for people with caring responsibilities such as families with small children. These are primarily people in the groupings of Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex, and Social Inclusion.
  - There is an anticipated negative impact for the same groupings whilst the work is ongoing, and it will be important to ensure that signage is as clear as possible, that there is wide enough access to shop premises etc for people in wheelchairs, and people with buggies, and that both temporary and permanent pavement surfaces do not pose slip risks for people with walking sticks etc
  - The impact of Covid-19 in terms of current and projected social distancing requirements will also need to be factored in but could enhance impacts from an equality perspective through contractors ensuring there is wide enough physical access for pedestrians, mitigating against the noise, smell, and air quality health and wellbeing impacts for pedestrians whilst work is ongoing.
  - Overall equality impacts are anticipated to be low to medium positive across all groupings once the work has been completed.

#### 4. Financial Overview

4.1. The finance and budget for the project is laid out as follows:

<b>As at 26 October 2020</b>	<b>£</b>
Local Area CIL Fund Available	1,805,510.81
Less committed in Capital Programme:	
Shifnal St Andrews Primary School	-187,778.46
Shifnal Primary	-12,272.25
<b>Uncommitted balance 31/03/20</b>	<b>1,605,460.10</b>
Strategic Fund	332,473.918
Neighbourhood Fund Available	677,098.58
<b>Shifnal Finance available summary:</b>	
Section 106 contribution	829,000.00
CIL: Local Area Fund	1,605,460.10
CIL: Strategic Fund	332,473.91
<b>Total Funds available</b>	<b>2,766,934.00</b>
<b>Estimated cost of Project</b>	<b>2,716,779.00</b>
<b>Remaining</b>	<b>50,155.00</b>

- 4.2. The finances of this project have been estimated and are subject to tender. How COVID 19 may impact on tender outcomes is unclear, and as with any tender process the ability to amend the project in accordance with the finalised tender outcome is required, therefore a delegation to the Assistant Director of Infrastructure to amend the project in line with the tender is contained with the recommendations of this report.
- 4.3. The project and its necessary detail were presented to the Internal Infrastructure Group (IIG) for use of CIL funding. IIG supported the use of CIL for the project subject to Cabinet and Full Council approval
- 4.4. The project costs have been forecast and will be subject to tenders being received. As the total cost of the project is significantly higher than £1,000,000, full council approval is required.
- 4.5. It should be noted that Shifnal Town Council approved the scheme and its design and project costs at their full council meeting in October 2020.
- 4.6. Shifnal Town Council also approved consideration of utilising neighbourhood CIL fund to support the project, once the tenders for the work have been received , it will need to be determined if this contribution is one of contributing to the project to ensure its delivery , or enhancing the project by additional public realm infra structure or increased specification , this issue will need to be resolved and then appropriate arrangements implemented once the position is understood .

#### 5. Climate Change

- 5.1 The existing layout of the town centre has not developed in alignment with its current housing growth, extensive queuing at highway junctions, time awaiting at junctions and journey

reliability times are all issues. This project will improve the junction issues and allow traffic to flow freely and prevent slowing, speeding of vehicles and related carbon emissions.

- 5.2 An improved town centre design, with landscaping and realigned layout will encourage increased pedestrian use, coupled with an improved public realm furniture and improved soft landscaping materials with additional trees to support the improvement of the town centre.

## 6. Background

- 6.1. The geographical area of Shifnal has been subject to extensive housing development over previous years, circa 1100 dwellings have been built to date with a further 400 planned. The town's location in Shropshire in relation to Shrewsbury, Telford and Wrekin and the West Midlands provides an attractive mix for developers and house buyers.
- 6.2. The growth in development has created local concern in respect of the ability of the current infrastructure to support town growth. The town centre improvement project and improvements to the layout and positioning of town centre junctions will enhance the town centre about presentation, and public realm in respect of its materials and town centre design.
- 6.3. The approved design as agreed with the Town Council for the project is attached in Appendix B
- 6.4. The project has been in development for several years, in response to the development opportunities allocated to Shifnal through Shropshire Council's Site Allocation and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan for construction between 2006 and 2026. Shropshire Council developed a Transport Strategy for Shifnal that considers cumulative impact and effect of all the proposed developments in Shifnal on the local highway network and determines a range of proposals for further investigation and development that will serve to manage the growth of vehicular and sustainable travel within the town.
- 6.5. In 2014, several traffic mitigation options that were agreed with the Shropshire Council local Members for Shifnal were tested using a traffic growth simulation model and put forward for public consultation. No clear local support for any of the options was demonstrated.
- 6.6. In 2015, Shifnal Forward conveyed to Shropshire Council that there was notable support in Shifnal to investigate the potential for a street improvement scheme in the town that would create a pedestrian friendly and low-speed traffic environment. Shropshire Council agreed to support this proposal in principle and proceeded to commission investigation and design work in relation to a potential enhancement scheme for Shifnal town centre.
- 6.7. A local working group consisting of representatives from Shifnal Town Council and Shropshire Council was set up and has been used to test and steer the design throughout its progression. The scheme involves the reconfiguration of junctions, the reallocation of space to pedestrians, and improvements to the aesthetics of the street using high-quality materials, street furniture and additional tree planting.
- 6.8. This design work culminated in a public consultation event over two days in December 2015. The feedback provided by the public at this exhibition demonstrated significant local support for the enhancement scheme as presented. In summary, 241 people responded to the questionnaires and 84 percent of respondents supported the overall proposal to enhance Shifnal town centre. In response to a request by Shropshire Council, Shifnal Town Council subsequently confirmed their support for the scheme in October 2020.
- 6.9. Since 2015, Shropshire Council representatives have attended various stakeholder meetings with Shropshire Council Local Members, Shifnal Town Council and wider community groups.

The scheme which was subject to public consultation in December 2015, was within the region of £3.5 - £4 million. It became apparent that due to other constraints, the amount of CIL expected would not cover the cost of the scheme.

- 6.10. Shropshire Council officers were invited to attend an extraordinary meeting of Shifnal Town Council on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 to present two value engineered options for the Shifnal Town Centre Improvement Scheme, with budget estimates of £2.0 million and £2.5 million which were intended to work within the current financial constraints.
- 6.11. Following the meeting, Shifnal Town Council agreed to provide formal feedback once they had an opportunity to consult with the wider community. Due to the coronavirus restrictions, Shifnal Town Council were not able to provide any formal feedback about the two options put forward. Whilst no formal feedback has been received, during the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020, several issues were raised by members of the Town Council. To progress the design, Shropshire Council commissioned WSP to make amendments such as retaining limited on street parking to the proposed scheme that incorporated some of the informal feedback received in January 2020, and subsequently developed 'Option 3', the approved design.
- 6.12. The final design and anticipated budget were then approved by Shifnal Town Council at their 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 full council meeting and by Shifnal local Members. A letter confirming support for the project from the Town Clerk has been received. See Appendix C. Cabinet also approved this project and report at its meeting of December 7<sup>th</sup> 2020.
- 6.13. Subject to approval, the project will be prepared for tender with an intent to begin work in late May 2021. This will allow all the necessary preparations to be considered and implemented and allow additional CIL funding to become available.
- 6.14. A working group of highways and transport staff and representatives of Shifnal Town Council will be formed to support this project. A project such as this will impact upon the town in respect of disruption including road closures, temporary traffic lights and loss of parking etc. and the ability to plan and prepare with local town councillors will ensure that any disruption is mitigated as far as possible and that communication is as effective as possible.
- 6.15. Typical improvement works will be: -
- Realigning and improving capacity at key town centre road junctions
  - Highways resurfacing
  - Improving levels of footway surfaces
  - Hard and soft landscaping
  - Tree planting
  - Improved town centre materials and colour palette
  - Public Realm furniture

## **7.0 Rationale supporting the use of CIL funding.**

7.1 CIL income from new development must be spent by the Council "funding the provision improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the

development of its area” in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended). "Infrastructure" is defined by section 216 of the 2008 Planning Act And includes but is not limited to roads and other transport facilities, flood defences, schools and other educational facilities, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities, and open spaces. Regard should also be had to the Government’s National Planning Policy Guidance which states that, “local authorities must spend the levy on infrastructure needed to support the development of their area, and they will decide what infrastructure is needed. The levy is intended to focus on the provision of new infrastructure and should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies in infrastructure provision unless those deficiencies will be made more severe by new development”.

7.2 Shropshire Council recognises that infrastructure needs vary from place to place and priorities vary over time in response to different development pressures. Shropshire’s infrastructure requirements are therefore detailed within Shropshire’s Implementation Plan and supporting Place Plans. An annual process of review is well established for these which ensures widespread and continual engagement in identifying and prioritising Shropshire’s infrastructure requirements both with the local community and local infrastructure and service providers. The Implementation Plan and supporting Place Plans therefore provide a robust evidence base to assist in the targeted use of developer contributions as well as a mechanism for coordinating all available resources around an agreed set of priorities within a place.

7.3 The annual review of the Implementation Plan and Place Plans, thereby ensuring the infrastructure requirements to be delivered through CIL are informed by local evidence of need and based on robust local consultation. 7.4 The Shropshire Place Plans are documents which bring together a range of information about a defined area, including the identified infrastructure needs of settlements and their relative priority. They are developed in collaboration with local parish and town council and infrastructure providers. They include a focus on local needs such as highways, flood defences, educational facilities, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities and open spaces. The Shropshire Local Infrastructure Plan provides a composite of the needs identified in the Place Plans with a focus on the highest priority issues, including those critical needs necessary to ensure development can happen

It should be noted that the Shifnal town centre and highways improvement plan is a key Category A project in the published Shifnal Area Place Plan and in respect of this project this includes for

- Wider footpaths
- Hard and soft landscaping
- Traffic Speed reduction infrastructure
- Public realm movements to the town centre in respect of improvements for pedestrians and public furniture, cycle provision and walking routes.

7.5 Shifnal Town Council are considering supporting infrastructure with the use of their Neighbourhood CIL allocation this is not yet confirmed but infrastructure and provision of electric charging points, improved signs and way intending are being considered and will be confirmed in due course subject to necessary liaison and agreement for the use and approve CIL funds.

## 8 Conclusion

8.1 Shifnal has been subject to significant housing development. This has raised local concern relating to the wider impact upon the town and its associated infrastructure. Several integral internal groups such as IIG have supported this project and the project is a Category A project in the current Shifnal Place plan. Should approval be provided, this project will address demands development has placed on the area by improving the local town centre in respect of its public realm, aid the safety and comfort of pedestrians across a range of demographics, and improve the layout of its key highway junctions to support the scheme. It is considered appropriate to use CIL monies to fund part of this project for the reasons given in this report

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

**Cabinet Report of 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/s26049/Report%20-%20Shifnal%20Town%20Centre%20and%20Highways%20Improvement%20Scheme%20FINAL.pdf>

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Councillor Steve Davenport**

**Local Members – All local members affected.  
Councillor Bird and Turley**

**Appendices**

**Appendix A - ESSIA for the proposed project and works**

**Appendix B - Approved Shifnal Town Centre Improvement Design**

**Appendix C - Letter of support from Shifnal Town Council.**

**Appendix A**

**Shropshire Council Part 1 ESIIA: initial screening and assessment**



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

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

<b>Name of proposed service change</b>
<b>Shifnal Town Centre and Highways Improvement Scheme.</b>

<b>Name of lead officer carrying out the screening</b>
Steve Brown, Head of Transport and Environment

**Decision, review and monitoring**

<b>Decision</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
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**

The proposals will affect all pedestrians in the given area, whether residents or visitors, as well as road users, and thus may have an impact across a range of Protected Characteristic groupings, particularly those with physical or learning disabilities and their careers, and families with young children.

This initial ESIIA screening, for positive, neutral or negative impacts of this project for people in Protected Characteristic groupings as set out by the Equality Act 2010, and about social inclusion, has indicated the following.

- As per the planned physical improvements to the public realm, there is an anticipated positive impact, once complete, for people with physical and sensory disabilities, for older people, and for people with caring responsibilities such as families with small children. These are primarily people in the groupings of Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex, and Social Inclusion.
- There is an anticipated negative impact for the same groupings whilst the work is ongoing, and it will be important to ensure that signage is as clear as possible, that there is wide enough access to shop premises etc for people in wheelchairs, and people with buggies, and that both temporary and permanent pavement surfaces do not pose slip risks for people with walking sticks etc
- The impact of Covid-19 in terms of current and projected social distancing requirements will also need to be factored in but could enhance impacts from an equality perspective through contractors ensuring there is wide enough physical access for pedestrians, mitigating against the noise, smell, and air quality health and wellbeing impacts for pedestrians whilst work is ongoing.
- Overall equality impacts are anticipated to be low to medium positive across all groupings once the work has been completed.

Further screenings for equality and health and wellbeing impacts may be advisable at timely stages during the work.

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

The Council is mindful that there will be negative equality impacts during the actual works, as well as positive impacts to be gained upon completion of the works.

Both formal noticing ahead of work and on site, and information sent to residents and properties will need to provide contact details for making comment. Local Members will be encouraged to seek feedback from residents and users and act as a first point of contact during and post scheme development for any unforeseen issues arising. This is the approach also being used for Highways schemes in place or proposed due to Covid-19 considerations.

Communication will also need to take account of potential negative response from residents and other properties that may experience deferred or possibly unforeseen impacts.

As the work is anticipated to begin post elections in May 2021, and last for the entire year, it will cause significant disruption to the town centre, and local members and the town council have been advised of this. A working group of town councillors, the town clerk and Shropshire Highways and transport staff is to be developed to form the engagement and information plan to support the town whilst this project is developed and delivered, to plan and communicate the works effectively and deal with the undoubtable operational issues that arise.

The Council will also keep abreast of other approaches across the country, particularly those undertaken because of the Covid-19 pandemic, to maximise shared learning for all such approaches.

#### **Associated ESIAs**



- ESIIA re Local Economic Growth Strategies
- Suite of ESIIAs re Local Plan Partial Review
- Suite of ESIIAs re highways management including Winter Service Policy, Risk Based Approach to Highways Management, and changes to highways and traffic management arrangements due to Covid-19

**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**

**Climate change**


- The existing layout of the town centre has not developed in alignment with its current housing growth, issues of extensive queuing at highway junctions, time awaiting ant junctions and journey reliability times are all an issue. This project will improve the junction issues and allow traffic to flow freely and prevent slowing, speeding of vehicles and necessary emissions.
- An improved town centre design, with landscaping and realigned layout will encourage more local pedestrian use, coupled with an improved public realm furniture, materials.

**Health and well being**

Cabinet gave recent approval to the use of health impact assessments. This proposal provides an early opportunity for utilising the guidance that has been developed for use in this regard, to more fully capture the health and well-being benefits anticipated

The scheme could support long term healthier travel choices for Shropshire residents by encouraging more journeys by foot and provide an improved public realm through a less car dominated environment.


**Scrutiny at Part One screening stage**

<b>People involved</b>	<b>Signatures</b>	<b>Date</b>
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i>		13/11/2020
<i>Any internal support*</i>		
<i>Any external support**</i> <b>Mrs Lois Dale</b> <b>Rurality and Equalities Specialist</b>		13/11/2020

*\*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
<i>Lead officer's name</i>		13/11/2020
<i>Accountable officer's name</i>		

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

**B. Detailed Screening Assessment**

**Aims of the service change and description**

The improvements planned to Shifnal town centre and public realm will enhance the existing infrastructure, by improving and in some areas reducing traffic flow and creating a more pedestrian friendly area, that can be utilised for community events and support local businesses. The work scheduled is: -

- Realigning and improving capacity at key town centre road junctions
- Highways resurfacing
- Improving levels of footway surfaces
- Hard and soft landscaping
- Tree planting
- Improved town centre materials and colour palette
- Public Realm furniture

**Background**

6.16. The geographical area of Shifnal has been subject to extensive housing development over previous years, circa 1100 dwellings have been built to date with a further 400 planned. The town's location in Shropshire in relation to Shrewsbury, Telford and Wrekin and the West Midlands provides an attractive mix for developers and house buyers.

6.17. The growth in development has created local concern in respect of the ability of the current infrastructure to support town growth.

- 6.18. The project has been in development for several years, in response to the development opportunities allocated to Shifnal through Shropshire Council's Site Allocation and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan for construction between 2006 and 2026. Shropshire Council developed a Transport Strategy for Shifnal that considers cumulative impact and effect of all the proposed developments in Shifnal on the local highway network and determines a range of proposals for further investigation and development that will serve to manage the growth of vehicular and sustainable travel within the town.
- 6.19. In 2014, several traffic mitigation options that were agreed with the Shropshire Council Local Members for Shifnal were tested using a traffic growth simulation model and put forward for public consultation. No clear local support for any of the options was demonstrated.
- 6.20. In 2015, Shifnal Forward conveyed to Shropshire Council that there was notable support in Shifnal to investigate the potential for a street improvement scheme in the town that would create a pedestrian friendly and low-speed traffic environment. Shropshire Council agreed to support this proposal in principle and proceeded to commission investigation and design work in relation to a potential enhancement scheme for Shifnal town centre.
- 6.21. A local working group consisting of representatives from Shifnal Town Council was set up and has been used to test and steer the design throughout its progression. The scheme involves the reconfiguration of junctions, the reallocation of space to pedestrians, and improvements to the aesthetics of the street using high-quality materials, street furniture and additional tree planting.
- 6.22. This design work culminated in a public consultation event over two days in December 2015. The feedback provided by the public at this exhibition demonstrated significant local support for the enhancement scheme as presented. In summary, 241 people responded to the questionnaires and 84 percent of respondents supported the overall proposal to enhance Shifnal town centre. In response to a request by Shropshire Council, Shifnal Town Council subsequently confirmed their support for the scheme in October 2020.
- 6.23. Since 2015, Shropshire Council have attended various stakeholder meetings with Shropshire Council Local Members, Shifnal Town Council and wider community groups. The scheme was subject to Public consultation in December 2015, was within the region of £3.5 - £4 million. It became apparent that due to other constraints, the amount of CIL expected would not cover the cost of the scheme.
- 6.24. Shropshire Council Officers were invited to attend an extraordinary meeting of Shifnal Town Council on 14th January 2020 to present two value engineered options for the Shifnal Town Centre Improvement Scheme, with budget estimates of £2.0 million and £2.5 million which were intended to work within the current financial constraints.
- 6.25. Following the meeting, Shifnal Town Council agreed to provide formal feedback once they had an opportunity to consult with the wider community. Due to the coronavirus restrictions, Shifnal Town Council were not able to provide any formal feedback about the two options put forward. Whilst no formal feedback has been received, during the meeting held on 14th January 2020, several issues were raised by members of the Town Council. To progress the design, Shropshire Council commissioned WSP to make minor amendments to the proposed scheme that incorporated some of the informal feedback received in January 2020, and subsequently developed 'Option 3', the

approved design.

6.26. The final design and cost were then approved by Shifnal Town Council at their 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 full council meeting and by Shifnal local Members. Hence, there is now opportunity to deliver the project to support and improve the town.

6.27. Subject to approval, the project will be prepared for tender with an intent to begin work in late May 2021. This will allow all the necessary preparations to be considered and implemented and allow additional CIL funding to become available. .

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

In the short term the intended target groups for the service change are pedestrians in Shifnal town centre, those visiting shops, the market or other premises, or those making active travel choices for journeys that use the area or traverse the area.

This scheme will affect residents and businesses but may also have associated impacts to these groups on neighbouring or nearby streets because of any displacement of traffic.

The scheme will affect any motorists and public transport operators using the area for local journeys, as well as people passing through, not least as Shifnal is a town that since the Middle Ages has been a staging post for longer journeys.

The scheme will affect all pedestrians in the given area, whether residents or visitors, and thus may have an impact across a range of Protected Characteristic groupings, particularly those with physical or learning disabilities and their careers, and families with young children.

Stakeholders include the Town Council, public transport operators, taxi drivers, and local businesses, as well as the local Shropshire Council councillors and the local MP and neighbouring local authorities.

Contractors are also a key stakeholder, as considerations around access for the vulnerable groupings identified, and timings of work schedules to mitigate negative impacts at certain times of the day, etc, will need to be written into contracts and monitored for adherence.

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

Extensive local consultations and engagement with the town council and subsequent public meetings, as detailed in the Cabinet report, indicate support for the scheme itself, whilst the evidence base draws upon the Local Plan Partial Review evidence base and work carried out to progress local economic growth strategies and place planning approaches.

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

Within the wider community, the scheme will have impacts for older people, people with disabilities, and families with young children, and they therefore form key target groups for engagement ahead of and during the works, and afterwards to assess equality impacts.










As the work is anticipated to begin post elections in May 2021, and last for the entire year, it







will cause significant disruption to the town centre, and local members and the town council have been advised of this. A working group of town councillors, the town clerk and Shropshire Highways and transport staff is to be developed to form the engagement and information plan to support the town whilst this project is developed and delivered, to plan and communicate the works effectively and deal with the undoubtable operational issues that arise

The Council's Communications Team and incoming portfolio holder will need to be involved in corporate press releases etc at timely junctures. It will also be important to continue to engage with officers and councillors from neighbouring authorities.

**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.*

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

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

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

**Climate Change adaptation**

This scheme could contribute towards improving the health and well-being of Shropshire’s residents by facilitating social distancing requirements in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, improving actual safety by reducing the likelihood of road traffic accidents, improving perceived safety, and encouraging the increased use of more sustainable and active modes of transport including walking, which can then help people to become fitter and healthier.

**Health and well being**

The impact of Covid-19 in terms of current and projected social distancing requirements will need to be factored in, particularly in ensuring there is wide enough physical access for pedestrians whilst the work is ongoing. There will be anticipated noise, smell, and air quality health impacts for pedestrians, due to the necessary use of machinery, and dust arising, which could exacerbate existing physical health conditions

Social distancing measures could in themselves reassure older people. People may otherwise be less confident of going out and about, much as we see with pavement parking issues, bringing potential issues of loneliness to the fore.

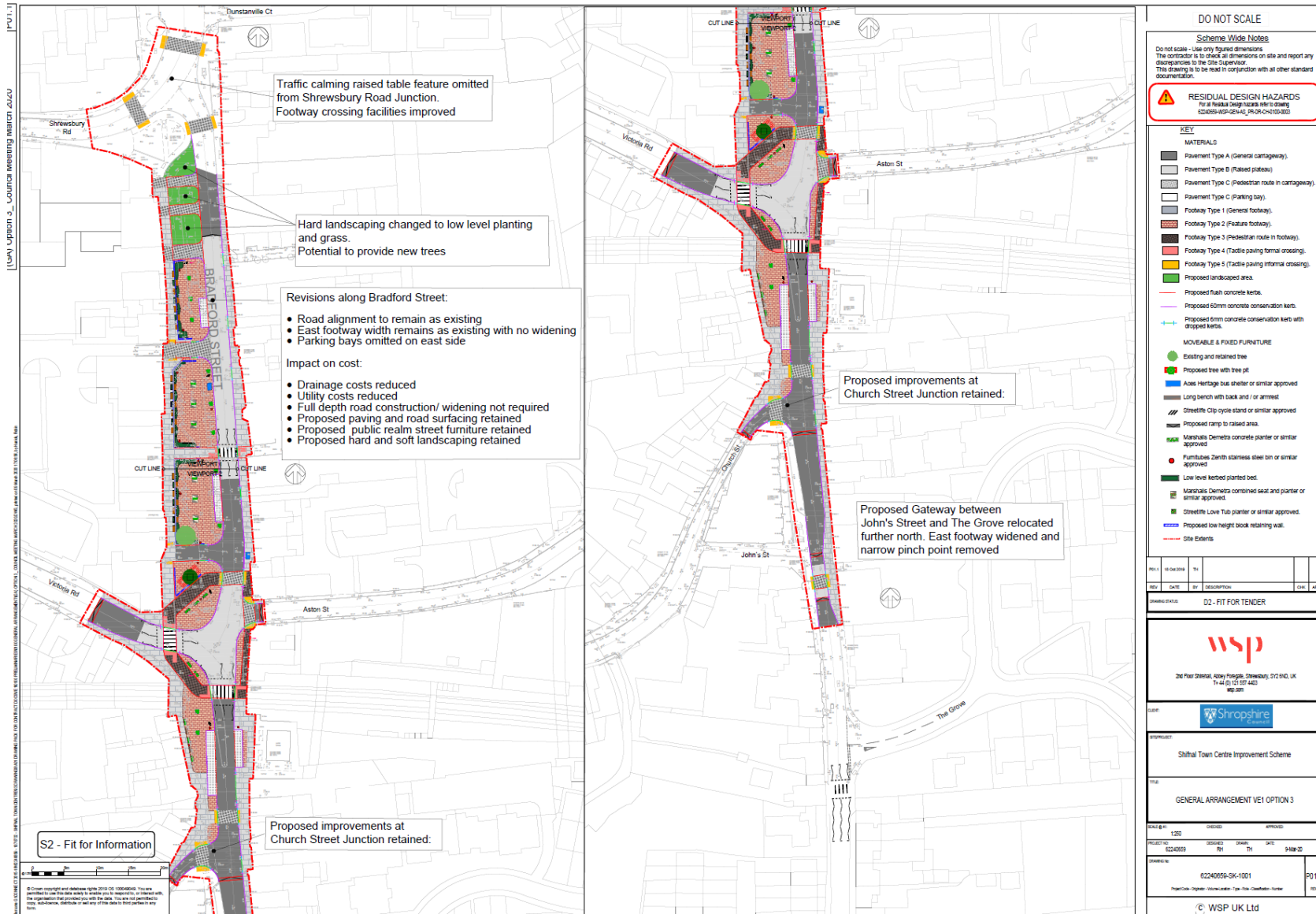
The use of tree planting to enhance the public realm will also provide opportunity to promote mental well being impacts through the greening of public spaces.

The improvements to the town centre and public realm will enhance the existing infrastructure, by improving and in some areas reducing traffic flow and by creating a more pedestrian friendly area, that can be utilised for community events and support local

businesses

Appendix B Approved Shifnal Town Centre Improvement Design

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**Appendix C**



16<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Steve Brown  
Shropshire Council  
Shirehall  
Abbey Foregate  
Shropshire  
SY2 6ND

Dear Steve

It is with great pleasure that I inform you that the members of Shifnal Town Council formally approved support for the Shifnal Town Centre Enhancement Scheme as detailed in the option 3 general arrangement documentation, fully funded by S106 and community infrastructure levy (local and strategic) to the value of £2,766,934 and delivered by Shropshire Council. (Figures provided by yourselves on summary note).

Members wished to reiterate the need for no loss of parking in the scheme or that additional allocated disabled parking should not be to the detriment of other users. Additional feedback may be forthcoming following the November Full Council meeting once recommendations have been considered.

The members further proposed that an advisory committee be convened in order to investigate proposals for the Town Council to further enhance the scheme and will address such recommendations at the November Full Council meeting including any additional input to the scheme utilising the neighbourhood funds.

I look forward to engaging further with officers and members to aid delivery of this scheme by summer 2021.

Yours sincerely

Denise Reynolds  
Town Clerk  
For and on behalf of Shifnal Town Council

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<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council 17 December 2020

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

## **CORPORATE CLIMATE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2021**

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

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation measures to build resilience are now essential to prevent the worst outcomes of the climate emergency. Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in May 2019 and adopted a Climate Strategy Framework, which established the objective of achieving net-zero carbon performance for Shropshire Council by 2030 in December 2019. An internal officer working group was established in April 2019 and the Climate Change Task Force was established to lead the Council's response in November 2019.
- 1.2 The early efforts of the Task Force have been directed towards embedding climate change as a key consideration in the Council's strategies and corporate governance systems. Considering the impact of our activities on the climate has been adopted as one of the eight organisation principles for the council. A range of projects and initiatives are being developed to help the Council improve its own performance and to demonstrate 'leadership by example' to help foster similar action across the wider economy and communities in Shropshire. The Task Force has strongly supported the establishment of the new community-led Shropshire Climate Action Partnership (SCAP) which is leading efforts to tackle carbon emissions across the county as a whole.
- 1.3 A commitment was given at Council in December 2019 to consult on a draft Climate Emergency Strategy and report the findings to Council with a final version of the Strategy. Since that commitment was given, we have revised our consultation approach to reflect changing circumstances. Preparation of the draft corporate Climate Strategy (Appendix 1) has already drawn on community engagement through the Council's quarterly Sustainability Forum and summarises the best available information about the Council's current direct and indirect carbon emissions and identifies the scale of reductions and residual offsetting which will be required to reach our objective of net-zero performance by 2030. The Action Plan element of the document reflects the findings of a community engagement workshop in February 2020 and identifies a range of potential actions and a pipeline of specific projects to help deliver progress.
- 1.4 However, we are facing a climate emergency and urgent action is therefore required. This is a fast-moving area of work and information about climate

change, carbon performance and management technologies is changing all the time. In these circumstances it is not proposed to hold a formal consultation process on the Strategy as originally proposed, but instead to publish the corporate Strategy as a 'live' document with a general invitation for public comments and suggestions for amendment which can be taken into account as part of an annual monitoring and review process. The draft corporate Strategy and Action Plan was considered by Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

## **2. Recommendations**

- A. That, subject to the views of Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> December, Council approves the Corporate Climate Emergency Strategy, Action Plan and Project Pipeline 2020 (Appendices 1 and 2);

## **REPORT**

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

- 3.1 The climate crisis is a serious threat to civilised society and the lives of millions of people both globally nationally and locally. The mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation measures to build resilience is now urgent and essential to prevent the worst outcomes of the climate crisis. Even if we are successful in mitigating the worst effects, we will continue to experience more pronounced and frequent episodes of extreme weather effects. Within 50 years there is a global threat to food supply chains and economic systems. The much greater frequency of extreme weather events will significantly increase insurance risks and disrupt financial markets. In addition to financial impacts, Climate Change threatens continued access to adequate energy, water, food and housing which are all essential human necessities which affect the health, wellbeing and future resilience of our communities.
- 3.2 The climate crisis therefore represents a significant strategic risk to Shropshire and the delivery of Council and public services. This risk is most likely to manifest itself in terms of financial impacts (e.g. operating costs, impacts on the Shropshire economy) and impacts on the health and wellbeing of staff and residents as service users.
- 3.3 Taking active steps through the adoption of a corporate Climate Strategy and Action Plan and supporting wider community efforts will allow the Council to make a demonstrable contribution to reducing the carbon footprint of the wider county, as well as 'leading by example' by reducing its own carbon footprint. Through its regulatory role and procurement decisions, Shropshire Council is in a position to make a strong positive contribution to help the wider Shropshire community make a positive transition to a low carbon future.
- 3.4 An Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) has been carried out on the draft documentation. This screening indicates that the corporate Climate Strategy and Action Plan are likely to have a positive effect on all groups in society and is intended to do so, given its objective of addressing Shropshire Council's contribution to the climate emergency. The climate

emergency will have significant impacts on the whole of Shropshire and all its diverse communities, from those living or working in our rural areas to those living or working in our market towns, as well as those that travel into our county and across our porous borders.

- 3.5 The Corporate Climate Strategy is expected to generate a positive impact in equality terms and in terms of health and well-being, for:
- Council staff and service users, and partner agency staff;
  - Children and young people and vulnerable households across Shropshire including families, older people and people on low incomes who are likely to be most susceptible to adverse impacts from extreme weather events;
  - People living in rural households who are off the energy grid;
- 3.6 It is not possible at this stage to say with certainty what the likely impacts of the new corporate strategy will be upon specific sectors of the Shropshire economy and upon groupings within the community. Council officers will continue to work with local Parish Councils and Town Councils, community groups and elected Members to communicate the rationale for actions to address the climate emergency and to help mitigate or enhance potential impacts on specific parts of the community.
- 3.7 Individual Council services will need to engage with their staff and service users to explore the need for, and implications of, service changes which may result from the adoption of carbon reduction measures. The Council will need to keep abreast of national good practice in order to maximise opportunities for equality and social inclusion within the overall policy context of addressing the climate emergency.

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

- 4.1. Measures to reduce Shropshire Council's carbon footprint and adapt service delivery to address the impacts of extreme weather events will significantly reduce financial risk and potentially generate revenue savings as well as delivering on our corporate responsibilities to the environment and our communities. Improving Shropshire Council's carbon performance and resilience will however require significant capital investment in energy efficiency, low carbon technologies and renewable energy generation.
- 4.2. Access to the Council's Capital Programme will be pursued where projects will be appraised on an individual basis following the process detailed in the Capital Strategy. Each initiative in the climate strategy would need to be evaluated on its own merits prior to inclusion in the Capital Programme. Some projects delivered in partnership with others may lead to commercial income being generated.
- 4.3. However, failing to reduce the Council's carbon footprint and implement climate change adaptation measures represents a financial threat to both revenue costs and the value of the Council's capital assets. This means that there is an incentive for the Council to 'Invest to Save' to mitigate the risk of future costs.
- 4.4. Many measures to reduce dependence on greenhouse gasses also offer opportunities to both generate a financial return and to provide community

leadership which highlights the ‘clean growth’ economic potential of new technologies and adaptation measures in the Shropshire context.

## 5. Climate Change Appraisal

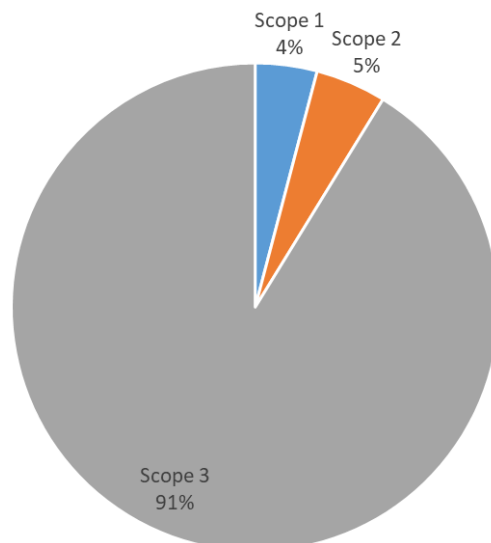
- 5.1 **Energy and fuel consumption:** The corporate Climate Strategy and Action Plan have been developed to drive the delivery of actions to improve energy efficiency and carbon performance across Council Services;
- 5.2 **Renewable energy generation:** The corporate Climate Strategy and Action Plan have been developed to drive the delivery of additional generation of renewable energy from a range of technologies on Council land and buildings;
- 5.3 **Carbon offsetting or mitigation:** The corporate Climate Strategy and Action Plan have been developed to drive the delivery of efforts to capture and store carbon and to mitigate the effects of climate change on biodiversity through the management of Council land;
- 5.4 **Climate Change adaptation:** The corporate Climate Strategy and Action Plan have been developed to drive the delivery of efforts to ensure that Council services and assets are resilient in the face of the challenges of more extreme weather events.

## 6. Background

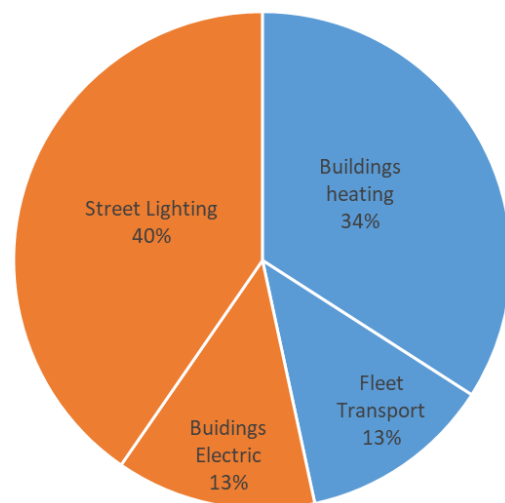
### *Corporate Carbon Footprint 2019*

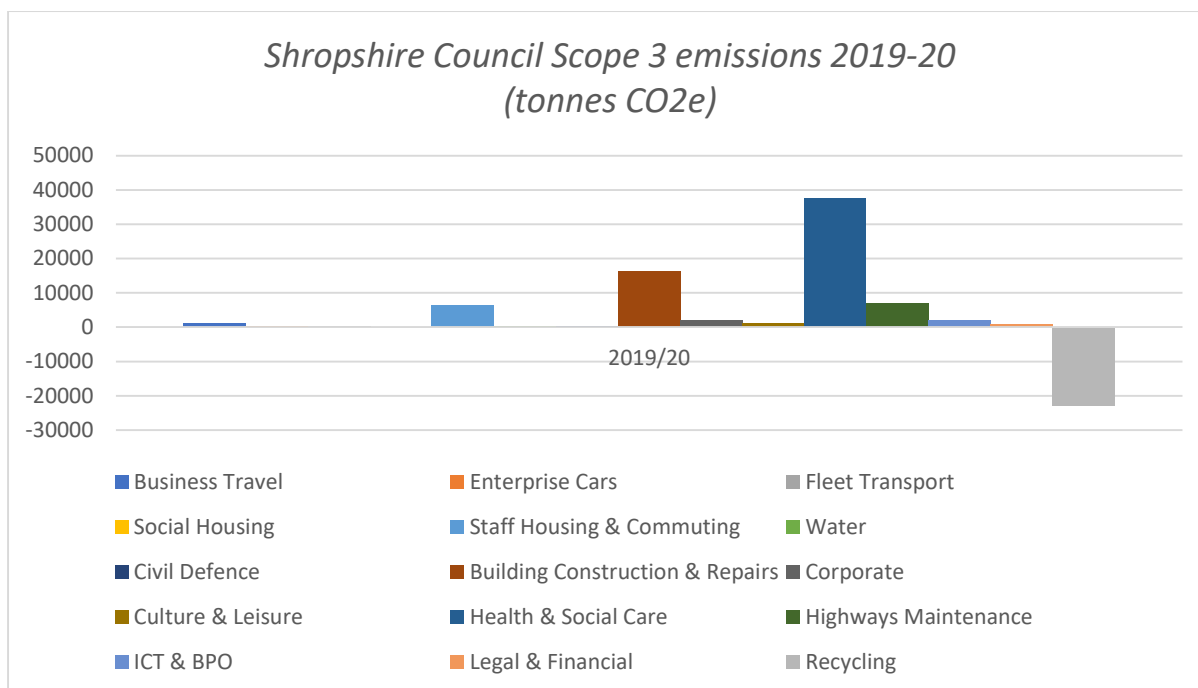
- 6.1 The best available data suggests that Shropshire Council’s carbon footprint (Scope 1 & 2) has fallen from around 12,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2017 to around 5,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2019. The Council’s indirect emissions (Scope 3) are assessed as being around 50,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2019 (see charts below). Whilst the Council’s footprint represents only around 1% of Shropshire’s total carbon footprint, work is ongoing to refine performance data and establish an accurate picture to support annual monitoring.

*Shropshire Council Carbon Footprint 2019-20 (tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e)*



*Shropshire Council Scope 1 & 2 emissions 2019-20 (tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e)*





6.2 The graphs above show that the majority of the Council’s carbon emissions are generated from indirect activity, such as services which are commissioned from commercial providers, the repair and maintenance of its buildings and from staff housing and commuting. The waste management contract operated by Veolia generates a net carbon saving of around 23,000 tonnes mainly because of the high levels of recycling in the county. The Council’s current carbon footprint is already offset to some extent through carbon capture and storage on land holdings such as countryside sites, which in total currently capture and store around 2,000 tonnes CO2e per year.

6.3 Shropshire Council was already working to reduce its’ carbon footprint and direct impact on the climate prior to the declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019. An internal officer working group was established in April 2019 and the Climate Change Task Force was established under the leadership of Adrian Cooper in November 2019. A Climate Strategy Framework, which established the objective of achieving net-zero carbon performance for Shropshire Council and set out the scale of the challenge, key objectives and principles and a route map for our response was approved by Council in December 2019. An update on progress was reported to Performance Management Scrutiny Committee in July 2020.

*Climate Task Force - Progress to Date*

6.4 The early efforts of the Task Force have been directed towards embedding and normalising climate change as a key consideration in the Council’s culture, strategies and corporate governance systems. This is reflected in the fact that climate action appraisals are now an integral part of all committee reports and major development and investment projects. Key staff from across the full range of council services have been provided with carbon literacy training to equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to broaden ownership of the issue and improve our corporate performance.

6.5 Alongside these initiatives, the Task Force is supporting the development of a wide range of projects to ‘power down’ energy consumption for Council buildings and transport, ‘power up’ the generation of renewable energy on Council land and buildings and support the capture and storage of carbon on Council-managed land. The current pipeline of projects is described as part of the Action Plan attached in Appendix 2, but of particular note are:

- i. Work to assess the feasibility of a 2 MW solar farm on the former landfill site at Maesbury Road, Oswestry, which could supply electricity direct to local companies in the neighbouring industrial estate;
- ii. Work to assess the feasibility of the manufacture of ‘green’ hydrogen as a vehicle fuel for heavy commercial vehicles in both the Council’s fleet and that of its contractors, using electricity from the Battlefield Energy Recovery Facility.

Future progress with these and subsequent projects will be reported as part of an annual monitoring and review process.

## 7. Corporate Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan 2021

7.1 A copy of the draft Strategy is attached as Appendix 1. Its key features are summarised in the Table below. A copy of the Action Plan and Project Pipeline is attached as Appendix 2 and identifies a range of potential actions and a pipeline of specific projects, both for the forthcoming 12 months and those that are under development for the longer term.

### *Summary of Corporate Strategy*

Theme	2030 Objective	Planned Measures
Power Down: Buildings Energy	Reduce 2019 annual emissions by 50% to 2,360 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rationalise the number of buildings to only those essential for the sustainable delivery of Council Services (Corporate Asset Management Strategy);</li> <li>• Reduce energy demand from our buildings through a comprehensive programme of fabric and technology upgrades;</li> <li>• Performance monitoring and control systems, together with staff and user training;</li> <li>• Meet the residual energy demand from renewable energy and carbon neutral sources;</li> <li>• Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard, wherever possible and viable.</li> </ul>
Power Down: Transport and Travel Energy	Reduce 2019 annual emissions by 70% to 1,930 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the need for staff travel through improved access to local office facilities and greater home working and normalising the use of IT and communications technology wherever possible;</li> <li>• Encourage the use of active modes and public transport for shorter journeys;</li> </ul>



Theme	2030 Objective	Planned Measures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progressively replace Council Fleet vehicles with those powered by Ultra-Low emission fuels such as electricity and hydrogen;</li> </ul>
Power Down: Commissioned Services	Reduce 2019 annual emissions by 65% to 27,686 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update procurement policies to highlight the importance of carbon performance as a consideration in procurement;</li> <li>Work with the suppliers of goods and services to reduce indirect (Scope 3) carbon emissions;</li> </ul>
Power Down: Resource consumption and waste	Reduce annual carbon emissions from water consumption and waste generation by 70% to 9 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce water consumption through a comprehensive retrofit programme of Council buildings;</li> <li>Introduce performance monitoring and control systems, together with staff and user training;</li> <li>Actively promote the procurement of recycled materials and the re-use and recycling of waste materials.</li> </ul>
Power Up: Renewable Energy Generation	Shropshire Council to become energy self-sufficient by 2030 for buildings and travel: 60 mW*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Council land and building assets for renewable energy generation potential;</li> <li>New-build and retrofitted buildings to maximise energy self-sufficiency;</li> <li>Where energy cannot be used to power Shropshire Council services direct, work with other public sector organisations and local businesses to explore how renewable energy generation from Council land and buildings could help to meet their energy needs and generate carbon credits.</li> </ul>
Carbon capture and storage:	Increase 2019 performance by 4,509 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e to 27,686 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Veolia to further increase existing positive carbon performance of commissioned municipal waste management;</li> <li>Review Council owned land for opportunities to increase existing capture and storage of carbon through e.g. tree planting, wetland creation and management;</li> <li>Work with farmers, landowners and land managers to develop initiatives to capture and store any residual corporate carbon footprint.</li> </ul>

\* Estimated power production requirement; assumes 25% efficiency gain and that all buildings are converted from fossil fuel heating and all travel by electric vehicles ;

- Strategy relates to Shropshire Council corporate carbon emissions only;
- Based on best available data for 2019 performance;
- Based on current technologies;
- Separate Climate resilience and adaptation strategy will be required.

- 7.2 Climate Change is a rapidly evolving area of work and the Strategy will almost certainly need to be reviewed and modified in future years to reflect technology changes and enhanced data.

#### *Carbon Budget*

- 7.3 Shropshire Council has agreed the principle of preparing an annual Carbon Impact Budget which will identify the greenhouse gas impacts of Council services and major projects and will report on annual performance trends in parallel with the Council's financial budget. The starting point for this budget is our current corporate footprint, and the corporate Strategy illustrates a trajectory and the indicative annual targets for future years which will be required to achieve the objective of net-zero performance by 2030. The level of annual reduction required is similar to the percentage reductions achieved in recent years (see paragraph 6.1 above).

### **8. Shropshire Climate Action Partnership**

- 8.1 In addition to efforts to tackle its own carbon emissions, and as a key community leader, Shropshire Council is one of the key founders and supporters of the community-led 'Shropshire Climate Action Partnership' (SCAP) which has set the objective of achieving net-zero carbon performance across Shropshire by 2030 and an initial target of preparing a county-wide Climate Strategy and Action Plan by the end of 2020. Further information is available here: <https://zerocarbonshropshire.org/> The Partnership is being supported by volunteers drawn from a wide range of business sectors and communities across Shropshire and has established a number of Technical Working Groups to develop a vision and actions for topic areas including:

- Land and biodiversity
- Energy
- Buildings
- Transport
- Consumption and resources
- Carbon tracking and reporting

### **9. Conclusions**

- 9.1 Whilst the transition to net-zero performance will not be easy or quick to achieve, a positive start has been made to identifying the scale of the challenge and putting in place some of the mechanisms and actions which will be required to deliver it. Annual monitoring and review will report the Council's future progress and performance.

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

Shropshire Council Climate Change Strategy Framework (December 2019)

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Dean Carroll

**Local Member**

All

**Appendices**

1. Shropshire Climate Change Strategy;
2. Shropshire Climate Action Plan and Project Pipeline


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# Shropshire Council

## Towards Net-Zero Carbon

### *Corporate Climate Strategy*



Climate Change Task Force  
November 2020

## Appendix 1: Draft Climate Change Strategy 2020

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## 1. Introduction

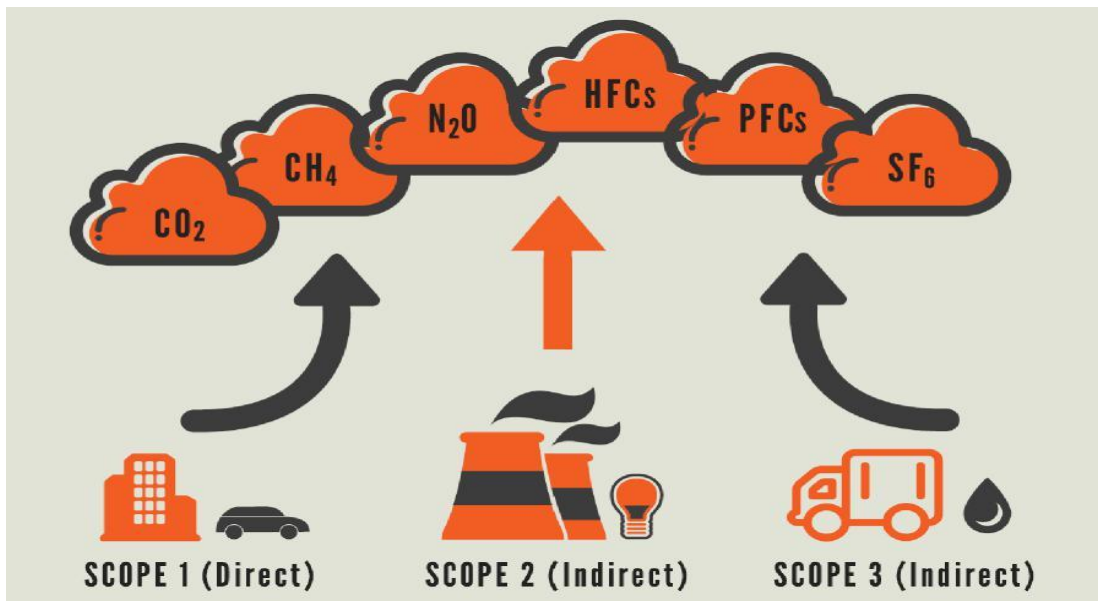
- 1.1. This purpose of this document is to outline a strategy to reduce Shropshire Council's corporate carbon footprint and promote adaptation measures to increase the resilience of the Council's services.
- 1.2. Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in May 2019 and agreed a Strategy Framework in December 2019 which established the objective of net-zero corporate carbon performance by 2030. The Strategy Framework also identified the risks posed by the climate crisis to Council services, together with information about the Council's direct carbon footprint and the actions and initiatives which were already being undertaken to reduce this. Finally, it also set out a set of key principles to guide the Council's actions.
- 1.3. Measures to reduce Shropshire Council's carbon footprint and adapt service delivery to address the impacts of extreme weather events will significantly reduce financial risk and generate very real savings to the public finances in the medium to long term as well as delivering on our corporate responsibilities to the environment and our communities. Placing the initial focus on our corporate performance allows the Council to 'lead by example', using its direct and indirect influence to foster a positive response to the challenge of the Climate Emergency by other public and private sector organisations.
- 1.5 Preparation of the Strategy has drawn on community engagement through the Council's quarterly Sustainability Forum and summarises the best available information about the Council's current direct and indirect carbon emissions and identifies the scale of reductions and residual offsetting which will be required to reach our objective of net-zero performance by 2030. The Action Plan element of the document reflects the findings of a community engagement workshop in February 2020 and identifies a range of potential actions and a pipeline of specific projects to help deliver progress.
- 1.6 However, we are facing a climate emergency and urgent action is therefore required. This is a fast-moving area of work and information about climate change, carbon performance and management technologies are changing all the time. In these circumstances it is not proposed to hold a formal consultation process on the Strategy, but instead to treat the corporate Strategy as a 'live' document and issue a general invitation for comments and suggestions for amendment which can be taken into account as part of an annual monitoring and review process. More detailed background information available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/climate-change-and-sustainability/>

## 2. Shropshire Council's Carbon Performance

### *The Greenhouse Gas Protocol*

- 2.1. Greenhouse gas emissions are categorised into three groups or 'scopes' by the most widely-used international accounting tool, the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol. As illustrated in Figure 1 and Table 1 below, Scope 1 covers direct emissions sources (e.g. gas boilers and fuel used in company vehicles), Scope 2 and 3 emissions cover indirect emissions.

Figure 1: Sources of corporate carbon emissions



2.2. A value chain carbon footprint measures both direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions of an organisation. Emissions are categorised across an organisation’s value chain, including upstream and downstream activities. These include emissions from both suppliers and consumers (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Shropshire Council’s corporate climate footprint is illustrated in Figure 2 and Figure 3 below:

Figure 2: Shropshire Council Carbon Footprint 2019-20 (tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e) by scope

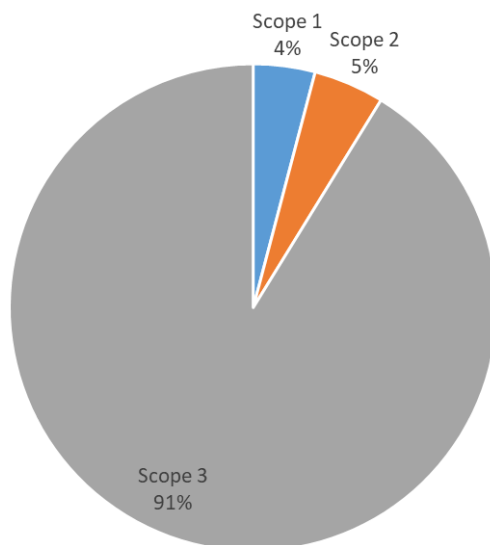


Figure 3: Scope 1 & 2 emissions 2019-20 (tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e)

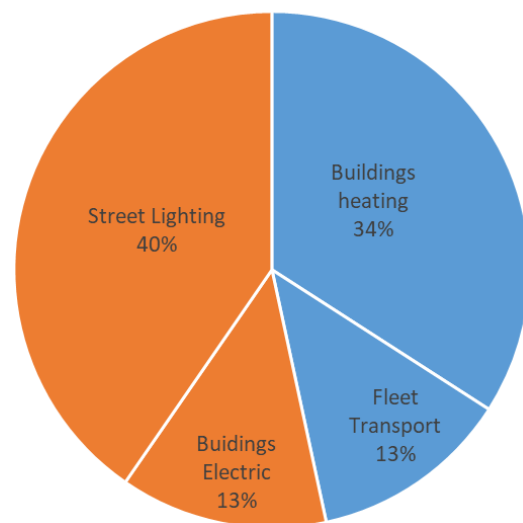
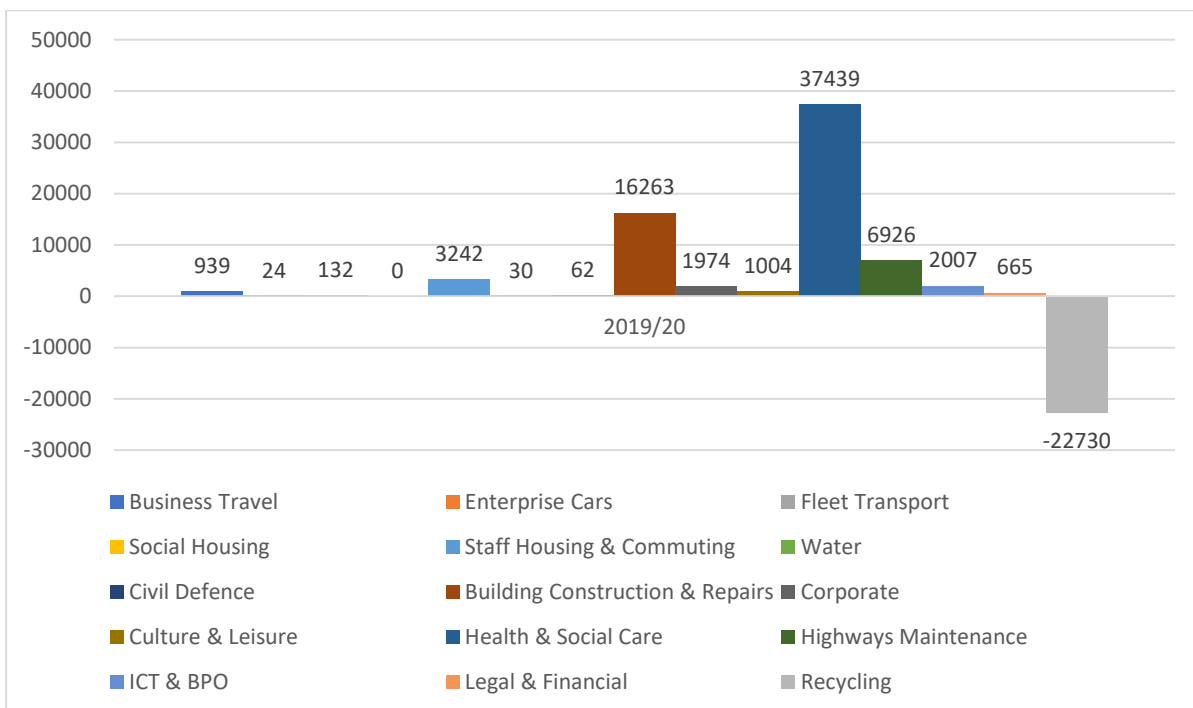




Figure 4. Shropshire Council Scope 3 (indirect) emissions for 2019 to 2020 (tCO2e)



2.3 The best available data suggests that Shropshire Council’s carbon footprint (Scope 1 & 2) has fallen from around 12,000 tonnes CO2e in 2017 to around 5,000 tonnes CO2e in 2019. The Council’s indirect emissions (Scope 3) are assessed as being around 50,000 tonnes CO2e in 2019 (see Figs. 2-4 above and Table 1 below). Whilst the Council’s footprint represents only around 1% of Shropshire’s total carbon footprint, work is ongoing to refine performance data and establish an accurate picture to support annual monitoring. The data above show that the majority of the Council’s carbon emissions are generated from indirect activity, such as services which are commissioned from commercial providers, the repair and maintenance of its buildings and from staff housing and commuting.

Table 1: Sources of carbon: Shropshire Council (tonnes CO2e)

Scope	Category	Organisational Scope	2019/20
1	Buildings heating	Corporate Landlord services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community centres.</li> <li>• Libraries.</li> <li>• Service Area Buildings.</li> <li>• Staff Offices</li> </ul>	1,688
1	Fleet Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles.</li> <li>• Grey fleet (vans, goods)</li> <li>• Passenger Transport</li> </ul>	621

## Appendix 1: Draft Climate Change Strategy 2020

Scope	Category	Organisational Scope	2019/20
2	Buildings Electric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emissions from National Grid purchased electricity for council buildings.</li> </ul>	644
2	Street Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emissions from National Grid purchased electricity for council buildings.</li> </ul>	1,999
3	Business Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus, train, plane etc.</li> <li>Business meetings.</li> <li>Leased vehicles.</li> </ul>	939
3	Enterprise Car Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business travel</li> </ul>	24
3	Fleet Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicles used as part of contracted services</li> </ul>	132
3	Social Housing*		0
3	Staff Housing & Commuting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Home working &amp; commuting</li> </ul>	3,242
3	Water		30
3	Civil Defence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procured service*</li> </ul>	62
3	Building Construction & Repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procured service*</li> </ul>	16,263
3	Corporate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procured service*</li> </ul>	1,974
3	Culture & Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procured service*</li> </ul>	1,004
3	Health & Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procured service*</li> </ul>	37439
3	Highways Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procured service*</li> </ul>	6,926
3	ICT & BPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procured service*</li> </ul>	2007
3	Legal & Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procured service*</li> </ul>	665
3	Misc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procured service*</li> </ul>	481
<b>Gross</b>			<b>76,139</b>
CR	Municipal Recycling	Procured service^	-22,730
CR	Land management	Carbon capture and storage^	-2,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Corporate Carbon FP</b>		<b>51,409</b>

\* Calculated from annual spending using a standard DEFRA co-efficient

^CR (carbon credits) recognises that some services consume more carbon than they generate

### Exclusions

2.3 The following datasets have been excluded:

1. Third party buildings: (Leisure services, school academy trusts and PFI buildings) – data availability;
2. Commercial waste generated by Shropshire Council – data availability;
3. Staff Pensions – this is the legal responsibility of the Shropshire County Pension Scheme;
4. Social housing - data from third party operators is required.

### Carbon Credits

2.4 Some of the Council's commissioned services and land management activities consume more carbon than they generate (see Table 1 above). In particular, the waste management contract operated by Veolia generates a

net carbon saving of around 23,000 tonnes mainly because of the high levels of recycling in the county. The Council's current carbon footprint is also offset to some extent through carbon capture and storage on land holdings such as countryside sites, which in total currently capture and store around 2,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e per year.

*Transport Fleet Clarification (Scope 1)*

- 2.5 Greenhouse gases (GHG's) are a direct consequence of ICE (internal combustion engines), a mobile source of direct emissions. As such, the Transport Fleet is a key contributor to Scope 1. As well as being a greenhouse gas, such emissions also have an adverse effect on local air quality, which affects health and wellbeing. In addition, because of road transport bias; the cost of climate change impacts should be considered in NHS costs, road maintenance due to extreme weather events, flooding, drainage and erosion costs.

*Building Utilities Clarification (Scope 1 & 2)*

- 2.6 Scope 1 includes static sources (direct emissions) as still found in some buildings (oil and gas heating). Scope 2 includes grid-sourced electricity. The level of both scope 1 and 2 emissions will be heavily influenced by the building efficiency.

*Procurement Clarification (Scope 3)*

- 2.7 Scope 3 is third party and supply chain emissions and basically everything else unaccounted for in Scope 1 and 2. This includes goods and services procured upstream and downstream to the organisation. Although this cannot currently be measured from specific performance data, DEFRA coefficients may be used to evaluate the carbon factor by service type based on the monetary value of the annual contract for downstream expenditure. This will be refined in future years as local data becomes more available.

*Business Travel (Scope 3)*

- 2.8 Staff commuting and business travel: Staff are encouraged to work from home, carry out meetings by teleconference or if meetings are necessary, to use public transport or efficient vehicles. However, public transport and air miles have not been included.

*Contracted Work (Scope 3)*

- 2.9 Decision making in design to ensure minimum embodied carbon. Procurement of contractors will have a significant impact on the Councils net GHG (CO<sub>2</sub>e) footprint as well as associated cost for procuring services. Scope 3 emissions also include third-party contractors, supply chains, (embodied carbon in materials and equipment). Services should refer to procurement guidance when tendering goods and services. For example, the encouragement to procure efficient vehicles to reduce emissions:
- Specify efficient vehicle in terms of emissions and running costs for all services.
  - Procuring local contractors (short distance to reduce scope 3 emissions).

*Financial Investments (Scope 3)*

- 2.10 Staff pensions and corporate investments depending on their sector. Services or investments monetarily connected to Shropshire Council even if legally detached. Staff pensions are directly linked to the council by virtue of its employees.

*Staff Housing and Social Housing (Scope 3)*

- 2.11 Includes staff home energy use – which is likely to become especially important from 2020 due to increased working from home directive during the Covid 19 Pandemic.

*Resource Management (Scope 3)*

- 2.12 Includes:
- Waste and Recycling Services: e.g. Contaminated and confidential waste,
  - Office equipment purchase (repurposing to reduce disposal costs).
  - Other utilities commodities including water.

*Any other Outsourced Services (Scope 3)*

- 2.13 This includes residential properties (staff and social housing), together with social care, leisure service operators and any other public sector services and outsourced management such as PFI buildings. Trend data for Shropshire Council's carbon performance has been affected by significant changes to the Council's assets over time. For example, what was termed Council Housing became a connected but independently managed housing operation; several public owned properties were sold and many schools have changed to become separately managed by Academy Trusts. These changes mean that Council housing and Academy schools are not shown counted within the Council's corporate carbon footprint.

### 3. Climate Emergency Strategy

*Key Objective:*

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

- 3.1. We recognise the impacts that an unstable climate is already having on our services and our duty to reduce our carbon footprint both locally and globally. Targets on emissions are not straightforward because the causes of emissions are not straightforward and there isn't yet a full understanding of the impacts that such targets would have on the economy and the health and wellbeing of our population. However, there is an urgent need to achieve significant emission reductions and the transition to a low carbon economy will also generate many economic, health & wellbeing, and environmental

benefits. Taking early action on what we can directly control is likely to prove a more effective approach than expending significant effort in planning and target setting.

- 3.2. Our current emissions reduction trajectory, for direct emissions (scope 1 & 2), demonstrates that net zero GHG emissions by 2030 is theoretically possible for both direct and indirect emissions. In these circumstances, Shropshire Council, has adopted the objective of achieving net zero for direct and indirect GHG emissions by 2030. This is not a legally binding target and may be subject to change based on future evidence, but it is a challenging goal commensurate with our recognition of a climate emergency. The achievement of this goal will require extensive support in both financial and policy terms if it is to be delivered in practice.

*Focus for Action*

- 3.3. Shropshire Council will focus its efforts on:
1. Embedding Climate Change in Council governance;
  2. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reductions;
  3. GHG sequestration;
  4. Improving resilience and adaptation to the effects of extreme weather.

*Key Principles:*

- 3.4 Shropshire Council will adopt the following principles:

*Prioritise Actions:*

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

*Support Clean and Inclusive Growth*

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

*Invest in Climate Action*

- a. Significant investment will be required if Shropshire Council is to achieve its goal of becoming net carbon zero by 2030. A range of potential actions and a pipeline of specific projects which target the most effective areas for investment and intervention are set out in the Action Plan which accompanies this Strategy. The capital investment required to make the transition to net-zero carbon performance is also likely to generate revenue savings from greater efficiency.
- b. Once sufficient information has been assembled, the business case for individual investment projects will demonstrate their financial viability and feasibility in both the short and long terms. Shropshire Council has already invested in a range of low carbon technologies that have provided a return on investment.
- c. Shropshire Council is under severe financial pressure and the Climate Action Plan will therefore prioritise interventions which generate a positive and direct return on investment. Within these investments we will try to prioritise investments that benefit those members of public of greatest need first, for example energy efficiency measures for residents on low incomes and the most vulnerable.
- d. Some Climate Action investments may not generate returns that are easily quantifiable in financial terms and others are just very complicated to calculate. Some returns may be beneficial for carbon reduction but may have negative impacts in other areas, for example planting trees on habitats with high wildlife value. Measures which generate co-benefits (e.g. cost saving and improved environmental and social performance) are particularly attractive. Given the rapid pace of change, some measures will yield benefits that are not currently calculable at this time.

*Work with others*

- a. We are on a shared journey and will need to work with others. This will allow us to learn from them and make use of external resources to help us to achieve net carbon zero and manage the effects of extreme climate events.
- b. We will help establish and support a Climate Action Partnership of stakeholders and the wider community. The Council will work with the Partnership to provide advice, support and encouragement to our communities, businesses and charitable organisations to help them to mitigate their emissions and adapt to the inevitable impacts of the climate crisis.
- c. The climate crisis is of particular significance for young people who will inherit the consequences of our actions. We will therefore work with schools across the county to ensure that the Climate Emergency is integrated as an issue across the curriculum and provide opportunities for schools and young people to contribute directly to the development and implementation of our Climate Emergency Strategy.

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

*Influence the behaviour of others*

- a. In addition to direct control of our own GHG emissions, we have significant influence over emissions indirectly resulting from our policies, and through our regulatory functions.
- b. Shropshire Council also has significant influence through its purchasing power. We will put in place measures to assess the carbon footprint of our procurement choices.
- c. We will lead by example and seek to positively influence the purchasing power or funding allocations of others like the Marches LEP and its members to favour low carbon initiatives and products.

*Assemble and publish evidence*

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

## 4 Corporate Carbon Management Strategy

*Power Down:*

Theme	2030 Objective	Planned Measures
Buildings Energy	Reduce 2019 annual emissions by 50% to 2,360 tonnes CO2e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rationalise the number of buildings to only those essential for the sustainable delivery of Council Services (Corporate Asset Management Strategy);</li> <li>Reduce energy demand from our buildings through a comprehensive programme of fabric and technology upgrades;</li> <li>Enhance performance monitoring and control systems, together with staff and user training;</li> <li>Meet the residual energy demand from renewable energy and carbon neutral sources;</li> <li>Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard, wherever possible.</li> </ul>
Transport and Travel Energy	Reduce 2019 annual emissions by 70% to 1,939 tonnes CO2e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the need for staff travel through improved access to local office facilities and greater home working and normalising the use of IT and</li> </ul>



Appendix 1: Draft Climate Change Strategy 2020

Theme	2030 Objective	Planned Measures
		<p>communications technology wherever possible;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the use of active modes and public transport for shorter journeys;</li> <li>• Progressively replace Council Fleet vehicles with those powered by Ultra-Low emission fuels such as electricity and hydrogen;</li> <li>• Update procurement policies and work with the suppliers of goods and services to reduce indirect (Scope 3) carbon emissions.</li> </ul>
Power Down: Commissioned Services	Reduce 2019 annual emissions by 65% to 27,686 tonnes CO2e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update procurement policies to highlight the importance of carbon performance as a consideration in procurement;</li> <li>• Work with the suppliers of goods and services to measure and reduce indirect (Scope 3) carbon emissions;</li> </ul>
Resource consumption and waste	Reduce annual carbon emissions from water consumption and waste generation by 70% to 9 tonnes CO2e by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce water consumption through a comprehensive retrofit programme of Council buildings;</li> <li>• Introduce performance monitoring and control systems, together with staff and user training;</li> <li>• Actively promote the procurement of recycled materials and the re-use and recycling of waste materials.</li> </ul>

*Power Up:*

Theme	2030 Objective	Planned Measures
Renewable Energy Generation	Shropshire Council to become energy self-sufficient by 2030 for buildings and travel: 60 mW*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Council land and building assets for renewable energy generation potential;</li> <li>• New-build and retrofitted buildings to maximise energy self-sufficiency;</li> <li>• Where energy cannot be used to power Shropshire Council services direct, work with other public sector organisations and local businesses to explore how renewable energy generation from Council land and buildings could help to meet their energy needs and generate carbon credits.</li> </ul>

\* Estimated power production requirement; assumes 25% efficiency gain and that all buildings are converted from fossil fuel heating and all travel by electric vehicles;



Carbon Capture & Storage:

Theme	2030 Objective	Planned Measures
Carbon capture and storage:	Capture and store carbon to achieve net self-sufficiency by 2030: 4,509 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Council owned land for opportunities to increase existing capture and storage of carbon through e.g. tree planting, wetland creation and management;</li> <li>Work with farmers, landowners and land managers to develop initiatives to capture and store any residual corporate carbon footprint.</li> </ul>

- Strategy relates to Shropshire Council corporate carbon emissions only;
- Based on best available data for 2019 performance;
- Based on current technologies;
- Separate Climate resilience and adaptation strategy will be required.

## 5 Carbon Budget

5.1 Shropshire Council has agreed the principle of preparing an annual Carbon Impact Budget which will identify the greenhouse gas impacts of Council services and major projects. The Council will develop and refine arrangements to report on annual performance trends in parallel with the Council's financial budget. The starting point for this budget is our current corporate footprint. Indicative annual targets for each service area are set out in Table 2 below.

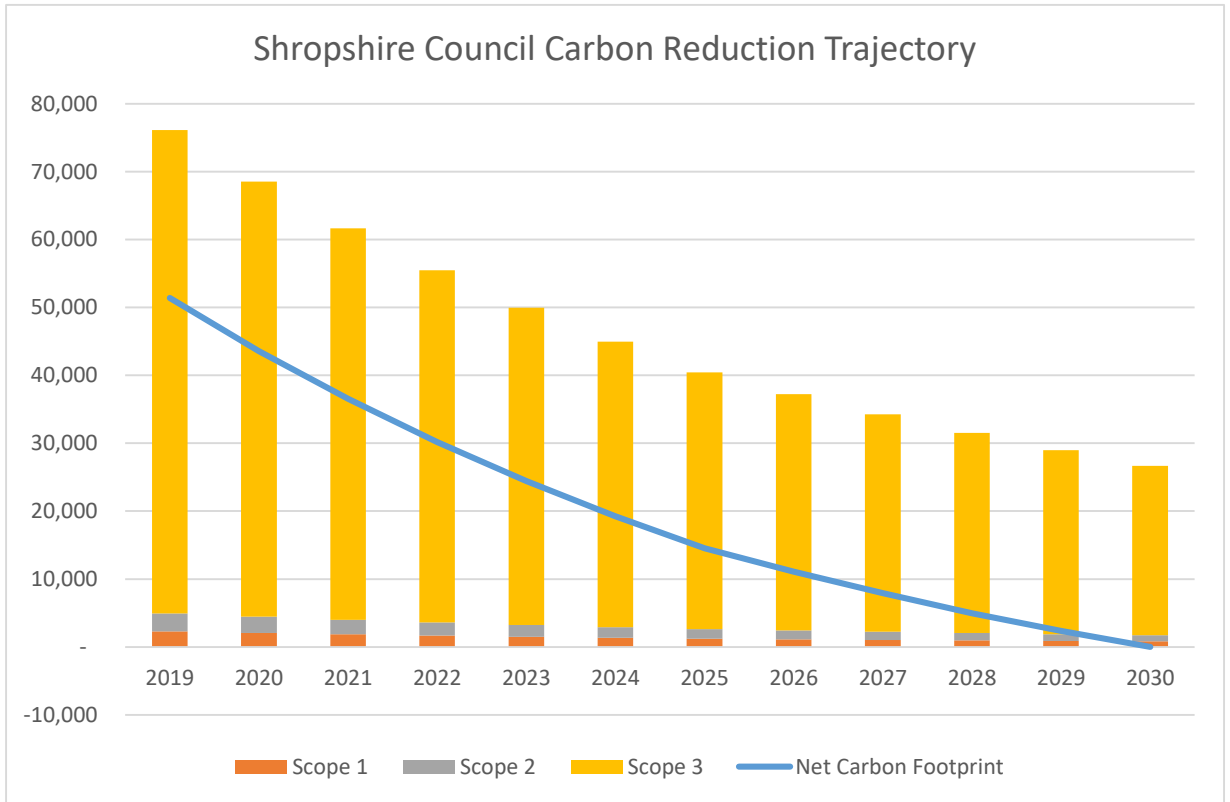
Table 2: Indicative Annual Carbon Budget 2020 – 2030 (tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e)

Service Areas	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Adult Services	18,720	16,848	15,163	13,647	12,282	11,054	9,948	9,153	8,420	7,747	7,127	6,557
Childrens Services	18,720	16,848	15,163	13,647	12,282	11,054	9,948	9,153	8,420	7,747	7,127	6,557
Place and Enterprise	33,484	30,136	27,122	24,410	21,969	19,772	17,795	16,371	15,062	13,857	12,748	11,728
Public Health	1,621	1,459	1,313	1,182	1,063	957	861	792	729	671	617	568
Resources & Support	3,595	3,235	2,912	2,620	2,358	2,123	1,910	1,757	1,617	1,488	1,369	1,259
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>76,139</b>	<b>68,525</b>	<b>61,673</b>	<b>55,505</b>	<b>49,955</b>	<b>44,959</b>	<b>40,463</b>	<b>37,226</b>	<b>34,248</b>	<b>31,508</b>	<b>28,988</b>	<b>26,669</b>
Carbon Credits	-2,000	-2,200	-2,400	-2,600	-2,800	-3,000	-3,200	-3,400	-3,600	-3,800	-3,900	-3,939
Recycling	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730	-22,730
<b>Net Carbon Footprint</b>	<b>51,409</b>	<b>43,595</b>	<b>36,543</b>	<b>30,175</b>	<b>24,425</b>	<b>19,229</b>	<b>14,533</b>	<b>11,096</b>	<b>7,918</b>	<b>4,978</b>	<b>2,358</b>	<b>0</b>

## 6 Carbon Reduction Trajectory

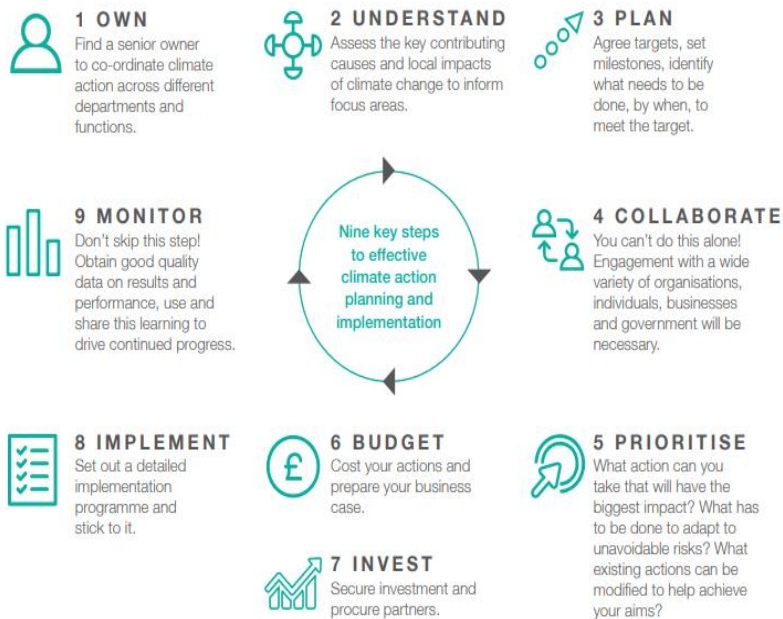
6.1 The carbon budget set out in Table 2 above recognises that early action is desirable and that emissions reductions will become more difficult over time. Reaching our objective of net-zero will require a modest increase in existing levels of carbon capture and storage. The trajectory to net-zero is illustrated in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3: Shropshire Council Carbon Reduction Trajectory 2019-2030



## 7. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

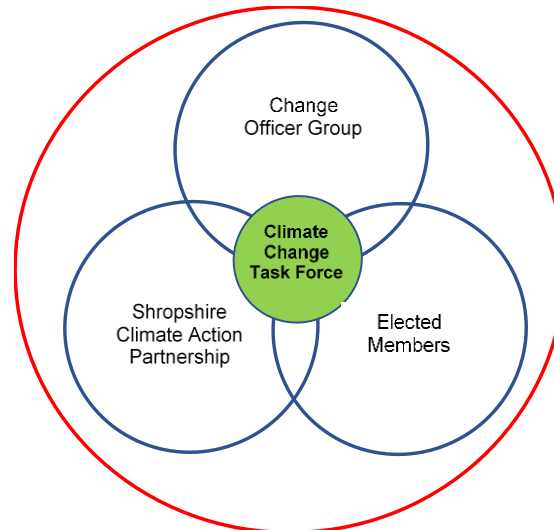
7.1 Recent guidance to Local Authorities by ARUP<sup>1</sup> on tackling ‘climate emergency’ commitments has helped to inform our corporate approach. A summary diagram of the nine suggested process stages is presented below:



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

- 7.2 While the above diagram is sequential, Shropshire Council will continue to work on several aspects in parallel while using the structure to keep on track and ensure specific stages are not neglected. The ARUP document suggests a similar approach: “Don’t stop acting just because you’re planning”. Shropshire Council has already made progress in most of the areas listed in the above diagram;

Figure 4 – Climate Change Working Structure



- 7.3 Responsibility for actions to address carbon performance and climate change is shared across all services and levels of management. The proposed working structure for climate change activity at Shropshire Council is illustrated in Figure 4 above.
- 7.4 Information about climate change, carbon performance and management technologies are changing all the time and the corporate Climate Strategy and Action Plan documents need to be agile enough to respond to these changes and their relationship to the county-wide strategy and action plan being prepared by SCAP (see Paras 9.1-9.3 below). They will therefore be treated as ‘live’ documents with carbon performance against the strategy budget and trajectory reported to Council at least annually. Updated information and performance monitoring are likely to prompt regular updates to the current corporate strategy.
- 7.5 In recognition of the urgent need to take action, no formal consultation process is proposed, but comments and suggestions for amendment on the corporate strategy and action plan are welcome and will be considered as part of the annual monitoring and review process described above. The latest ‘live’ version of the Strategy and Action Plan will be made available for public comment on the Council’s climate change web pages here:

## 8 Action Plan

- 8.1 The corporate Climate Strategy is accompanied by a separate Action Plan and Project Pipeline which have been prepared from actions drawn from multiple sources including internal discussions with officers from across Council services and the community workshop event which was held in February 2020. The full list of actions has been edited to include only those

that Shropshire Council can implement itself. It also focusses on those actions that are likely to reduce the Council's own emissions – including indirect (Scope 3) emissions. The Climate Officers Group, supplemented by occasional extra meetings with heads of service, will review this list of actions every few months and report on progress.

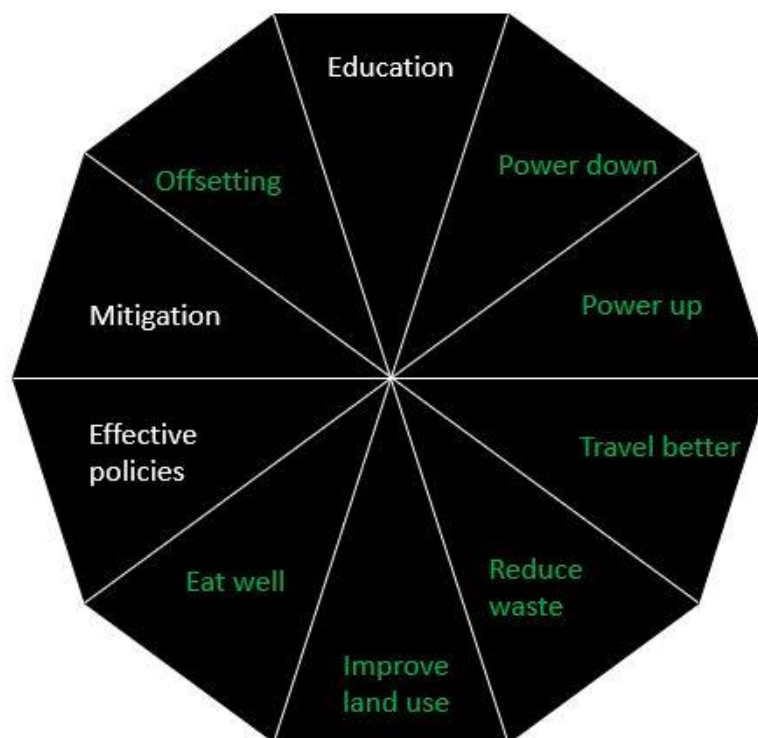
8.2 The Action Plan and Project Pipeline is structured into potential actions which:

- a. reduce demand for energy and resources ('Power Down');
- b. increase the generation of renewable energy ('Power Up');
- c. help store carbon in vegetation and soils ('Sequestration');
- d. increase understanding of the issues and the solutions ('Comms').

The document comprises two tables:

- i. a Project Pipeline which identifies a range of active projects;
- ii. an Action Plan which identifies range of potential actions which are classified (colour coded) into those which:
  - a. are currently planned ('Now');
  - b. are to be explored shortly ('Soon');
  - c. are to be explored in future ('Later').

8.3 Actions that help reduce the emissions of Shropshire businesses or residents will form part of the strategy and action plan being prepared by the Shropshire Climate Action Partnership (see Para 9.2 below). Actions that help capture and store (sequester) carbon are included. However, the Action Plan is work in progress and will be updated regularly and progress reported annually.



8.4 In developing the list of actions, reference has been made to the 10 'dynamics' shown above and detailed on the Zero Carbon Dynamics [web](#)

[site](#)<sup>2</sup>. A qualitative assessment can be made of all items listed while the tangible dynamics (shown in **green**) can be measured in terms of emissions and used to build a zero carbon 'balance sheet'. Future work on our list of actions will further integrate these headings with our own carbon 'balance sheet'.

## 9 Shropshire Climate Action Partnership

- 9.1 The world-renowned Tyndall Centre for Climate Change in Manchester has recently a maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget of 17.2 million tonnes (MtCO<sub>2</sub>) for Shropshire for the period of 2020 to 2100. The latest carbon footprint calculations show that at 2017 CO<sub>2</sub> emission levels, the county would use this entire budget by 2023.
- 9.2 In addition to efforts to tackle its own carbon emissions, and as a key community leader, Shropshire Council is one of the key founders and supporters of the community-led 'Shropshire Climate Action Partnership' (SCAP) which has set the objective of achieving net-zero carbon performance across Shropshire by 2030 and an initial target of preparing a county-wide Climate Strategy and Action Plan by the end of 2020. Further information is available here: <https://zerocarbonschropshire.org/> The Partnership is being supported by volunteers drawn from a wide range of business sectors and communities across Shropshire and has established a number of Technical Working Groups to develop a vision and actions for topic areas including:
- i. Land and biodiversity
  - ii. Energy
  - iii. Buildings
  - iv. Transport
  - v. Consumption and resources
  - vi. Carbon tracking and reporting
- 9.3 Through its regulatory role and procurement decisions, Shropshire Council is in a position to make a strong positive contribution to help the wider Shropshire community make a positive transition to a low carbon future. For example, the draft Local Plan includes policies which help to reinforce the need for energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures within the current limits which are defined by government policy which lies outside the Council's control.

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<sup>2</sup> Zero Carbon Dynamics web site: <https://www.zerocarbondynamics.com/dynamics.html>


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# Climate Action Plan and Project Pipeline 2020

The following table is a selection of actions drawn from multiple sources including the public event in February 2020. The full list has been summarised to include only those that Shropshire Council are able to take on. It focusses on those actions that are likely to reduce the Council’s own emissions – including indirect (Scope 3) emissions – rather than Council led actions that help reduce the emissions of Shropshire businesses or residents. Actions that help sequester carbon are included. This list is a work in progress. Formal approval under the Council’s Capital Programme will be pursued where projects will be appraised on an individual basis following the process detailed in the Council’s Capital Strategy. Each potential action would need to be evaluated on its own merits prior to inclusion in the Capital Programme. Some projects delivered in partnership with others may lead to commercial income being generated. Updates will be made at monthly internal Climate Officers Group meetings.


The first table lists active projects that are already underway as part of a ‘Project Pipeline’ and the second table identifies a range of potential actions that could be undertaken subject to satisfactory feasibility assessment.


## 1. Project Pipeline


Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
<b>POWER DOWN</b> 			
<b>Current projects that reduce demand for energy and resources</b>			
Shropshire Council is working to expand the range of staff incentives for low carbon behaviour and living, including via salary sacrifice schemes and staff rewards schemes.	Human Resources	Cycle to Work scheme is an existing example	Y
Continue and further promote Warp-it Re-use scheme	Assets and Estates	Warp-it is a way to "find, give away, or loan office furniture, equipment and other resources". It currently saves about 50 tCO2e pa. The next step is to roll the scheme out more widely to other public sector bodies in the County.	N

Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
Assess the feasibility of manufacturing Hydrogen Vehicle Fuel at Battlefield, using power from the Waste to Energy plant	Climate Change Task Force	Government is now clearly backing hydrogen as a low carbon vehicle fuel. Our transport fleet and that of our key contractors (including buses) could make use of hydrogen, therefore we will undertake a feasibility study as a joint commission with Highways and Transport colleagues. Battlefield was recently identified as one of only two preferred locations identified in the Marches as part of a recent regional study commissioned by the Midlands Energy Hub for low carbon transport hubs.	Y
Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme	Housing Services	Shropshire Council and Herefordshire Council are working together on allocating the Governments 'Green Home Grant', the Warm Homes Fund 'Rural homes and communities Category', and other funding to households in greatest need. Total budget is £1.8m across both areas. Air Source Heat Pump's will feature highly in the measures introduced where the buildings are suitable. A larger bid for LAD2 funding across the Marches area is being prepared for Spring 2021.	N
Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator	Housing Services	Shropshire Council has led the submission of a bid for up to 50% grant funding (up to £30k per house) for energy and carbon performance improvements to social housing in Shropshire.	N
Install EV Charging Points in market towns across Shropshire	Highways	Shropshire Council is part of a successful 100% Government-funded project called 'Agile Streets' which is seeking suitable test locations for 25 funded EV chargers to help vehicle owners who are reliant on on-street or public parking. Application for additional Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) funding, would cover 75% of the cost of an additional 20-25 charging points.	N
Shropshire Council Buildings – Energy Efficiency Improvements (Sustainable Energy in Public Buildings)	Property Services Group	The Climate Change Task Force and Property Services Group are working to extend the current programme of ERDF-funded improvements to building efficiency through SePuBu: <a href="https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/climate-change-and-sustainability/sepubu-sustainable-energy-in-public-buildings/">https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/climate-change-and-sustainability/sepubu-sustainable-energy-in-public-buildings/</a>	Y
Shropshire Council Buildings – Energy Efficiency Improvements (Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund)	Climate Change Task Force	Shropshire Council and APSE Energy have submitted a bid to the BEIS-funded Public Sector Low Carbon Skills Fund which would pay for them to identify and develop a programme of energy efficiency and low carbon heat upgrade	Y




Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
		projects for our buildings, before preparing an application for capital funding, on our behalf, to the Salix-funded £1 billion Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme	
Replace all street lights with LED lighting by 2024	Highways	£6.8 million is being spent to replace all sodium street lamps with more efficient and longer lasting LED lighting. This will save 794.5 tCO <sub>2</sub> e - currently equivalent to about £900,000 - every year. All replacement due by March 2024.	N
Assess the potential to develop an 'Electric Forecourt' as part of the proposed Oswestry Innovation Park at Mile End, near Oswestry	Climate Change Task Force	Mile End near Oswestry is being considered as one of 100 national Electric Forecourts which can charge 24 electric vehicles at once with superchargers that can deliver up to 350kW of charging power. This enables people to charge vehicles within 20-30 minutes initially, and much faster in the future as battery technologies mature.	Y
Promote business energy efficiency in Shropshire	Economic Growth	The Business Energy Efficiency Programme (BEEP) is working across the Marches area. It's led by Worcestershire Council and utilises existing ERDF programme funds.	Y
<h2>POWER UP </h2>			
<h3>Current projects that increase generation of renewable energy</h3>			
Assess the feasibility of installing 2MWp of solar PV on the former tip in Maesbury Industrial Estate	Climate Change Task Force	Potential for a return on investment starting at 6% in 2021 and increasing to 9% by 2030. 5400 tCO <sub>2</sub> e saving by 2030. 25-year lifetime net gain of £3.1m. Ecological and Historic Environment surveys completed. Site survey work has started by Nottingham City Council Energy Services. Feasibility study to be completed by Jan 2021.	Y
Assess the potential for Renewable Energy Opportunities on Council Land	Climate Change Task Force	A report on the potential for renewable energy generation on 10 areas of council owned land is being produced by Public Power Solutions (Swindon BC). It will be available by April 2021 and will assist in the aspiration to be energy self-sufficient by 2030. This will require an estimated 60MWp per annum. Currently the figure is 1.2MWp with Maesbury projected to add another 2MWp.	Y

Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
Assess the potential to establish a Virtual Power Plant (VPP)	Climate Change Task Force	Proposals have been prepared for new build and retrofit of solar and battery systems for new build housing schemes, which would operate as part of a Virtual Power Plant (VPP), together with a variation which could provide a VPP installation 'offer' for SC employees as part of an Employee Benefits Salary Sacrifice Scheme.	Y
Assess the feasibility of constructing a hydro-electric generator at Shrewsbury Weir	Climate Change Task Force	Discussion between Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council (as landowner) are on-going.	Y
Assess the feasibility of establishing a Heat Network in north Shrewsbury	Climate Change Task Force	Shropshire Council is working with the Midlands Energy Hub and the Shropshire Climate Action Partnership to prepare a bid for feasibility funding for a heat network study for Shrewsbury.	Y
Renewable Energy grants for non-domestic buildings	Economic Growth	European and Government 50% grant for the installation of eligible renewable technologies on non-domestic buildings in the Marches. MarRE is underway in SC with a dedicated project officer	Y
<h2>SEQUESTER CARBON </h2>			
<h3>Current projects that help store carbon in vegetation and soils</h3>			
By 2050 plant 345,000 trees. This is a minimum of 11,500 per year.	Planning Services	Tree scheme re-launched in October 2020 with 12,500 trees allocated in just 9 hours. An additional 20,000 trees were allocated for 2020/21 planting season with funding from a Defra funded project. These have also been allocated without advertising. Trees not funded by the council or Defra will not be included in our overall carbon budgets to avoid double counting.	Y
Defra Trees Outside Woodland (TOW) project	Planning Services	Defra project will provide £500,000 over 2 years to help investigate methods of increasing the planting of Trees Outside Woodland. Shropshire Council is one of 5 Local Authorities piloting different approaches. Shropshire is leading on the agroforestry and orchards theme. A project officer will be recruited.	Y

Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
Work with others to establish, a carbon credit scheme that invests in projects that sequester carbon locally (known as 'carbon in-setting')	Climate Change Task Force	A pilot is underway with a Council highways contractor to partly offset (in-set) their carbon emissions via provision of additional trees to the Community Tree Scheme.	Y
<h2>COMMUNICATION &amp; EDUCATION </h2>			
<p>Current initiatives that increase understanding of the issues and the solutions</p>			
Report annually on progress with the action plan, emission reduction, and carbon sequestration. Publish as much data (including live data) as possible online.	Climate Change Task Force	Provisional data is provided within the Climate Change Strategy. Annual energy generation from existing PV sites are presented the Shropshire Council website.	N

## 2. Corporate Climate Action Plan

Actions are highlighted based on their approximate period for action		
Now	Soon	Later


Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
<b>POWER DOWN</b> 			
Actions that reduce demand for energy and resources			
Create a strategy for staff related transport that follows the hierarchy of transportation modes	Human Resources	Initial estimate for carbon emissions due to staff commute is 2853 tCO2e per year	N
Support staff to work from home and attend meetings virtually	Human Resources	Significant work underway in response to the Covid19 crisis.	Y
Further promote national car-sharing schemes for staff and wider community	Human Resources	Initial estimate for carbon emissions due to staff commute is 2853 tCO2e per year	N
Complete an assessment of the energy efficiency of staff homes using EPC data and ideally energy use data obtained from staff surveys	Human Resources	Work is underway linking staff addresses to national Energy Performance Certificate data	Y


Appendix 2: Climate Action Plan and Project Pipeline

Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
Review Transport Policy and contracts to favour low carbon options	Highways	Does this impact Council emissions? Lessons to be learned from Cornwall total transport model. Existing work on Park and Ride developments; links with Health sector around school transport; shared vehicle assets; school runs and patient transfer, DfT work, etc	Y
Prepare a pipeline of bids in advance for active travel funding	Highways	Seek support from Sustrans	Y
Buy 5 electric cargo bikes for Council use or loan by 2025	Highways	A bid was submitted in early summer 2020 but was unsuccessful. Additional funding sources will be sought	Y
Revise Council procurement strategy to reflect carbon performance of those we purchase from	Finance, Governance & Assurance		N
Divest funding for fossil fuels from Shropshire Council pension fund by 2023	Finance, Governance & Assurance		N
Continue role out of superfast and ultra-fast broadband and rural hubs to reduce dependency on car journeys, etc, for business and access to services	Economic Growth	Estimates of carbon savings could be determined using staff distances to work. These calculations are being worked on.	Y
Seek energy bills from staff for the last 12 months to help assess the Council's Scope 3 emissions.	Climate Change Task Force	Consider linking to the mandatory training on sustainability.	N
Seek funding to retrofit energy efficiency measures into all homes that need it	Climate Change Task Force		Y


Appendix 2: Climate Action Plan and Project Pipeline

Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
Working with industry, facilitate workshops and collate online resources to assist skills development of building retrofit workforce	Property Services Group		N
Use SEPuBu framework to add an assessment of energy efficiency measures to existing property condition assessment	Property Services Group		Y
By 2021 adopt good design standards for development control that incorporate natural features like shade trees, green walls and roofs, and water features that help with natural cooling and creating a healthy environment	Planning Services		Y
Provide informed advice and publish links to guidance, best practice case-studies, and appropriate technologies for energy efficiency measures in historically sensitive buildings	Planning Services	A cross departmental working group has been established to consider appropriate investment and maintenance of the Council's 'historic estate'.	Y
Include annual mandatory training on climate change issues for staff via the 'Leap Into Learning' platform	Human Resources	An existing learning programme on sustainability issues is available for staff. This requires updating and consideration of it being a mandatory requirement or not.	Y
Replace all fleet vehicles with electric or hydrogen vehicles by 2030	Highways		Y
Replace all pool vehicles with electric or hydrogen vehicles by 2030	Highways	Pool vehicles currently add approximately 24 tCO2e per annum. 8 pool cars are hybrid vehicles.	N
Consider a Workplace Parking Levy	Highways	Consider a Workplace Parking Levy to encourage sustainable travel options.	Y

Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
Revise procurement guidelines to be clear that low and zero emission transport modes of suppliers is inherent to our social value scoring process	Finance, Governance & Assurance		N
Consider increasing social value weightings within procurement processes with specific reference to low carbon and with a minimum percentage scoring introduced	Finance, Governance & Assurance		N
Seek funding to retrofit Council housing stock to Passivhaus standard or equivalent with an ambition for all housing stock to reach this standard.	Property Services Group		Y
<b>POWER UP </b>			
Actions that increase generation of renewable energy			
Ensure any roof-top maintenance works to council buildings considers installation of solar PV to help reduce costs of installation.	Property Services Group		Y
Commission a study by the end of 2021 into the viability of water-source heat pumps in the development of the Riverside area of Shrewsbury and potentially elsewhere.	Climate Change Task Force		Y

Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
Produce guidance for Neighbourhood plans to ensure they are aware of their ability to promote on-shore wind	Planning Services		Y
Commission research into the potential for Shropshire Council to become energy self-sufficient by 2030	Climate Change Task Force	Electricity used is already from entirely renewable sources. We currently generate over 900 MWh every year which, since 2012, has saved the authority over £700,000.	Y
<h2>SEQUESTER CARBON </h2>			
<p>Actions that help store carbon in vegetation and soils</p>			
Establish a network of Tree Wardens in association with the Tree Council	Planning Services	This may fall under the remit of the new project officer associated with the Trees Outside Woodland Project.	N
By 2021 adopt good design standards for development control that incorporate carbon rich materials like hempcrete, glulam, and timber, in the construction that act as a carbon store and reduce use of carbon intensive materials like steel and concrete.	Planning Services		Y
Of the SC owned land not already tree covered or built-up, plant 5% with native local provenance trees.	Planning Services	Need a better estimate of the potential for tree planting on SC land. This is a provisional guess until more accurate figures can be generated.	Y



Title	Lead org / Dept	Notes / work underway	More info needed?
<h2>COMMUNICATION &amp; EDUCATION</h2>			
<p>Actions that increase understanding of the issues and the solutions</p>			
<p>By March 2021 publish a new Climate Crisis area of the web site that provides lists of resources and funding sources to encourage home energy saving</p>	<p>Communications</p>	<p>Keep Shropshire Warm Scheme already in place via MEA and Energy Savings Trust. New £5k funding from gov. Existing web site does have links to resources and a Climate Resources Pack.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>By 2021 develop a climate communications strategy to make the most of both internal and external communication channels</p>	<p>Communications</p>		<p>Y</p>
<p>Provide free or subsidised venues for community activities that promote resilience and adaptation to the climate crisis or results in lower carbon lifestyles.</p>	<p>Commercial Services</p>		<p>Y</p>

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Committee and date  
Council

17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Item No

## **Report of the Portfolio Holder Finance & Corporate Support**

Contact: David Minnery  
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### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This document identifies some of the work undertaken within the Finance Portfolio since September 2019 and details some of the aims and objectives for the future.

### **2.0 Finance**

#### **2.1 Financial Strategy**

2.1.1 On 6 July 2020 Cabinet approved a revised Financial Strategy reflecting the need to revise the existing strategy approved by Council on 7 February 2020 in response to the subsequent impact of Covid-19 on the UK.

2.1.2 The Country entered lockdown from 23 March 2020 and Council Services were closed, delivered remotely or moved into emergency provision. Over two and a half thousand Council staff were required to work from home and/or make themselves available for redeployment. Business continuity measures were immediately put into place across the Council. Emergency spend was sanctioned, protocols to support suppliers, contractors and local businesses were implemented and a Council Tax deferral scheme was hurriedly introduced for the months of April and May.

2.1.3 Lockdown was relaxed over the summer months followed by a further lockdown from 5 November to 2 December 2020. It is unlikely that the impact of Covid-19 will be eradicated before the end of March 2021, meaning that the entire 2020/21 Financial Year will have been completed under unique circumstances with little clarity, certainly in relation to service delivery, on what was a result of circumstance as they existed at the time, what will ultimately 'revert back' in the future and what was a signal of lasting change.

2.1.4 The impact on vital sources of income and extent of increased demand for services will not be fully quantifiable for some time. Multiple waves of funding have been forthcoming from Government bringing with them a

requirement to put in place various responses from specific targeted activity such as distributing food parcels to assessing businesses for eligibility for emergency Grants.

2.1.5 Growth and savings assumptions were revisited in October this year leading to an increased funding requirement. These have been built into the Financial Strategy 2021/22 – 2025/26 which is to be considered by Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

2.1.6 The December Financial Strategy will reflect announcements from the Government regarding the one off Spending Round announced in November 2020 and the impact of increasing growth in costs of Children’s Social Care. The strategy will be subject to budget consultation and will be refined further over the winter months as more clarity is released with the Provisional and Final Local Government Finance Settlements for 2021/22.

## 2.2 Financial Oversight

2.2.1 Over the financial year it is important to ensure that an oversight of the Council’s financial position is reported through to Cabinet. This is delivered by financial monitoring reports covering the revenue account, the capital programme and the cash position via treasury management updates. The financial position is reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis providing what continues to be an accurate analysis of the forecast outturn position each financial year.

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

2.2.3 The Council’s current year revenue position is under strain as a result of pressures particularly within Children’s services and Housing Benefit Subsidy as well as loss of commercial income in many areas due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2.4 £22.4m of non ring-fenced grant has been received from MHCGGL in respect of the pandemic to date plus £5.184m for losses of Sales, Fees & Charges income. A further £124.8m has been received to date in respect of ringfenced grant much of which has been passported through to local businesses and the care sector.

## 2.3 Finance Services within the Portfolio

- 2.3.1 A number of initiatives have been or are being implemented by services directly within the Finance Portfolio.
- 2.3.2 Following the announcement of two new business rate reliefs and grant schemes introduced for 2020-21 to support businesses adversely impacted by COVID 19 over £45m has been awarded in Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief to over 2,300 businesses and over £0.25m in Nursery Relief to 33 businesses. The team have also validated around 7,000 business grant applications to support eligible businesses during the COVID-19 crisis leading to payment of over £81m in business grant support. Also, £0.193m has been awarded to businesses impacted by the February and March 2020 floods.
- 2.3.3 In response to COVID-19 over 7,000 council tax payers were able to defer their council tax instalments to February and March 2021 and were rebilled. £0.8m has been awarded in Hardship Relief to support over 5,500 working age Council Tax Support claimants with their council tax payments. £0.135m council tax relief has been awarded to residents impacted by the February and March 2020 floods.
- 2.3.4 Revenues and Benefits have continued to implement an ambitious program of transformation in interactions with council taxpayers, businesses and benefit claimants. We currently have over 26,000 council tax accounts set up for e-billing (18% of accounts and an increase of 9,500 from last year) and over 3,395 businesses set up for e-billing (27% of accounts and an increase of 895). In 2019 we introduced e-notifications for housing benefits and over 1,546 claimants have already signed up for this (over 14% of housing benefit caseload). From April 2020 to September 2020 there have been over 3,000 new housing benefits claims submitted using our online claim form which accounts for over 83% of new housing benefit claims in this period. In the same period 2,733 direct debits have been set up online, and in total there have been 9,495 online updates using Revenues online forms.
- 2.3.5 For the 2019-20 financial year the Revenues and Benefits Service achieved a 98.1% collection rate for council tax collection which is the 7<sup>th</sup> highest out of 56 Unitary Authorities. The team also achieved a 98.8% collection rate for business rates collection which is the 11<sup>th</sup> highest out of 56 Unitary Authorities. This was achieved despite the impact that COVID-19 started to have on collections in March 2020.

- 2.3.6 The Revenues and Benefits Service ensured that for 2019-20 £0.413m was spent in discretionary housing payment against total grant funding of £0.413m (100%) which supported 824 residents.
- 2.3.7 For the 2019-20 financial year the Revenues and Benefits Service achieved average speed of processing for new housing benefit claims of 27 days and average speed of processing for housing benefit changes in circumstances of 7 days.
- 2.3.8 Based on Internal Audit work undertaken in 2019/20 and management responses received; the Head of Audit provided limited assurance that the Council's framework for governance, risk management and internal control was sound and working effectively. There was an increased number of high and medium risk rated weaknesses identified in key individual assignments that were significant in aggregate, but discrete parts of the system of internal control remained unaffected. In addition to which, the response to the Coronavirus pandemic had led to scope limitations which restricted the independent assurances provided on the key systems that have undergone fundamental changes during the year. Where systems had been evaluated to a draft stage, assurances remained 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. Current audit activity is providing an early indicator that whilst not unexpected, the pressures of responding to COVID-19 activity is having an impact on the governance, risk management and internal controls across service areas.
- 2.3.9 The 2019/20 Statement of Accounts was considered and reviewed by the Audit Committee following Council approval to this delegation and the formal date for approval and publication of the accounts for 2020 was reset to the 30 November due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, have issued an unqualified opinion on the accounts and Value for Money position of the Council.
- 2.3.10 The Treasury team have outperformed their investment benchmark by 0.42% in 2019/20 and performance for the last three years is 0.32% per annum above the benchmark. Treasury activities during the year have been within approved prudential and treasury indicators set and have complied with the Treasury Strategy.

2.3.11 The Commissioning Development & Procurement service have, as well as providing support to the rest of the Council on a variety of tendering, recommissioning projects and Covid response work, continued to develop with senior officers a more consistent and efficient approach from commissioning and contracting. Work this year has focused on the delivery of key risk contract assurance and monitoring, savings from contract renewals and contract management of key corporate expenditure including that on agency staff and office supplies. The use of the corporate e-tendering system has continued to be extended to further areas with further increased use of the Dynamic Purchasing System module. Current work is focused on business as usual, implementing an electronic signature solution, contract management assurance, enhancing our Social Value approach, streamlining our contract reference system and providing a commissioning training module for the essential managers' programme.

2.3.12 In addition to the quarterly strategic risk update a risk workshop takes place with Directors where all the strategic risks are challenged by Directors. All risk definitions, risk scores and target scores are discussed together with a discussion regarding the risk appetite of the authority. The latter confirmed that Directors feel the risk appetite for the authority is represented correctly in the Opportunity Risk Management Strategy. This position is then considered and reviewed by Cabinet Members. The next strategic risk workshop with Directors is due to take place in early December 2020.

2.3.13 The Risk and Insurance Team continue to complete robust annual renewals in respect of the insurance provision for the authority under the five year Long Term Agreement. The insurance market has seen a definite hardening with premiums being increased by most insurers and the team work hard to endeavour to maintain current premium rates.

2.3.14 The Risk, Insurance and Resilience team have worked to make best use of the technologies available and have developed, with IT colleagues, the SharePoint system to accommodate all operational and project related risks. This enables one up to date version of the risk register to be available at all times and accessible to all relevant officers. It also enables through PowerBi reporting, to provide timely and accurate reporting on the current risk exposures across these areas.

2.3.15 During 2019/2020 our Business Continuity Management arrangements have been invoked due to responding to the Coronavirus pandemic. The plans have stood up well and our response has been effective. The plans will be reviewed as part of the lessons learnt from our response and will be modified accordingly.

### **3.0 Legal and Democratic Services**

3.1 Legal Services continues to support the corporate governance of the Council and the specific needs of the service areas. Various lawyers have been involved since the last update in advising and assisting with the numerous projects that are ongoing to deliver against the Council’s strategies. We continue to provide a strategic view on proposals we are asked to advise on and endeavour to identify any cross cutting issues or themes between different service areas. Assisted by colleagues in the Legal Support Office, our case management system and the Council’s corporate IT infrastructure we have successfully adapted to remote working despite being a service that still has to place some reliance on hard copy documents.

3.2 All service areas within legal are facing increased demands but for the fourth year running it is necessary to highlight the ongoing pressures in child care cases which have intensified yet further. Cases are becoming more complex and demanding and this has led to an increase in the costs because of the need to regularly instruct counsel. There has been a sharp rise in cases where children are taken into police protection following which proceedings need to be issued urgently with no opportunity to try to address concerns in a planned way outside of the court process.

In addition, the physical shut down of the Family courts has involved an overnight transfer of responsibility onto Legal Services as we have been required to set up and record the majority of the hearings ourselves through Teams. This is a significant additional burden though overall, despite occasional technical difficulties, the system has been successful in ensuring that protective orders have been obtained to keep vulnerable children safe. The pressures remain intense however and it will be necessary to consider a more robust structure for the longer-term.

3.3 The Elections team had worked hard in readiness for the Police and Crime Commissioner election for it to be delayed in light of covid in late March. Following this the team have worked tirelessly to prepare the annual canvass and prepare for the Local and Parish Elections and the Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2021. This will be a major event for the team, together with the added burden of running several elections during a pandemic. Preparations are well underway and all health and safety issues are being address. Committee Services have undertaken a large amount of extra work rolling out and supporting meetings taking place virtually. Education admission appeals required significant extra work this summer with the support of IT and education colleagues to ensure participation of panel members and fair hearings for the appellants.



## 4.0 Human Resources

### 4.1 Occupational Health, Safety and ICT Approvals

4.1.1 The Occupational Health, Safety and ICT Approvals teams have been fundamentally involved for much of the year on both the council's flood response and the Covid response, taking an active role in the procurement and logistics provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the council both internally and as part of regional and national initiatives with NHS and council partners.

The Health & Safety Team have also been actively involved in the provision of staff guidance and draft Risk Assessments for schools and service areas, as well as reviewing documents and inspecting sites when services reopened. The team continue to be active in these areas at regular meetings across the council and also with unions.

The Occupational Health, Safety and ICT Approvals teams have also been focusing on the business as usual aspects of improving our offer and support to customers through the following:

- Working with service areas to produce and implement H&S management systems including policies, procedures and arrangements.
- Development of our commercial officer to external customers, including Academies and external organisations.
- To fulfil contractual monitoring and support to Academies and external customers.
- To engage with service areas to ensure that health and safety compliance is in place through site visits, inspections, investigations and the Self-Monitoring Checklist to roll out to Premise and Team Managers.
- Raise awareness of workstation assessments for agile working in line with the Agile Working Strategy. This is particularly important due to the Covid situation and increased levels of home working.
- Support 'Leap into Learning' development for e-learning health and safety awareness courses across service areas. Delivery of relevant courses via Microsoft Teams has also been implemented and only essential face-to-face courses are now undertaken e.g. First Aid / Fire Extinguisher use.
- Implementation and monitoring of Business World for the management of accident data, training bookings and course management and case management arrangements for occupational health.
- To continue to implement the Wellbeing Plan and facilitate three themes of Be Active, Be Minded and Be Informed.
- Continued response to requests for support after notification of accidents and incidents.

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

- The three themes to promote engagement with employees to support their own health and wellbeing has focused on ‘Be Active’, Be Mindful’ and Be Informed’
- Planned events were hampered due to the Covid situation but many staff have accessed on-line Yoga session and staff have been encouraged to maintain contact via social activities such as Virtual Coffee Breaks to avoid staff feeling isolated while at home.
- The Mental Health Policy remains in place as well as a core of trained Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA).
- Targeted support for musculoskeletal conditions from Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust for fast track access for employees to Physiotherapy Services.
- The 2020 programme of seasonal influenza vaccination programme to employees who provide front line care and support business continuity arrangements has been delivered this year utilising vouchers for identified staff to arrange vaccinations through a network of pharmacies. To facilitate some care staff, two evening clinics were also arranged.
- Work continues to reduce overall cost of ICT systems and storage through our governance arrangements of reviewing requests for any new ICT procurements, ICT upgrades, or significant changes to existing ICT systems or software.
- To bolster our support to staff, the council are offering a pilot to access to CARI, a confidential online wellbeing solution as support to staff who may be struggling to cope. The offer includes and assessment and access to free webinars and support for wellbeing.
- NOSS (Network of Staff Supporters) also remains available for staff to access, again confidentially, for telephone counselling and support.
- Funding has been secured for a Fixed Term 18 months post to support wellbeing initiatives across the Council and recruitment is under way.

4.1.3 In response to COVID-19 and emphasis on the importance of supporting our staff through this unsettling and anxious time, we have implemented a range of targeted wellbeing initiatives:

- Weekly MHFA podcasts which provide signposting and guidance on mental health topics including anxiety, depression, panic attacks, trauma, stigma and loneliness in reference to the pandemic. This is a further way of promoting MHFAs, as well as challenging stereotypical thinking around mental ill health in line with Time to Change’s aspiration. We wish to continue these podcasts until the end of the year.
- Weekly live guided meditation sessions via Microsoft Teams, which are now also being recorded for staff unable to make the live sessions. Our

instructor, an affiliate of the Council, has built up a faithful following since starting these sessions.

- Shropshire Mind webinars on stress management were available to all staff during the pandemic, as part of our mental health awareness week initiatives in May 2020.
- Consistent and continuous relaying of the importance of looking after one's mental health and signposting to our support services by our CEOs in their staff briefings.
- Free access to Instructor Live – a website with over 800 exercise videos and nutritional advice to aid physical and mental wellbeing.
- We have launched a wellbeing toolkit enabling staff to complete a questionnaire to measure cognitive and emotional responses to their job and then signpost to support via the external company, as well as our own internal support services. The toolkit will be beneficial in measuring outcomes and identifying hot spots and emerging themes.
- Our in-house coaches have accepted an invitation from Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin's Trauma-Informed Coaches Network to undergo trauma risk management (TRIM) training. The course will help our coaches manage the welfare needs of colleagues across all sectors who are or have been exposed to potentially traumatic incidents as a result of COVID-19. The coaches will be able to support colleagues in terms of coping, fostering resilience, reducing burnout, and helping to prevent the development of mental health difficulties which include anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Promoting Public Health England's psychological first aid (PFA) digital training module geared towards all frontline/essential workers and volunteers to our staff in such positions, including the MHFAs. The course aims to increase awareness and confidence in those providing psychological support to people affected by COVID-19.

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

4.1.5 The focus for the coming year will be to continue with the Covid response work and also continue to support initiatives regarding workplace wellbeing, reducing sickness absence, building our framework for workplace compliance and to continue developing our commercial approach and offer.

## 4.2 HR Admin & Payroll (Recruitment and Payroll)

- 4.2.1 Following the implementation of Unit 4 ERP in April 2019, significant time and resource has been invested in improving the end-user experience for both corporate and schools-based staff.
- 4.2.2 Members of the HR Admin and Payroll team have provided significant support to corporate and Schools staff in using system processes, which has encouraged direct involvement on both parts in identifying process developments and improvements, some of which are outside of the system. The recruitment portal delivered for Marches MAT appears to be a package that would be of interest to MATs/Academies and is an additional service that could be developed
- 4.2.3 Payroll processes continue to be reviewed to reflect remote working and to support the organisation as it emerges from the Covid pandemic. Further efficiencies will be realised once all customers are using the new system and the current Covid pandemic eases, allowing normal workloads to return.
- 4.2.4 HR Admin and Payroll staff continue to work with Academies in ensuring that processes and the transmission of data is fit for purpose and meets their changing needs. This has delivered stronger and more effective working relationships. In addition, SLA offerings have been reviewed, to be more relevant to individual customer requirements and it is expected that this will aid in futureproofing the service and maintaining a robust relationship with each customer.
- 4.2.5 A comprehensive review of workloads in the team is being undertaken, with some tasks already allocated, allowing future vacancies to be identified and recruited to. This is also a consequence of remote working and the need to re-think processes to adapt to changing conditions and environments of the entire customer base (internal and external).
- 4.2.6 There continues to be an opportunity for commercial activity. However, with the current climate and position of the team and additional resource demands, development has been restricted. It has however afforded time to consider a different commercial approach and potential new offerings, which will be developed in the coming months.

## 4.3 HR Advice and Organisation Development

### 4.3.1 Response to Covid 19 pandemic

Since March 2020, the HR Advice and OD team have supported the organisation's response to the pandemic resulting in non-essential work being put on hold. A number of controls put into place at very short notice

due to the government announcements and updating FAQ's for staff, liaising with Public Health.

The HR team have been supporting managers and staff including schools relating to workforce issues – this would range from ensuring teams could function working from home, minimum staffing numbers, guidance for managing employees shielding, childcare responsibilities, sickness/other absences, ensuring that managers keep in touch with teams and encourage employees to stay connected. From having over 1,000 staff located in admin buildings 86% of them have been working from home full time. Support has been provided to staff working from home in terms of ensuring they have the right technology and equipment to support them, as well as support for wellbeing and mental health (see Section 4.1.2).

For those staff who have been unable to work from home, provision has been made for access to office space in Shirehall and other admin buildings. For those staff who have been working from home, equipment has been provided to make the workspace more comfortable i.e monitors, keyboards, office chairs etc and we will shortly be rolling out an online workstation assessment module for all staff. Further work is taking place through a New Ways of Working Group, chaired by the Director of Children's Services, to look at further support for staff for the future working arrangements. The group has representatives from across the organisation, including Unison. An Employee Reference Group has also been established with volunteers from across the organisation and now totals 50+ members. The work of both groups includes undertaking a follow up Employee Survey in December 2020, additional support for Wellbeing and working up a 'new deal' for employees based on more flexible/agile working practices. This will be reflective of not just working arrangements once Covid restrictions are lifted, but also considering plans for new civic offices in Shrewsbury and use of admin buildings across the county.

Where service areas have been stood down or closed, the team have co-ordinated redeployment of staff across the organisation. In July 2020 there has been a total of 162 staff had been redeployed. A Memorandum of Understanding was also agreed with health partners through the STP to move staff across health and local authority quickly.

For those staff who were unable to work at home, because their usual place of work was non-operational, and they couldn't be redeployed these employees were furloughed. Approximately 500 staff were furloughed in June 2020, this number has since reduced with very few remaining on furlough.

A Staff Testing Helpline was set up and has been staffed by the HR team enabling local testing for employees or household members who developed

symptoms (later extended to partners and academies). Between the end of April and November 2020 a total of 190 enquiries have been received, with 168 being referred for testing.

Whilst non-essential work casework has been put on hold, some essential casework has continued with meetings and hearings taking place virtually as well as recruitment to senior posts within the organisation, including the Chief Executive and Assistant Director/Heads of Service roles.

#### Upskill Shropshire (Apprenticeships)

The number of apprentices continues to increase utilising the funds from the apprenticeship levy. At the end of October 2020, over 280 applications were received from staff and 202 have converted into active apprenticeship starts, ranging from 12 months to 4 years in course duration. A further 17 learners are due to enrol on their apprenticeship training programmes within the next 3 months. Upskill Shropshire are hosting a virtual celebration week via staff networks between 23rd - 27th November, celebrating the successes for those who have completed their apprenticeship in the last 12 months. The Apprentice of the Year Award will be announced during National Apprenticeship Week in 2021 which will be awarded to the apprentice who has shown exceptional commitment, contribution and application of learning for the future

#### *DWP Kickstart Scheme*

In November 2020, Shropshire Council submitted an application to the DWP to support 60 placements for the Government's Kickstart Scheme. The placements will be 6 months long and enable young people aged 16-24, currently claiming Universal Credit and at risk of long term unemployment to access work to develop skills and enable them to take up long term employment following the scheme. The scheme is fully funded by DWP and will cover the wages of the participants for 25 hours per week plus support from a "set up" fund. Over 40 placements have been committed by teams across the local authority for the new year and there will be a second intake later in the summer 2021.

#### 4.3.2 Commercial Opportunities

In 2016, Shropshire HR set itself the ambitious challenge of generating in excess of £1million in annual external revenue by the spring of 2020 (an increase of £0.3m per annum). By embracing a creative and innovative mindset, Shropshire HR has been able to diversify its products and services, and has been able to successfully attract several new customers across the public, private and charitable sectors. By the spring of 2020, Shropshire HR

successfully generated an external traded revenue of £1.1m for the financial year 2019-20.

In addition to providing high quality annual and consultancy support services to clients, Shropshire HR has continued to innovate and has brought world-class products to market. The most successful of which, 'The Leadership Conference 2019' and the 'Virtual Leadership Conference 2020' have attracted investment and sponsorship from the private sector, and successfully generated £25,000 and £19,000 respectively from ticket and sponsorship sales (see link to online content below).

<https://yarringtonevents.uk/tlcshrews/>

Unfortunately, Covid-19 has represented a significant challenge to Shropshire HR's planned commercial activity. However, in the spirit of 'adapt and overcome', we have shifted our service (including our training & development offering) to an online offering. Shropshire HR will continue to review its business development plan and will continue to adopt ambitious growth targets. Furthermore, Shropshire HR has been nominated for a national award (APSE Best Commercial and Enterprise Initiative) in recognition of its success commercially. The virtual awards ceremony is being held on the 16<sup>th</sup> December.

<p><b>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</b></p> <p>Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2023/24 – Cabinet 13 February 2019, Council 28 February 2019</p> <p>Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2024/25 – Cabinet 16 December 2019</p> <p>Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2018/19 – Cabinet 28 November 2018</p> <p>Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2018/19– Cabinet 13 February 2019</p> <p>Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2019/20 – Cabinet 4th September 2019</p> <p>Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2019/20 – Cabinet 18th November 2019</p> <p>Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves – Cabinet 13 February 2019</p> <p>Fees and Charges 2019/20 – Cabinet 13 February 2019, Council 28 February 2019</p> <p>Estimated Collection Fund Outturn 2018/19 – Cabinet 13 February 2019</p> <p>Council Tax Resolution 2018/19 – Council 28 February 2019</p> <p>Financial Outturn 2018/19 – Cabinet 22 May 2019, Council 25 July 2019</p> <p>Statement of Accounts 2018/19 – Council 25 July 2019</p> <p>Treasury Strategy 2020/21 – Cabinet 12th February 2020, Council 27th February 2020</p> <p>Treasury Management Update Quarter 2 2019/20 – Cabinet 16th December 2019</p> <p>Treasury Management Update Quarter 3 2019/20 – Cabinet 12th February 2020</p> <p>Treasury Management Update Quarter 4 2019/20 – Cabinet 20th July 2020</p> <p>Treasury Management Update Quarter 1 2020/21 – Cabinet 7th September 2020</p> <p>Review of Non Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief and Council Tax Discretionary Discounts – Cabinet 4 July 2018</p>
<p><b>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)</b> David Minnery</p>
<p><b>Local Member</b> All</p>
<p><b>Appendices</b> None.</p>





## Committee and Date

Council

17 December 2020

10.00am

## **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS**

Leader of the Council      Councillor Peter Nutting  
Email                              peter.nutting@shropshire.gov.uk

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### **1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To consider amendments to Part 4 the Constitution (Council Procedure Rules) relating to questions on notice from members at meetings of the Council.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Part 4 of the Constitution, Council Procedure Rules, be amended by the deletion of the second paragraph of 15.3, "Questions on Notice at Committees and Sub-Committees," and the insertion of an additional paragraph after 15.4 "Notice of Questions" as follows:

#### **15.5 Number of questions**

A period of up to 30 minutes shall be set aside at each meeting when normally up to six questions will be heard. If notice is received of more than six questions for the same meeting, priority will be given to questions in accordance with the order in which they were received. At any one meeting, no Member may submit more than two questions.

## **REPORT**

### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Rules relating to Questions from Members at meetings of the Council are included in Part 4 of the Constitution at Paragraph 15 "Questions from Members."

- 3.2 The is currently no limit on the number of questions from members that can be asked at full Council which can lead to the member question session becoming cumbersome and repetitive.
- 3.3 The current limit on the number of questions on notice that can be asked at any one meeting of a Committee or Sub Committee contained in Part 4 of the Constitution at Paragraph 15.3 may be appropriate to apply also to full meetings of the Council.
- 3.4 In order to ensure more than one Member has the opportunity to ask questions, it is proposed also to limit the number of questions any one member can ask at any meeting to two

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**  
Council Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Peter Nutting

**Local Member**

All

**Appendices**

None

## COUNCIL 17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020

### MEMBER QUESTION REPORT

#### Question from Councillor Dave Tremellen

When does Council intend bringing the Shrewsbury shopping centre investment back “on shore” as promised at the time the acquisition was made using Jersey Property Unit Trusts in January 2018?

#### Response from the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration

#### COUNCILLOR STEVE CHARMLEY

Council approved the recommendations detailed in the “Shopping Centres Holding Structures Review” paper (Council 19th December 2019) and officers are working to that remit. Work is being undertaken to obtain and assess further advice and guidance and to determine the optimal time for implementation of the restructure. Members will be updated as this progresses on request.

#### Question from Councillor Dave Tremellen

In the light of Shropshire Council Cabinet’s considering relocating its operating centre to a replacement property based within the Shrewsbury Shopping Centre, how does it justify a relocation to a building it does not, ultimately, own outright and which it cannot guarantee its tenure in, unlike Shirehall which it owns outright and can guarantee to occupy however circumstances change?

#### Response from the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets, Economic Growth and Regeneration

#### COUNCILLOR STEVE CHARMLEY

The way the Council is working is changing and the reliance on administrative assets and how they operate is being actively considered further to the previous decision making at Cabinet. The new ways of working are being developed and a comprehensive review of the best option is well underway. This will consider a number of key areas including such aspects as maintenance, operating costs, climate change, flexible environments, tenure and colocation with partners. Officers have been tasked with bringing back further recommendations and will be targeting an appropriate future meeting.

#### Question from Councillor David Vasmer

Whilst welcoming the recent re-opening of the Community Tree Scheme I would like ask a series of questions relating to the original scheme which opened on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October and closed on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October after 10,000 trees were

allocated to land owners in a bid to help the Council reach carbon neutral status by 2030:

- a. Could you supply an anonymised list of the successful applicants, the first three letters of their postcode and the number of trees allocated to each one?
- b. How many on the above list are community groups?
- c. How many applicants were unsuccessful when the first scheme was launched in October and how many of these were community groups?
- d. Were any checks made to ensure that wealthy landowners did not benefit?
- e. Could a map be produced showing the locations where all the 10,000 trees are being planted?

**Response from the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services and Climate Change and the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services**

**COUNCILLOR DEAN CARROLL and COUNCILLOR GWILYM BUTLER**

a. A spreadsheet (Appendix 1) with an anonymised list of successful applications for the original round of this year's tree scheme is attached – there were 64 of them, receiving a total of 12,360 tree and hedgerow transplants. The spreadsheet includes the type and number of trees and hedging received, the first three letters of their postcode and the grid reference or co-ordinates of where the trees are being planted. Tab 2 on the spreadsheet gives a more detailed breakdown of the types and numbers of trees in the various planting mixes offered and the total numbers of each.

b. Those applications that are from community groups and other 'non-individual' applicants are highlighted yellow in the 'category' section of the spreadsheet. There are 9 of them. However, this is probably not the full picture as this information was extracted from the description on the application form of why they wanted the trees and the aims of their planting; there might have been a number who didn't include the local group they were affiliated with or who are private individuals who were notified by one of the groups and applied as individuals. I would say that our re-opening of the scheme appears to have more entries relating to various groups/green projects. This is probably because we made sure to notify them ahead of re-opening, to give them a chance to make applications before the scheme was re-opened to all on our website. We should also have more information on who was responsible for planting trees in the future; our 'Record your tree planting' map (see e) below) captures whether the application is made on behalf of a community group or project.

c. There were 13 unsuccessful applicants when the original tree scheme closed in October, and as far as we know all of these were individuals, none were community groups. Those applications that were refused were all due to them being invalid ie not meeting the objectives and criteria of the scheme, rather than the supply of trees running out (the scheme was closely monitored and closed in time to avoid oversubscribing).

d. No checks on the wealth of the applicants were made prior to delivery of the scheme. The scheme is and always has been open to all, providing the proposed

tree planting meets the objectives and criteria of the scheme. This is made clear on our web site and application form, from which the following extracts are taken for information:

e. Working with the GIS Team, we have been able to create an interactive map to show where the trees have been planted. It is a requirement that successful applicants consent to the planting details being included on the map, as per our website:

'Finally, as an exciting new feature, successful applicants must be prepared to show the location and planting details of their trees on an interactive map of Shropshire, to provide a permanent and growing record (forgive the pun) of where trees have been planted around the county. Personal identifying details won't be revealed on the map, although we will need your contact details to correspond with you regarding the scheme. Ideally, we hope to include a facility enabling people to upload photographs of their trees at the planting stage, and then subsequently to show how they're developing over time.'

It is very early days, so only a few records have been entered to date, but the following link takes you to the page from which you can access the tree planting map. It can be used to record all tree planting activity in Shropshire (not funded through other grant aid such as Forestry Commission or agri-environment schemes), whether through the Tree Scheme or otherwise. We hope in time to develop it to also act as a register of potential land and sites for planting and potentially to bring together those that have land for planting with those volunteering to supply or plant trees, as well as simply record where trees have been planted:

<https://apps.esriuk.com/app/questionwhere/51/view/ddb12ff7eff740daaef3cf638e26c858/index.html#>

### **Question from Councillor David Vasmer**

Regarding the current re-opened Community Tree Scheme, how many trees are being made available and how many trees have been distributed so far? Has there been any changes to the priorities for the distribution of trees since October and how many trees does the Council plan to make available in future years?

### **Response from the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services and Climate Change and the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services**

#### **COUNCILLOR DEAN CARROLL and COUNCILLOR GWILYM BUTLER**

Funding has been secured through a new Trees Outside Woods (TOW) project with DEFRA and other partners to supply an additional 20,000 tree and hedgerow transplants this planting season (to be delivered before the planting season closes in February 2021). As of Tuesday 1st December we have had applications totalling 17,360 trees. I would point out that these have not been screened as yet and a (probably small) proportion of them will be refused, as per the original scheme in October this year.

The only change in the second round of the scheme, based on applications received in the first round, is that we have halved the amount of hedging that people are allowed to apply for, because we are trying to encourage tree planting and small scale woodland creation, rather than run a hedgerow creation project.

This Council remains committed to planting a tree for every resident of Shropshire and that will require support to continue and expand the Community Tree Scheme in future years. The DEFRA TOW project funding will contribute further for at least one more year and additional funding beyond that will need to be secured either internally or externally. The aspiration is that the number of trees available in future years will exceed the number provided this year.

### **Question from Councillor David Vasmer**

In a meeting of the Place Overview Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> November this year Councillors were told that the Council was protected from any overspend on the North West Road because it had entered into an agreement with contractors, Balfour Beatty. An argument was made that the Council would work closely with the contractor in a pre-construction phase and thus securing an incentive for the contractor not to overspend. I am worried that the Council may have already entered into an agreement with Balfour Beatty to build the North West Road. Is that correct? If not, what is the nature of the agreement with Balfour Beatty?

### **Response from the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport**

#### **COUNCILLOR STEVE DAVENPORT**

The principle of involving a contractor at the design stage is well established industry practice that aims to minimise construction and cost risk and maximise efficiencies through good design. The Council has progressed from the (no charge) Feasibility Stage with Balfour Beatty into the formal and contracted Pre-Construction Stage. This is in line with the SCAPE framework options available to the Council at this time to develop project certainty further (Balfour Beatty being the single SCAPE framework supplier). SCAPE is a procurement framework that the Council had already gained access to as an available procurement route prior to the commencement of the NWRR project.

The Pre Construction stage is being undertaken through a fixed cost, maximum value, £1.9m contract, approved through the previous delegation to the Director of Place at the point of Council assent to Large Local Majors Programme Entry. The cost of this contract is within the agreed programme financial forecasts and is accommodated by the programme timeline. The Pre-Construction stage is designed to get contractor involvement to assist the schemes development to the final design by informing with knowledge of specialist techniques and materials, to identify opportunities for construction efficiencies and provide a sense check to costings and programming.

There is no requirement to then proceed to a full Construction contract through SCAPE as part of this progression, and the project board, Executive Board and Full Council will be advised on the preferred construction procurement route in due

course at the point of Full Business Case submission to DfT. The decision to pursue a chosen procurement option at that time will be informed by the assessment of risk (financial costs / overrun, deliverability and programme requirements etc.) at that time, and may also include full open market tender alongside other options in order to ensure value for money is being obtained.

The NWRR Full Business Case is currently due for consideration by Council Winter 2021 and further updates on its progress will be given in due course

### **Question from Councillor Tracey Huffer and Andy Boddington**

Covid-19 testing centres are vital to our response to the current pandemic. They help protect individuals. They inform us about the rate of infection across Shropshire. We are concerned that it is difficult to get a Covid-19 test in the rural south of the county without travelling a considerable distance. We are concerned that official guidance asks people not to travel but local arrangements require people to travel long distances for tests. It is a 56 mile round trip by road from central Ludlow to the Shrewsbury London Road test centre. It costs around £60 for a taxi fare.

- 1) Where are the current testing centres located?
  - 2) What support is offered for people without transport to get to these centres?
  - 4) How soon are test results available after testing at these centres?
  - 5) We understand that a mobile testing unit is in operation. How is its location decided? What would happen if there were urgent needs for testing in, say, Ludlow and Whitchurch on the same day?
  - 6) Will anyone who cannot or does not wish to travel receive a postal test or will this be restricted to people with specific symptoms?
  - 7) What are the postal arrangements for postal test? For example, are they delivered on Sundays? How are tests returned from people who cannot leave home because they are self-isolating or for other reasons?
  - 8) How long does it take for postal tests to arrive and how long after posting the test kit back do the results get communicated?
  - 9) What arrangements are in place for people who need to be tested at home?
- We recognise that the data needed to answer these questions may not always be available at a local level. Regional or national data could substitute where necessary.

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

#### **COUNCILLOR DEAN CARROLL**

1. Where are the current testing centres located?
  - There is a regional testing site located in Ironbridge
  - There are two semi-permanent Local Testing Sites in Shrewsbury:
    - o London Road Car Park, Shrewsbury, SY2 6PG
    - o Beatrice Street Car Park, Oswestry, SY11 1QW
  - There is currently one Mobile Unit allocated to Shropshire which rotates around the County depending on local need. This has nominally between Craven Arms, Whitchurch and Market Drayton. The current dates are:
    - o Whitchurch – 14<sup>th</sup> Dec – 19<sup>th</sup> Dec

- o Ludlow site TBC 20<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> Dec
  - o Market Drayton 29<sup>th</sup> December to 4<sup>th</sup> Jan
  - Shropshire have one more Local Testing Site which we are looking to place in the South West of the County. A number of locations in the South East have been assessed as not suitable but further locations are being currently surveyed.
  - Additional sites have been identified across the County to move mobile testing sites to in the event of an outbreak.
  - Residents of Shropshire also able to access testing in other neighbouring areas if this is more convenient
2. What support is offered for people without transport to get to these centres?
- Local testing sites are walk in centres, near to town centres so those without transport can walk into the sites, parking is available nearby for those who do drive. For those without transport, postal testing has also been made available. In an outbreak situation, mobile testing will be brought into local areas and the local testing team from Shropshire Community Trust will support testing staff at workplaces, in localities or in peoples homes if needed.
3. How soon are test results available after testing at these centres?
- This is currently up to 48 -72 hours, however the majority of results are returned between 24-48 hours
4. We understand that a mobile testing unit is in operation. How is its location decided? What would happen if there were urgent needs for testing in, say, Ludlow and Whitchurch on the same day?
- The location of the units are based on need, they rotated around the County to increase access to testing sites. Location also depends on suitability of the site.
  - Should there be a need in different parts of the County, we can call on our local testing service in the event of a small outbreak or ask the regional team to deploy an additional MTU to Shropshire, this will depend on availability.
5. Will anyone who cannot or does not wish to travel receive a postal test or will this be restricted to people with specific symptoms?
- Anyone with the three main COVID symptoms can order a postal test online through 119 or book into a local testing site, within Shropshire or outside of the County
6. What are the postal arrangements for postal test? For example, are they delivered on Sundays? How are tests returned from people who cannot leave home because they are self-isolating or for other reasons?
- Tests can be ordered online 24/7. These are collected and delivered by Royal Mail. Completed test kits are collected from priority postboxes or from homes as part of the government programme.



<https://www.royalmail.com/priority-postboxes>. Kits are collected 7 days a week, before 4pm from priority postboxes across the Country and also from home addresses. Delivery of test kits is 6 days a week.

7. How long does it take for postal tests to arrive and how long after posting the test kit back do the results get communicated?
  - Up to 72 hours
8. What arrangements are in place for people who need to be tested at home?
  - This is via the postal system or in an outbreak situation could be through our local Testing Team at Shropshire Community Trust.

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List of Successful Applicants

Post Code	Tree Bundle			Tree Bundle Total (10 Max)	Native hedging mix (10 Max)	TOTAL OF ALL	Category	Location of Planting (Co-ordinates)
	Lowland woodland mix	Upland woodland mix	Wet woodland mix					
SY5	3	3	2	8	2	10		SO 32644 99460
SY13	0	0	10	10	10	20		SJ 52192 36045
SY4	1	0	0	1	9	10		SJ574241
SY13	0	0	0	0	7	7		SJ487347
TF9	0	0	0	0	10	10		SJ 68128 26966
SY13	2	0	0	2	0	2		Along our field
SY13	2	1	1	4	0	4		SJ567407
SY13	0	0	0	0	2	2		SJ 53229 41895
SY5	0	1	0	1	2	3		SJ330021
SY5	2	0	0	2	10	12		52°42'23.6"N 2°51'43.2"W
SY13	3	2	0	5	5	10		SJ55594278
SY5	0	2	0	2	0	2		SO3608 9781
Sy5	0	1	0	1	12	13		SJ378074
SY5	0	1	2	3	10	13		52°34'40.9"N 2°57'20.8"W
SY4	0	0	0	0	10	10	Woodland School	SJ 5223 1776
SY7	0	1	0	1	1	2		52.4771, -2.8314
SY13	2	0	0	2	2	4		350346 335067
SY8	10	0	0	10	10	20		SO 511 704 and SO 503 702
TF13	1	0	0	1	10	11		Sj 6188900537
SY13	3	0	4	7	3	10		52.964381, -2.682970
SY4	1	0	0	1	9	10		SJ 58550 25942
SY13	1	0	0	1	2	3		SJ 58907 32630
SY6	10	0	0	10	0	10		SO 54722 98350
SY7	0	0	0	0	10	10		SO584869 and SO585868
SY11	1	0	0	1	3	4	School	SJ 2935 4588
SY8	3	0	7	10	10	20	Local group	SO 58987 82531
SY4	1	0	0	1	9	10		SJ 46853 18620 or SJ468186
Sy5	0	1	1	2	8	10		SO 40147 96982
SY12	1	1	0	2	10	12		SJ448330
SY7	0	8	0	8	2	10		Lat/Long =52.516882,-2.868913
SY5	0	1	0	1	2	3		526 / 020 using explorer 241map
SY4	0	0	0	0	10	10		SJ5072 2877 SJ 5080 2878
SY12	0	0	10	10	10	20		SJ4654029734
SY5	3	3	2	8	2	10		337,461.339 305,357.550

List of Successful Applicants

SY10	2	0	0	2	4	6	Latitude 52.81 longitude -3.11
SY5	1	0	0	1	5	6	Local Group SJ4758 0309
SY12	3	3	3	9	10	19	School SY2
TF9	0	0	0	0	10	10	SJ 6926837470.
SY9	0	0	0	0	10	10	SO 26420 87246
SY13	0	0	2	2	2	4	sweetly.reprints.email
SY13	2	2	2	6	4	10	SJ 51686 34796
SY5	0	1	0	1	10	11	N52 38.535 W2 53.457
DY14	2	0	0	2	2	4	Local Wildlife Group 2 27 665W 52 25 658 N
CH42	0	0	0	0	10	10	SJ 626 073
TF9	1	1	1	3	2	5	SJ 57145 24074
DY11	0	5	0	5	0	5	tracking.stow.incur
WV7	0	1	1	2	1	3	Local Nature Reserve SJ 809046
SY5	2	0	8	10	6	16	SJ 508025
WS11	10	0	0	10	0	10	SJ633071
SY9	0	0	0	0	10	10	SO2788
SY7	0	10	0	10	10	20	52°28'09.0"N 2°36'43.8"W
SY4	1	1	0	2	1	3	Parish Varied within the Parish.
DY12	3	0	2	5	10	15	SJ731770
SY13	6	2	2	10	10	20	SU 50598 33214
SY13	1	0	1	2	4	6	SJ5631
SY6	3	1	1	5	5	10	SO 43427 98545
TF9	1	0	2	3	2	5	SJ703295
SY2	0	0	0	0	10	10	School SJ511120
SY7	0	0	0	0	10	10	SO 47653 82806
WV16	0	10	0	10	10	20	SO 59242 89381
TF9	1	0	0	1	2	3	SJ6457 3391
TF9	3	3	0	6	4	10	52.902335 -2.529154
SY13	0	0	0	0	10	10	SJ5032
TF9	5	0	0	5	5	10	SJ72313 30872
WV16	0	0	0	0	10	10	OS725895

Type	ratios of different species		Number of Bundles	
	%	in a bundle of 20 trees	Woodland Type	Ordered
<b>Low ground</b>			Lowland	97
English oak	20	4	Upland	66
sessile oak	20	4	Wet	64
small leaved lime	20	4	Hedgerow	391
wild cherry	10	2		
hazel	10	2		
rowan	10	2		
hawthorn	5	1		
crab apple	5	1		
<b>High ground</b>				
sessile oak	50	10		
silver birch	15	3		
beech	10	2		
hawthorn	10	2		
rowan	10	2		
crab apple	5	1		
<b>Wet areas</b>				
common alder	35	7		
downy birch	20	4		
crack willow	10	2		
goat willow	10	2		
aspen	10	2		
osier	5	1		
hazel	5	1		
Guelder rose	5	1		
<b>Native hedgerow mix</b>				
hawthorn	35	7		
field maple	20	4		
blackthorn	15	3		
hazel	15	3		
dog rose	5	1		
dogwood	5	1		
Guelder rose	5	1		

Tree Species	Number Ordered (per type)	Species	Total Number
English oak	388	English oak	388
sessile oak	388	sessile oak	1048
small leaved lime	388	small leaved lime	388
wild cherry	194	wild cherry	194
hazel	194	hazel	1431
rowan	194	rowan	326
hawthorn	97	hawthorn	2966
crab apple	97	crab apple	163
sessile oak	660	silver birch	198
silver birch	198	beech	132
beech	132	common alder	448
hawthorn	132	downy birch	256
rowan	132	crack willow	128
crab apple	66	goat willow	128
common alder	448	aspens	128
downy birch	256	osier	64
crack willow	128	Guelder rose	455
goat willow	128	field maple	1564
aspens	128	blackthorn	1173
osier	64	dog rose	391
hazel	64	dogwood	391
Guelder rose	64		
hawthorn	2737		
field maple	1564		
blackthorn	1173		
hazel	1173		
dog rose	391		
dogwood	391		
Guelder rose	391		

Woodland Type	Ordered for Prees	Ordered for J.Holliday
Lowland	56	41
Upland	18	48
Wet	39	25
Hedgerow	202	189
<b>Total</b>	315	303
Total Trees	12360	

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## **Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority Chair's Report of Extraordinary Meeting held on 28 September 2020 and the Annual Meeting held on 14 October 2020**

### **Extraordinary Fire Authority Meeting – 28 September 2020**

At its Extraordinary Meeting on 28 September 2020, the Fire Authority ratified the recommendation of its Brigade Managers' Employment Panel that Mr Simon Hardiman and Mr Dan Quinn be appointed as Assistant Chief Fire Officers with effect from January 2021.

### **Fire Authority Annual Meeting – 14 October 2020**

#### **Election of Chair and Appointment of Vice-Chair**

The Fire Authority has elected Councillor Eric Carter as its Chair and appointed Councillor Chris Mellings as its Vice-Chair until June 2021.

#### **Committee Composition and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups**

The Fire Authority has agreed the number of seats on its Committees and the allocations of those seats to political groups.

#### **Committee Membership and Constitution**

The Fire Authority agreed the constitution for each of its Committees and Panels.

The Fire Authority has confirmed appointments to its committees and appointed its Chair, Councillor Eric Carter, to the Local Government Association Fire Services Commission.

Councillor Kevin Pardy has been appointed as the Fire Authority's Equality and Diversity Member Champion and Councillor Kuldeep Sahota as its Risk Management and Audit Member Champion.

#### **Review of Member Role Descriptions**

The Fire Authority has agreed the Member Role Descriptions listed below:

- Member
- Chair of the Authority
- Vice-Chair of the Authority

- Leaders of the Main Opposition Groups
- Chair and Vice-Chair for Strategy and Resources Committee
- Chair of Strategic Advisory Group
- Chair and Vice-Chair of Standards, Audit and Performance Committee
- Risk Management and Audit Champion
- Equality and Diversity Champion
- Independent Person, including Skills and Competencies

## **Review of Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation to Officers**

The Fire Authority has reviewed and agreed its Standing Orders for the Regulation of Proceedings and Business, Standing Orders relating to Contracts and the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

This includes amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to reflect the change in the Executive Officer Structure which will now comprise the Chief Fire Officer and two Assistant Chief Fire Officers. This new structure comes into effect in January 2021.

## **Meeting Schedule 2021**

The Fire Authority has approved the 2021 schedule of Authority and Committee meetings.

## **Wholetime Recruitment Campaign**

The Fire Authority received a report setting out the decisions made by the Service Management Team regarding the most appropriate methods of recruiting between seven and fourteen wholetime firefighters in 2020/21.

These included

- The use of the HR Solutions Hub managed electronic system 'SIFT for Firefighter' as the preferred method of recruiting wholetime firefighters;
- The use of postcode restricting to limit applications to those resident in the West Midlands region which is in line with the ethos of providing local jobs for local people; and
- The approval of funding for Fire Bootcamps for under-represented groups. The 10-week Bootcamp programme is directly related to the Job Related Tests which are part of the firefighter recruitment process. The use of Bootcamps as part of the 2018 recruitment process was successful with 1 BAME candidate and 2 female candidates who had attended Bootcamp, being successfully appointed as firefighters.

## Strategic Fire Alliance Update

The Fire Authority received an update on the Strategic Fire Alliance and the progress that has been made on the four key areas identified as foundation activities that would support wider future working. The key areas as approved by both Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authorities are as follows:

1. Fire Control
2. Integrated Risk Management Plan
3. Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
4. Procurement

Progress has been made in all four key areas but has been hampered in recent months by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Progress is reported regularly to the Strategic Alliance Board and Programme Delivery Board and this report provided Members with an overview of each work programme and the next steps for each project over the coming months. Members will receive further updates as the projects develop.



Eric Carter  
Chair  
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority  
November 2020

## Background Papers

Agenda and Papers for the Annual Meeting of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority held on 14 October 2020

**The agendas and reports (apart from exempt or confidential items) for all Fire Authority and Committee meetings are on the Service's website:**

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

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

- Click on 'About Us' in the red bar at the top of the page
- Click on 'Fire and Rescue Authority'
- Click on 'Meetings' in the list on the right hand side of the screen
- Click on '14 October 2020' and the various reports and appendices will be listed

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

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