



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

Date: 27 May 2022

**Committee:  
Cabinet**

**Date: Wednesday, 8 June 2022**

**Time: 10.30 am**

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

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

**There will be some access to the meeting room for members of the press and public, but this will be limited for health and safety reasons. If you wish to attend the meeting please email [democracy@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@shropshire.gov.uk) to check that a seat will be available for you.**

Members of the public will be able to access the live stream of the meeting by clicking on this link:

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/Cabinet08June2022>

Tim Collard – Assistant Director Legal and Governance

**Members of Cabinet**

Lezley Picton (Leader)

Gwilym Butler

Dean Carroll

Rob Gittins

Kirstie Hurst-Knight

Simon Jones

Cecilia Motley

Ian Nellins

Ed Potter

Your Committee Officer is:

**Amanda Holyoak**

Tel: 01743 257714

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



# AGENDA

## 1 **Apologies for Absence**

## 2 **Disclosable Interests**

Members are reminded that they must declare their disclosable pecuniary interests and other registrable or non-registrable interests in any matter being considered at the meeting as set out in Appendix B of the Members' Code of Conduct and consider if they should leave the room prior to the item being considered. Further advice can be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

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

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022, attached.

## 4 **Public Question Time**

To receive any questions from members of the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. Deadline for notification is not later than 5.00 pm on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022.

## 5 **Member Question Time**

To receive any questions from Members of the Council. Deadline for notification is not later than 5.00 pm on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022.

## 6 **Scrutiny Items**

## 7 **Copthorne and Porthill 20mph Speed Limit Zone** (Pages 5 - 56)

Lead Member – Councillor Ian Nellins – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Natural Assets & The Green Economy

Report of Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place, attached

Tel: 01743 258915

## 8 **Economic Growth Strategy 2022-2027** (Pages 57 - 84)

Lead Member – Councillor Edward Potter – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning

Report of Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place, attached

Tel: 01743 258915

**9 Children's Services Key Performance Data** (Pages 85 - 114)

Lead Member – Councillor Kirstie Hurst-Knight – Portfolio Holder for Children and Education

Report of Tanya Miles, Executive Director of People, attached

Contact: 01743 258674

**10 Workforce Strategy 22/23 - 24/25** (Pages 115 - 166)

Lead Member – Councillor Gwilym Butler – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources

Report of James Walton, Executive Director of Resources, attached

Tel. 01743 257775

**11 River Safety in Shropshire** (Pages 167 - 178)

Lead Member – Dean Carroll – Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure

Report of Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place, attached

Tel. 01743 258915

**12 Policy on the Release of Balloons and Sky Lanterns** (Pages 179 - 182)

Lead Member – Ian Nellins – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Natural Assets & The Green Economy

Report of Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place, attached

Tel. 01743 258919

**13 Levelling Up Update** (Pages 183 - 198)

Lead Member – Edward Potter – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning

Report of Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place, attached

Tel. 01743 258919

**14 Exclusion of Press and Public**

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

**15 Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 April 2022**

To confirm as a correct record the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2022, to follow



## Committee and Date

Cabinet

8 June 2022

## **CABINET**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022**

**In the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND  
10.30 - 11.20 am**

**Responsible Officer:** Amanda Holyoak

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

### **Present**

Councillor Lezley Picton (Chairman)

Councillors Dean Carroll, Rob Gittins, Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Simon Jones, Cecilia Motley, Ian Nellins and Ed Potter

### **54 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gwilym Butler.

### **55 Disclosable Interests**

None were declared.

### **56 Minutes**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 6 April 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **57 Public Question Time**

No questions has been received from members of the public.

### **58 Member Question Time**

Members questions were received from the following:

1. Councillor David Vasmer - in relation to a review of safety issues alongside waterways in the county following recent drownings in the Shrewsbury area.

In response to a supplementary question, the Portfolio Holder for Physical Infrastructure gave assurances that Shropshire Council was taking a lead role in this review. Working alongside other partners the review included education, consideration of risk factors, fencing, lighting and exit points and, whilst the review had commenced in Shrewsbury, the scope could be increased in the county where appropriate.

2. Councillor Rosemary Dartnall – regarding the Integrated Care System (ICS) Green Plan suggestion that the impact of service locations can result in a beneficial reduction of emissions yet the increased centralisation of health services results in patients and staff travelling further.

In response to a supplementary question, the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Natural Assets and the Green Economy recognised that centralisation was not the answer to all, but compromises had to be made. Benefits included patient ability to access more than one service in a single visit thereby reducing the number of journeys, maximising the use of space and the resultant economies in energy consumption. The opportunities within the ICS to enhance biodiversity would be explored and Members would be kept informed of developments.

The full questions and responses are available from: [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 27th April, 2022, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council](#)

## 59 Whitchurch Swimming Centre Feasibility Study

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism, Transport presented the report providing details of a feasibility study for the provision of a new Swimming and Fitness Centre in Whitchurch and seeking approval that the proposed plans be the subject of a formal public consultation exercise. She drew Members' attention to the age and structural issues of the Whitchurch swimming pool, the high user level of the existing facility (now closed) and the need to provide a swimming pool in the area. She added that it was recommended that the Library facility remain in its current location in the Whitchurch Civic Centre.

Responding to comments from local Members, the Portfolio Holder drew attention to the flexible use of the dry side space within the new facility that would provide a large room divisible into two studio areas, one of which would be designated for use by the Youth Service. Referring to access issues raised, she gave assurances that steps would be taken to ensure that the new facility would be accessible by all.

Referring to the timescale in bringing this matter forward, the Leader stated that lengthy and detailed investigation into the condition of the existing pool had been undertaken as the initial decision had been to refurbish rather than replace the pool. The Portfolio Holder added that the new facility would benefit the ongoing growth of the town. Members were greatly supportive of the proposals to provide a new facility in Whitchurch.

Whilst recognising the need and benefit of the proposed new facility in Whitchurch, a Member highlighted that proposals for Shrewsbury were not currently forthcoming. The Leader stated that the Shrewsbury facility had been put 'on hold' rather than abandoned.

### **RESOLVED:**

- I. To note and acknowledge progress and actions undertaken to meet the recommendations of the Cabinet report in June 2021

- II. To agree that the proposed plans be the subject of a formal public consultation exercise and that a further report be brought to Cabinet following completion of the consultation.
- III. To agree that subject to the outcome of the public consultation exercise and Cabinet's consideration of that report, the business case for the project be presented to Council with a recommendation that the development of the Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre be included in the capital programme.

## 60 Draft Housing Allocations Policy for Consultation

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health presented a report detailing the draft revised policy, to be subject to an eight-week consultation period, for allocations to Council owned stock and nominations to housing associations. He stated that the revised Housing Allocations Policy sought to make best use of the flexibilities provided under the Housing Act 1996 to ensure social housing was allocated to those in the greatest need and to support strategic housing priorities.

The importance of further involvement and input from scrutiny was recognised and would be undertaken prior to further consideration of this issue by Cabinet.

### **RESOLVED:**

To approve that the draft policy, set out in Appendix I, be subject to an eight-week public consultation period, and for this to include formal consultation with all Private Registered Providers currently operating in Shropshire.

## 61 ICS Joint Green Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Natural Assets and the Green Economy presented the report on the Integrated Care System (ICS) Joint Green Plan that provided a joint response to the challenge of climate change. He explained that Council Officers had been working with ICS colleagues to prepare the draft Plan to be approved by individual ICS organisations prior to its adoption by the ICS Board in May 2022.

Whilst recognising this as an early stage collaboration, questions were asked about the following: availability of local figures; Green Plans being compiled for each of the Trusts; identification of a Board lead; monitoring of action completions; the Performance Board and bringing together of expertise across the county and working towards zero carbon.

The Leader stressed that the Plan was in the early stages of development and the Council did and would continue to have an influence going forward.

### **RESOLVED:**

- i) To approve the draft ICS Green Plan attached at Appendix 1; and

- ii) To support the principle of collaborative working on relevant actions in the Action Plan contained in the document.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....





<u>Committee and Date</u>
Cabinet
8th June 2022

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

## **REPORT HEADING: Copthorne and Porthill 20mph Speed Limit Zone**

**Responsible Officer:** Rose Dovey, Interim Active Travel Manager  
Email: [rose.dovey@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:rose.dovey@shropshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01743 22658

### **1. Synopsis**

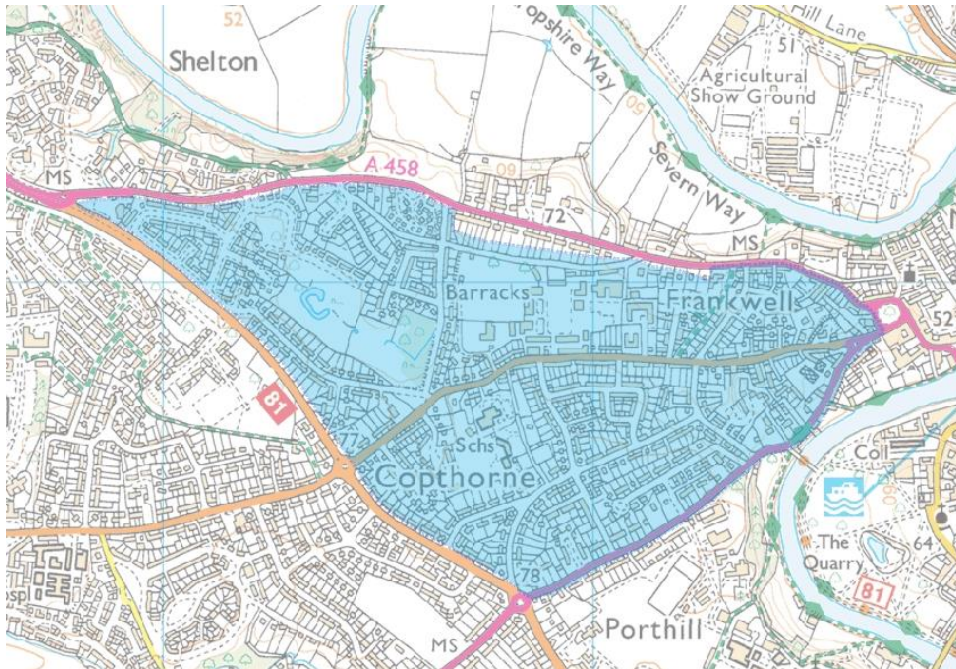
- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's endorsement to develop the principle of Liveable Neighbourhoods and to go out to public consultation to implement a pilot 20mph speed limit zone in the ward areas of Copthorne and Porthill (Shrewsbury).

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. A 20mph speed limit zone for the ward areas of Copthorne and Porthill (Shrewsbury) known in this report as 'the study area' study area was put forward as part of the proposed Liveable Neighbourhood Trials Community Engagement Exercise undertaken in late 2021. It received the most support (up to 85%) out of all the proposed measures the community were asked to provide feedback on.
- 2.2 The core aim of implementing a 20mph speed limit zone in the study area would be to reduce overall traffic speeds in the area closer to 20mph rather than to bring average speeds on all roads in the area down to 20mph or below. This would be implemented via a phased approach with the initial introduction of low-cost measures including signage and road markings and a community behaviour change campaign to encourage drivers over time to drive at an appropriate speed without excessive reliance by the Council on enforcement by the Police. It is envisaged that speeds across the area will be monitored as part of the pilot and will be used to inform whether further engineering measures are required to reduce vehicular speeds at problem sites.
- 2.3 The proposed 20mph speed limit zone for the study area, would cover the area within (and inclusive of) The Mount (A458) - from 55 metres

west of its junction with Hafren Road), the whole length of Porthill Road (A488) and (but not including) Shelton Road (See Figure 1 below). New St (A488) had a 20mph speed limit order approved in April 2022. A schedule of those roads which the proposed 20mph speed limit zone would cover is contained in Appendix 1.

**Figure 1: Proposed 20mph Speed Limit Zone – Copthorne and Porthill**



- 2.4. There is overwhelming evidence that lower speeds result in fewer collisions and a reduced severity of injuries; and consistent evidence that casualties are reduced when 20mph speed limit zones are introduced<sup>1</sup>. It should be noted that these benefits are achieved even when average speeds do not drop to 20mph - any speed reduction leads to a positive outcome (see Section 8 for further detail).
- 2.5 The core outcome sought from introducing a 20mph speed limit zone in the study area is to make the built environment safer and a more attractive place to walk and cycle. Introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone can help to address the widely held perception of people feeling unsafe walking and cycling in and around their community. This was reflected in the Copthorne and Porthill Liveable Neighbourhood Trials consultation where traffic speeds were cited by respondents as the top concern when walking and cycling around the area.
- 2.6. Shropshire Council, as the Highway Authority, is responsible for the setting of all local speed limits across the road network throughout Shropshire excluding motorways and trunk roads. The Council's

<sup>1</sup> The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), *Road Safety Factsheet: 20mph Zones and Speed Limits Factsheet (November 2020)*

current approach to 20mph speed limits and speed limit zones follows the Department for Transport (DfT) Guidance – "Setting Local Speed Limits" Circular 01/2013<sub>2</sub>. This Guidance states that local authorities can set speed limits on their roads in situations where local needs and conditions suggest a speed limit which is lower than the national speed limit, for example, in urban areas that are primarily residential and where cycle movements are high (or potentially high) and where the safety benefits are seen to outweigh the disadvantage of longer journey times for motorised traffic.

2.7. The Guidance also notes that 20mph speed limits are most appropriate for roads where average speeds are already low, below 24mph, and the layout of the road also gives the clear impression that a 20mph speed or below is the most appropriate to encourage self-compliance. In February 2018, the Place Overview Committee undertook work on 20mph speed limits and speed limit area zones and concluded that 20mph restrictions should only be considered in the following locations:

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

2.8. For the most part, a 20mph speed limit zone for the study area meets the requirement outlined in the second bullet-point as follows:

- The study area is primarily made up of urban residential streets
- A high level of community support for a 20mph speed limit zone has been demonstrated through the results of the community survey undertaken for the proposed Liveable Neighbourhood trials (see section 7.4)
- Traffic surveys undertaken provide evidence that there are currently moderate to high numbers of both pedestrians and cyclists using the streets in the study area (see Appendix 2)

2.9. However, although the characteristics and layout of many of the local roads in the study area give the clear impression that low speeds are required, the characteristics of other roads, primarily those strategic roads in the study area do not meet these requirements (see Appendix 2 for further detail on traffic speeds in the area).

2.10. The DfT Guidance is now nine years old and is regarded by many industry experts as being out-of-date. It is set to be reviewed in

light of more recent evidence which shows that 20mph speed limit zones are about bringing vehicle speeds down closer to 20mph rather than reducing all speeds to below 20mph. Local authorities that have adopted this approach include Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), Kent County Council (KCC) and Bristol City Council (BCC). OCC is currently trialling five pilot areas to establish the methodology for a proposed county-wide 20mph speed limit zone approach. KCC considers 'signed only' 20mph speed limits where existing average speeds are up to 26mph and there is strong local support. BCC rolled out a 20mph speed limit across the city between 2012-15. A major review of the schemes in 2020 determined that no significant changes needed to be made to these measures and that they were to be made permanent.

2.11. A peer review of other local authorities 20mph speed limit zones and a review of the existing evidence base suggests that implementing the following low-cost measures can result in lowering traffic speeds across the whole area<sup>2</sup>.

- Area-wide signage (repeater signs, roundels and Vehicle Activated Signage)
- Road markings to complement signage
- Planter boxes (in risk-assessed areas) to narrow wide kerb turning radii at junctions.
- Community behaviour change campaign (see section 8.2)
- Proactive policing (see section 8.1)
- Changes in vehicle technology (see section 8.3).

2.12. The implementation of a pilot 20mph speed limit zone speed would require an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to be made by Council. There is no legislative requirement to undertake public consultation when implementing an ETRO but it is recognised that for this type of scheme, it would be best practice to do so. Whilst an ETRO is in place comments can be made and are taken into account before any decision is taken to make an ETRO permanent.

2.13. If the trial is successful then the service would seek to make the scheme permanent at the end of the trial period, subject to any adaptations required arising from the learning gathered. A paper will come to Cabinet at the end of the trial period to advise of the outcome and seek a recommendation to remove, implement or adapt the scheme.

2.14. Subject to the success of the trial other areas could be considered for 20mph zones in the future with a view to providing a safer and more attractive environment for active travel modes, such as

<sup>3</sup>The state of the evidence on 20mph speed limits with regards to road safety, active travel and air pollution impacts A Literature Review of the Evidence. Dr Adrian L Davis FFPH Adrian Davis Associates Consultant on Transport & Health Bristol, UK. August 2018

walking and cycling, as well as provide broader environmental, health and community benefits.

<sup>[2]</sup> Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 (January 2013) [Setting local speed limits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270422/Setting_local_speed_limits_-_GOV.UK_(www.gov.uk).pdf)

### 3. Recommendations

3.1. That Cabinet approves:

1. The proposal to go out to public consultation to implement a pilot 20mph speed limit zone in the study area as shown in Figure 1 above.
2. The receipt of a future report from officers summarising the results of the public consultation exercise with a view to introducing an 18 month pilot 20mph speed limit zone in the study area.
3. The receipt of a future officer's report summarising the results of the pilot 20mph speed limit zone in the study area in the event one is introduced in accordance with 2 above, and recommendation/s for whether or not to roll out other 20mph speed limit zones in other residential or urban settings.

## REPORT

### 4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

#### 4.1. Risk Assessment

- 4.1.1. **Risk:** There may be a level of public concern that the introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone may lead to an increase in vehicle queues at junctions that are already at capacity as well as general congestion both on roads within the 20mph zone and on alternative routes.
- 4.1.2. **Mitigation:** Evidence shows that reducing driver speeds across an area promotes smoother driving thereby reducing congestion. This can be compared to when a 20mph speed limit is introduced to a single street or road – this approach often results in traffic displacement onto alternative routes. However, when a 20mph speed limit is introduced area-wide, it reduces the risk of displacing motorised traffic onto other local roads. In saying this, although the introduction of a 20mph speed limit is unlikely to increase, it may create some initial displacement of traffic onto those roads which drivers and satellite navigation tools ascertain to be the shortest route.

Any increase in vehicle volumes could be mitigated through a wider roll-out of the 20mph speed limit to adjacent areas or 'city-wide' as evidence suggests that this approach often results in traffic 'evaporation' whereby people shift modes from the private car to active travel.

- 4.1.3. **Risk:** The introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone may result in increased cycle and pedestrian casualties because there will potentially be more active users using the network, including sharing the carriageway with vehicular traffic.
- 4.1.4. **Mitigation:** The critical mass effect suggests that more cyclists and pedestrians will reduce the risk to all because motorists will be more aware of them. In addition, collisions that do occur will be of lower speed and recent estimates suggest that at 20 mph there is a 1.5% risk of death, compared with 5% at 30 mph.
- 4.1.5. **Risk:** A lack of resources within West Mercia Police means that it may be challenging to undertake enforcement of the 20mph speed limit zones which may result in an ineffective scheme.
- 4.1.6. **Mitigation:** Although the enforcement of a 20mph speed limit zones may be challenging in the short-term, the need for proactive enforcement should be reduced over the longer term with the use of a behavioural change campaign, the adoption of more 20mph speed zones nation-wide and the introduction of Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) technology.
- 4.1.7. **Risk:** Inadequate resources are allocated to deliver the community behavioural change strategies or other soft measures or elements in the scheme delivery that "win hearts and minds".
- 4.1.8. **Mitigation:** Resources are already in place through West Mercia Police and Council's Road Safety services to deliver supporting soft measures, including Community Speedwatch, Bikeability training and child pedestrian training. These initiatives, combined with measures such as repeater signs and VAS, can have a short-term influence on driver behaviour. For influence to be maintained however, the evidence is that 'signed-only' 20mph speed limits need to be supported by enforcement, physical measures and other reinforcing measures. Council is also currently looking to recruit a member of staff specialised in community behavioural change techniques who will lead the proposed behavioural change campaign.

However, there is also evidence to support the idea that community engagement and empowerment – for example through community and voluntary sector initiatives such as DIY Streets and Playing Out – can lead to radical and lasting improvements in the

physical and social street or neighbourhood environment<sup>3</sup>. If the recommendation to introduce the proposed Copthorne and Porthill 20mph Speed Limit Zone is approved by Cabinet, further investigation can be undertaken into synergising the supporting community behavioural change elements of the project with relevant initiatives through community and voluntary sector organisations

## 5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The proposed 20mph speed limit zone scheme would be 100% funded from the DfT Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 and is estimated to cost approximately £20,000 - £30,000.
- 5.2. The implementation of additional signs would place a requirement on the Authority to maintain them to an acceptable standard and would consequently incur additional ongoing revenue costs

## 6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. The proposed Copthorne and Porthill 20mph Speed Limit Zone will likely have numerous positive outcomes in terms of climate change and air quality through reducing speeds across the area and enabling modal shift from vehicular modes to active modes of transport. Expected outcomes include:

### 6.1.1. **Reduced energy and fuel consumption:**

- (a) Driving at lower speeds is proven to reduce fuel consumption. The Department for Transport states driving more slowly at a steady pace will save fuel and reduce pollution, unless an unnecessarily low gear is used.<sup>4</sup> The provision of measures such as VAS signage that display a driver's current speed will assist in reducing unnecessary accelerations thereby lowering emissions of air pollutants. One study on 30 km/h zones (18.64mph) showed a 12% reduction in fuel consumption, which suggests that 20mph limits without measures such as traffic humps (which cause vehicles to decelerate and accelerate) can cut residential CO2 emissions by 12%<sup>5</sup>.
- (b) Mode shift to active transport is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing transport emissions and reduced

<sup>3</sup>The state of the evidence on 20mph speed limits with regards to road safety, active travel and air pollution impacts A

Literature Review of the Evidence. Dr Adrian L Davis FFPH Adrian Davis Associates Consultant on Transport & Health Bristol, UK. August 2018

[enty for Worthing \(20splentyforworthing.org.uk\)](http://20splentyforworthing.org.uk)

<sup>5</sup> Transform Research and Communication (TRC), 2017. 20mph default speed limits for residential areas, Edinburgh: Transform Scotland.

speeds in urban areas supports a modal shift to walking and cycling. In 2017, greenhouse gas emissions (GHG emissions) from road transport made up around a fifth of the UK's total GHG emissions<sup>6</sup>. Modal shift to active modes, alongside the adoption of low and no emission cars and vans is key as the UK looks to move towards the government's target of adopting net zero emissions by 2050.

## 7. Background

- 7.1. The proposed 20mph speed limit zone for Porthill and Copthorne forms part of the revised approach that came about as a result of the Porthill and Copthorne Liveable Neighbourhoods engagement exercise. The proposed Liveable Neighbourhoods formed the cornerstone of the wider Bicton to Shrewsbury Active Travel Corridor project which is being core funded by the DfT's Active Travel Fund 2 grant. The aim of this project is to provide for improved active travel infrastructure between both existing and proposed residential areas to the west of Shrewsbury (where there is a high level of development) to Shrewsbury Town Centre.
- 7.2 A large amount of support for a 20mph speed limit zone for the study area was gathered through the Porthill and Copthorne Liveable Neighbourhoods engagement exercise. 83 per cent of Survey One respondents and 85 per cent of Survey Two respondents supported this measure. This was the highest level of support received out of all the proposed measures put forward. Appendix 3 provides further detail on the wider Bicton to Shrewsbury Active Travel Corridor project, the DfT's Active Travel Fund 2 grant and the Porthill and the outcomes of the Copthorne Liveable Neighbourhoods engagement exercise.

## 8. Additional Information

- 8.1. As noted in section 2.4, there is overwhelming evidence that lower speeds result in fewer collisions and a reduced severity of injuries; and consistent evidence that casualties are reduced when 20mph speed limit zones are introduced. Appendix 4 provides an overview of where road traffic accidents have occurred in the study area over the last five years (November 2016 – November 2021) as well as the type of accident. If an 18-month pilot 20mph speed limit zone in the study area was introduced, it will be important for Council officers to work with West Mercia Police to proactively lower speeds in the area, not just for accident reduction reasons but also in the interests of overall community safety and cohesion. Appendix 4 contains a brief synopsis of how other Police forces around the UK proactive 'police' 20mph speed limit zones.

<sup>6</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS), [Road transport and air emissions - Office for National Statistics](#)



- 8.2. Lowering traffic speeds in urban areas should be seen as a behaviour change project and it is important that local communities have a part to play in both designing and delivering 20mph area zones. Behaviour change projects should be based on building social unacceptability for speeding in residential areas, and can be backed up by community speed enforcement campaigns and proactive policing (see section 8.1)
- 8.3. Although the enforcement of 20mph speed limit zones may be challenging in the short-term, the need for proactive police enforcement should also be reduced over the longer term with the introduction of Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) technology (see Appendix 5 for further detail).

## 9. Conclusions

- 9.1. Introduction of a pilot 20mph speed limit zone in Porthill and Copthorne, whereby existing 30mph limits are reduced to 20mph via a phased approach of initial 'signs and lines' only, offers a new approach to reduce speeds in the area. This approach has been adopted by some local authorities and is currently being tested by local authorities as a way to increase the uptake of sustainable travel modes and improve the experience of being on neighbourhood streets as well as making healthy travel safer. A 20mph speed limit zone supports the delivery of other Council objectives including health and wellbeing, creating healthy and dynamic communities and contributing to a carbon-zero transport network.
- 9.2 If the recommendations for a pilot 20mph speed limit are approved by Cabinet, the results of the public consultation exercise will be brought back to Cabinet to inform a decision as to whether to implement a pilot 20mph speed limit zone in the study area via an Experimental Traffic Order (see section 2.10) for a period of 18 months. A robust monitoring and evaluation process will be put in place as part of the pilot scheme to ensure all benefits (and disadvantages) are recorded and analysed to inform any future recommendations for the roll-out of 20mph speed limit zones in other areas.

**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)**

Ian Nellins

**Local Member**

Julian Dean (Porthill Ward Member)

Rob Wilson (Copthorne Ward Member)

**Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Schedule of locations for 20mph speed limit signage
- Appendix 2: Porthill and Copthorne Study Area Traffic Data
- Appendix 3: Background: Proposed Porthill and Copthorne Liveable Neighbourhood Trials
- Appendix 4: Porthill and Copthorne Study Area Road Safety Data
- Appendix 5: Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA Technology)
- Appendix 6: Survey to Residents
- Appendix 7: Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) Initial Screening Record 2021-2022

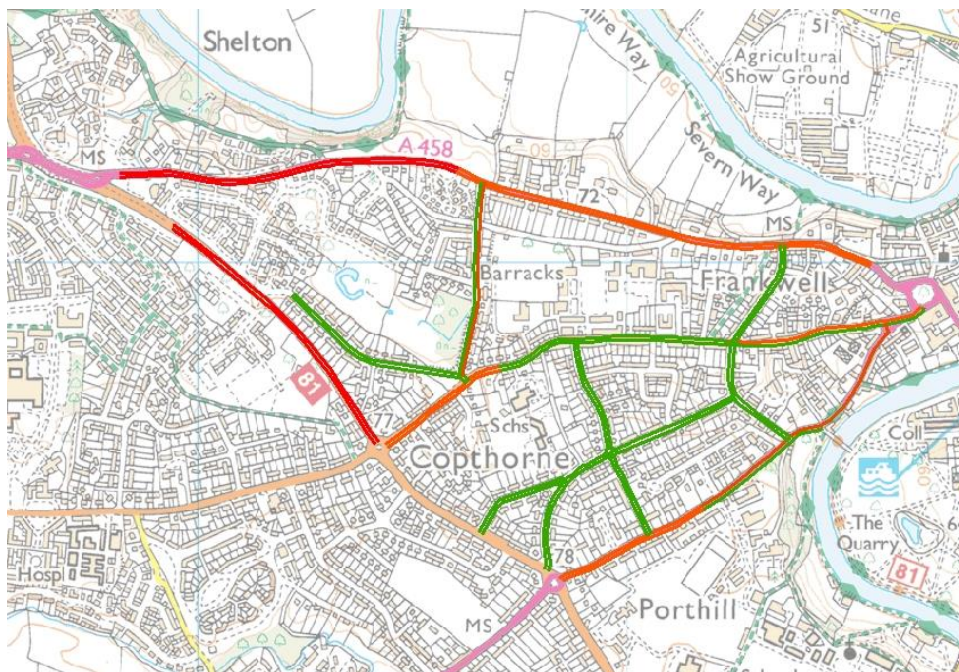
## APPENDIX 1: SCHEDULE OF LOCATIONS FOR 20MPH SPEED LIMIT SIGNAGE

Alverley Close
Aysgarth Road
Barracks Lane
Bugle Close
Cadogan Gardens
Copthorne Crescent
Copthorne Drive
Copthorne Gardens
Copthorne Gate
Copthorne Park
Copthorne Rd (B4386)
Downfield Road
Eldon Drive
Eardley Close
Eastwoods Road
Granville Street
Greenacre Road
Greenhill Ave
Greenways
Hafren Close
Hafren Road
Kelsalls Lane
Lessar Ave
Leyburn Ave
Lindale Court
Pengwern Road
Pengwern Close
Porthill Close
Porthill Drive
Porthill Gardens
Porthill Road
Richmond Drive
Shelton Fields
Sherbourne Road
St George's Court
The Mount (from 55m East of Hafren Road only)
Thornhill Road
Tudor Gate
Westwood Drive
Whitfield Crescent
Willow Place
Woodbank Drive
Woodfield Ave
Woodfield Road

## APPENDIX 2: PORTHILL AND COPTHORNE STUDY AREA TRAFFIC DATA

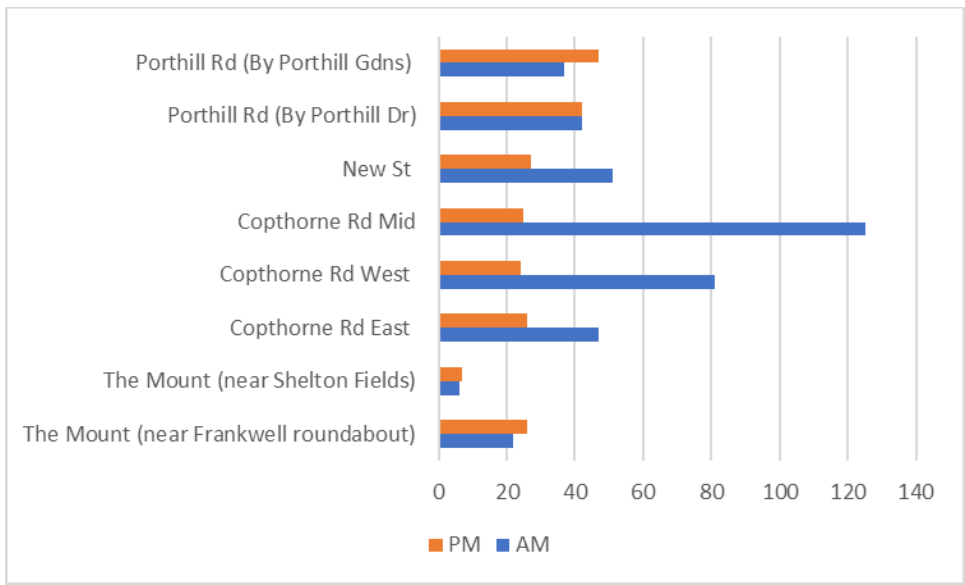
1. The map below (Figure 1), which was created using data from recent baseline traffic surveys, shows those streets where the average daily traffic speeds are low (below 24mph) in green, moderate (between 24mph – 30mph) in orange and high (above 30mph) in red. According to the DfT Guidelines, the green streets wouldn't require any interventions, the orange streets would require the introduction of speed calming measures (such as speed tables, speed humps and chicanes) and the red streets would not be suitable for inclusion within a 20mph speed limit area zone.

**Figure 1: 20mph Speed Limit Zone Study Area - Average Speeds**

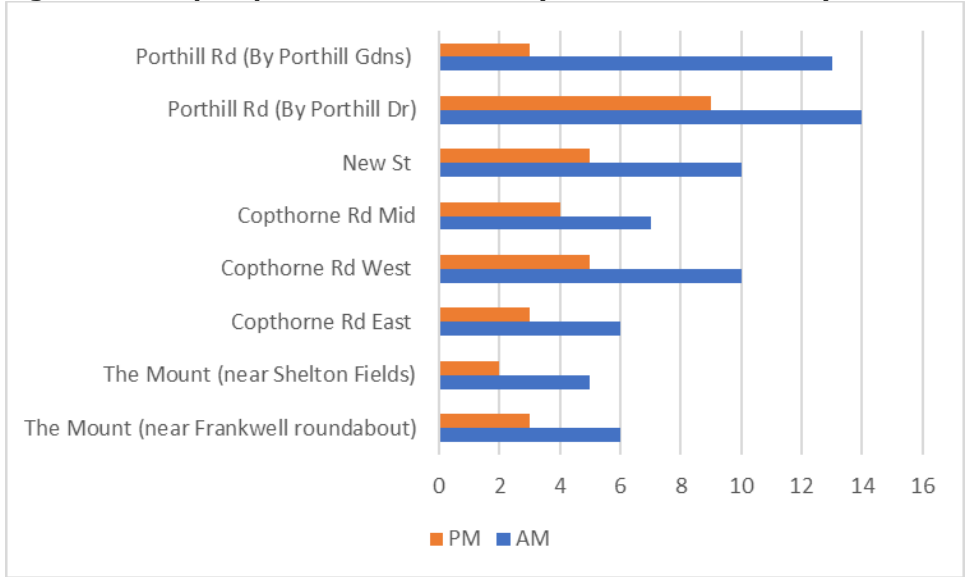


2. Figures 2 and 3 show peak hour pedestrian and cyclist flows on the strategic roads across the study area.

**Figure 2: 20mph Speed Limit Zone Study Area - Peak Hour Pedestrian Flows**



**Figure 3: 20mph Speed Limit Zone Study Area - Peak Hour Cyclist Flows**



### **APPENDIX 3: BACKGROUND – PROPOSED PORTHILL & COPTHORNE LIVEABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD TRIALS**

1. In May 2020, the government launched a £2billion package to create a new era for cycling and walking in the UK. As part of this, a new Active Travel Fund was released. Shropshire Council successfully bid for funding from two tranches – the Emergency Active Travel Fund (Tranche 1) and the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2. Tranche 1 supported the provision of temporary schemes to enable social-distancing and encourage walking and cycling as an alternative to public transport during the Covid-19 pandemic and Tranche 2 supported the creation of longer-term schemes including the permanent installation of those Tranche 1 schemes which had received community support. The Council was awarded £86,000 through Tranche 1 in June 2020 and £259,500 through Tranche 2 in November 2020.
2. Council's bid for Tranche 2 funding (submitted in August 2020) was for £1.9M to fund four projects. The majority of this funding was sought to progress the Bicton to Shrewsbury Town Centre Active Travel Corridor project – the aim of which was to provide better connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, through a network of shared-use paths, from Shrewsbury West, where there is a high level of projected growth in residential development, through to the Shrewsbury town centre. Council was awarded just 13% of the total funding requested and were therefore required to work with the DfT to submit a revised proposal. This took a longer amount of time than expected primarily due to a lack of staffing within Council at the time.
3. In May 2021, an Active Travel Manager was appointed whose core role was to submit a revised proposal for Tranche 2 funding. Two proposed 'Liveable Neighbourhood' trials for the Copthorne and Porthill areas (The Copthorne Liveable Neighbourhood Trial (CLiNT) and the Porthill Liveable Neighbourhood Trial (PLiNT) formed the cornerstone of this revised approach along with traffic-calming and additional crossings on Copthorne Rd (B4386) as the connection between the proposed Liveable Neighbourhoods. This revised approach also incorporated the use of Capability funding to progress two feasibility studies for segregated cycle facilities in the area.
4. In October 2021, Council launched a community engagement exercise in the Copthorne and Porthill communities, the core aim of which was to give the local community the opportunity to 'Have their Say' on whether they supported the proposed Liveable Neighbourhoods trials in principle, as well as the individual proposed measures.

5. In line with DfT requirements, Council were required to follow the following 'five-point plan' prior to the implementation of schemes under the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2:
  - Publish detailed consultation plans to show how Councils will consult their communities before funding is released
  - Show 'reasonable evidence' of consultation before schemes can be introduced.
  - Undertake appropriate public opinion surveys before and after implementation.
  - Submit monitoring reports on the implementation of schemes 6-12 months after their opening; and
  - Liaise closely with DfT on these requirements and attend briefing sessions where DfT will communicate the strengthened requirements in more detail.
  
6. An Active Travel webpage which contained detail on the Bicton to Shrewsbury Active Travel Corridor Programme with a focus on the proposed PLiNT and CLiNT as well as a detailed consultation plan was launched on Council's website on October 1, 2021. The Consultation Plan outlined the following phased consultation approach which was to be undertaken for the proposed Tranche 2 schemes:
  - Pre-consultation planning with Local Members
  - Phase 1: Engagement
  - Phase 2: Consultation
  
7. Pre-consultation with Local Ward Members, Julian Dean (Porthill) and Rob Wilson (Copthorne) was undertaken between August and October 2021 to inform the development of the proposed Liveable Neighbourhood trials. The pre-consultation process also included a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify local stakeholders, including schools, businesses, professional road users (such as bus operators and the refuse collection contractor, Veolia), statutory consultees (including emergency services) and disability groups. These stakeholders were invited to meet with Rose Dovey (Project Manager) and the Local Ward Members prior to the launch of the Phase 1 Engagement to give them the earliest opportunity to be informed of the proposed Liveable Neighbourhood trials and enable them to raise any concerns directly.
  
8. The Phase 1: Engagement exercise was held between 4 October and 1 November 2021, the core aim of which was to give the local community the opportunity to 'Have their Say' on whether they supported the PLiNT and the CLiNT proposals in principle, as well as the individual proposed measures. The community were also encouraged to provide suggestions for alternative measures. All formal feedback was collected through the following two survey portals:

- A Survey Monkey survey (Survey 1) – This was a short survey designed to gather feedback on whether the community supported the proposals or not. This survey received 746 responses.
  - A Common Place survey (Survey 2) – This was a more in-depth survey with a mapping tool showing the boundaries of each area and allowing for interactive location comments (members of the community could review posts, agree and share with social media). This survey received **253** responses.
9. 999 survey responses were received in total. This cannot be viewed as the total number of respondents who took part as some respondents may have chosen to complete both surveys. The majority of respondents to both surveys were Shrewsbury residents with most stating that they live within the Copthorne and Porthill areas (Survey 1 - 83% and Survey 2 – 88%). The results of Survey 1 showed an almost even split between those who supported and those who opposed the proposals. 47.7% of respondents opposed the proposals and 46% of respondents supported the proposals. The results of Survey 2 showed that 59.3% of respondents opposed the proposals and 39.9% of respondents supported the proposals. This demonstrates that overall, more respondents opposed the proposals than supported them.
10. Although the outcome of this engagement exercise was that there was insufficient support for the proposed trials, the surveys indicated a high level of support for a 20mph speed limit zone with 83 per cent of Survey One respondents and 85 per cent of Survey Two respondents supporting this measure. This was the highest level of support received out of all the proposed measures put forward. As a result, a revised approach to the CLiNT and the PLiNT was developed which took into account the into account the following key concerns raised by the community during the Phase 1: Engagement.
- Speed and volume of traffic in the area
  - Safety improvements needed for road and footway users crossing roads
  - Improved environments needed for pedestrians and cyclists
  - Improvements to the 'feel' of the area needed, particularly in regard to reduced traffic and traffic noise.
  - Resident and street parking concerns
11. In December 2021, Council's Active Travel Programme Board (ATPB) reviewed the results of the community engagement exercise. Following that review, it was considered appropriate not to proceed with the Liveable Neighbourhood Trials but instead to put forward a second revised approach for approval by the DfT. The revised approach, consisting of the following projects was approved by DfT at a meeting held in late December 2021:

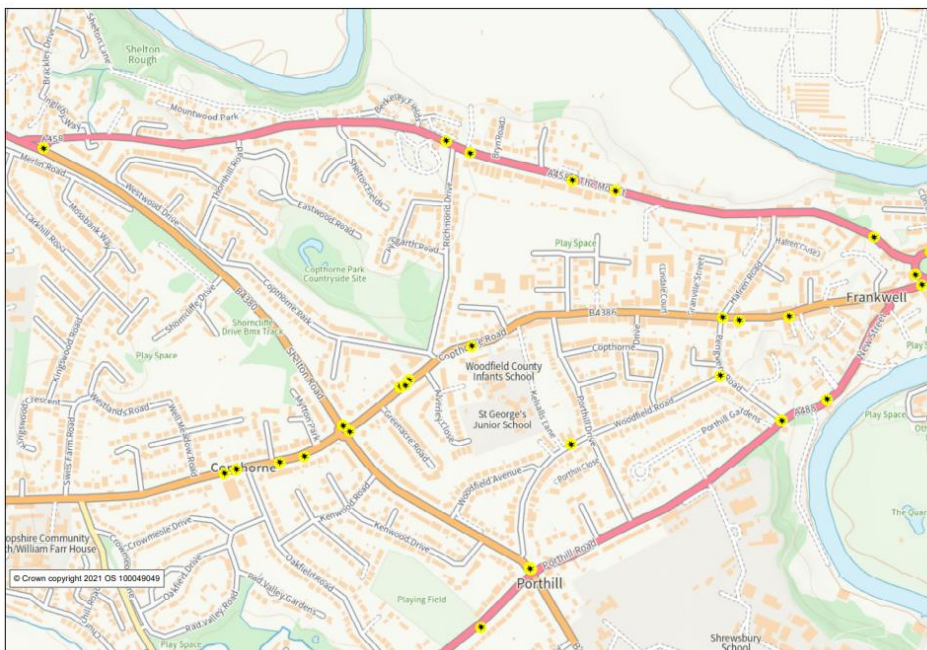


- A 20mph area zone for Porthill and Copthorne
  - Two additional crossings and traffic calming measures for Copthorne Rd
  - School Travel Planning
12. The ATPB suggested that a report should be presented to Cabinet in early 2022 to seek endorsement to go out for public consultation to introduce a proposed pilot 20mph speed limit zone in the ward areas of Copthorne and Porthill. The additional crossings and school travel planning work is currently being progressed in parallel workstreams.

## APPENDIX 4: PORTHILL AND COPTHORNE STUDY AREA ROAD SAFETY DATA

- As noted in section 2.1, There is overwhelming evidence that lower speeds result in fewer collisions and a reduced severity of injuries; and consistent evidence that casualties are reduced when 20mph speed limit zones are introduced. Research shows that even as little as a 1mph reduction in average speed can result in an average 6% reduction in collisions. Figure 3 shows those sites where road traffic accidents have occurred in the study area over the last five years (November 2016 – November 2021).

**Figure 3: 20mph Speed Limit Zone Study Area – Road Traffic Accident Data (2016-21)**



- An overview of Police data on reported road traffic accidents occurring in the study area over the last five years (November 2016 – November 2021) shows:
  - Twenty-five accidents have been reported in the study area resulting in thirty-two casualties. Ten (40%) of these road traffic accidents were classified as 'serious injury crashes' and fifteen (60%) were slight injury crashes.
  - Of the thirty-two casualties, there were 9 pedestrian casualties and 9 cyclist casualties (28% of all casualties respectively).  
**Combined, 56% of all casualties were active travel users**
  - Fourteen accidents (56%) took place at high-risk times i.e during peak hours (08:00 – 09:00 and 15:00 – 18:00) – These fourteen accidents resulted in twenty casualties, six of which were pedestrian casualties (30%) and four of which were cyclists (20%).

3. Multiple factors, rather than one single factor (such as excessive speed) were identified in the Police reports as contributing to these reported road traffic accidents. These factors included driver error, pedestrian/cyclist error, occurrence of a medical episode resulting in loss of control of a vehicle and lack of visibility. Slower moving traffic would most likely have influenced the outcome of many of these accidents either by preventing the occurrence of the accident in the first place or reducing the severity of the accident.
4. Proactive policing is also key to lowering speeds in an area thereby reducing the number and severity of accidents. West Mercia Police policies and practices, in regard to 20mph speed limit zones, are currently in alignment with the DfT Guidance in that 20mph speed limits and zones should be self-enforcing. However, there are police forces around the country that have departed from the national guidance in the interests of overall community safety and cohesion rather than just for casualty reduction reasons, including:
  - **West Midlands Police:** The Traffic Unit recognises that 20mph limits "... are evidently the most important speed limit to our communities and have the largest potential of any limit to positively affect lifestyle choices and reduce the amount of people killed or seriously injured on our roads, so why not enforce them?"
  - **London Metropolitan Police:** The Traffic Unit are increasing their enforcement of 20mph limits which includes use of Community Speedwatch and also Junior Speedwatch using school children to educate drivers found speeding in the proximity of schools.
  - **Avon and Somerset Police:** The Traffic Unit treat 20mph limits in a similar manner to any other speed limit. They publish speed camera locations in advance each week and these regularly include more than fifty 20mph sites out of a total of around 2004 sites. Motorists are given a clear and unambiguous message that 20mph limits are both mandatory and enforced. Most non-compliers receive the option of a Speed Awareness Course or a Fixed Penalty Notice.

## **APPENDIX 5: INTELLIGENT SPEED ASSISTANCE (ISA) TECHNOLOGY**

1. Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) technology uses a speed sign-recognition video camera and/or GPS-linked speed limit data to automatically restrict the speed of the vehicle to the legal limit. ISA systems do not automatically apply the brakes, but simply reduce engine power preventing the vehicle from accelerating past the limit.
2. The European Union agreed in 2019 to make ISA, along with a number of other vehicle safety measures, mandatory on new models of car sold in the EU from May 2022 and on new versions of models currently on the market, from May 2024. The UK's Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) has stated it intends to adopt the EU rules; also, car manufacturers are unlikely to produce different vehicles specifically for the UK market. Over time, vehicles with ISA technology will make up an increasing proportion of the national fleet thereby helping to progressively reduce the amount of proactive enforcement required.

**APPENDIX 6; SURVEY TO RESIDENTS**

PROVIDED AS A SEPARATE PAPER

## APPENDIX 7; EQUALITY, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT (ESHIA)

### Shropshire Council

### Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)

### Initial Screening Record 2021-2022

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

<b>Name of proposed service change</b>
Copthorne and Porthill 20mph Speed Limit Zone
<b>Name of lead officer carrying out the screening</b>
Rose Dovey, Interim Active Travel Manager

#### **Decision, review, and monitoring**

<b>Decision</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Initial (part one) ESHIA Only?	x	
Proceed to Full ESHIA or HIA (part two) Report?		x

*If completion of an initial or Part One assessment is an appropriate and proportionate action at this stage, please use the boxes above. If a Full or Part Two report is required, please move on to full report stage once you have completed this initial screening assessment as a record of the considerations which you have given to this matter.*

<p><b>Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations</b></p> <p>The proposed Copthorne and Porthill 20mph Speed Limit Zone affects all people in the given area, both residents and others who use the area as a through route to access their destination by private vehicle. This may have an impact across a range of Protected Characteristic groupings, particularly those with physical or learning disabilities and their carers, and families with children, including those attending schools in the area.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the potential impact in equality terms will be medium to high positive for the groupings of Age, Disability, and Pregnancy and Maternity, and for the tenth grouping used in Shropshire, of Social Inclusion. This because the 20mph speed limit zone is anticipated to result in safety gains for pedestrians, cyclists and other active modes, including users of mobility scooters, wheelchair users, and people with pushchairs and prams.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the potential impact for the Disability grouping will be low positive in that the potential outcome of the 20mph Speed Limit Zone is to lower traffic speeds resulting in safety gains for those people in the Disability groupings</p>
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who choose to walk, cycle or use other active modes (including mobility scooters) on this corridor.

The proposed 20mph Speed Limit Zone is expected to present the following positive impacts:

### **1. Fewer collisions and reduced severity of collisions and injuries**

There is overwhelming evidence that lower speeds result in fewer collisions and in reduced severity of collisions and injuries. This evidence has built up over more than two decades<sup>7</sup>. From the evidence base, it can be clearly understood that the higher the speed the longer it takes to stop the vehicle and the greater the harm on impact. At the point a car travelling at 20mph car would have stopped, a car travelling at 30mph would still be doing 24mph. Additionally, the risk of being killed is almost 5 times higher in collisions between a car and a pedestrian at 50km/h (31mph) compared to the same type of collisions at 30 km/h (18.6mph)<sup>i</sup> In 2018.

### **2. Increased physical and health outcomes**

Increasing walking and cycling is an important policy goal of the Government who has set a national target for half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030 ([Gear Change – A Bold Vision for Walking and Cycling](#)). Lower traffic speeds will encourage more uptake of active travel modes due to the increased (actual and perceived) safety benefits, convenience and comfort of walking and cycling in the area.

Physical inactivity costs the NHS up to £1 billion each year, with additional indirect costs of £8.2 billion according to a report by the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2014 on the economic benefits of walking and cycling<sup>8</sup>. This report also highlights a link between adult obesity levels and travel behaviour as countries with the highest levels of cycling and walking generally have the lowest obesity rates. The Local Government Association (LGA), in its Growing Cycle Use, report stated that if cycling rates were elevated to London levels across other UK cities, this would avoid at least 34,000 incidences of 8 life-threatening conditions between 2017 and 2040. Regular commuting by bike is also linked to a lower risk of cancer, asthma, diabetes and heart disease<sup>9</sup> compared to other forms of transport.

Increased levels of walking and cycling amongst a community can also have positive mental health outcomes. According to the NHS, physical activity can protect against anxiety and depression, in particular, exercising outdoors has been shown to have additional benefits<sup>10</sup>. Research in the British Medical Journal suggests that exercise can also help reduce stress. Guidance from the UK Chief Medical Officers' on physical activity suggests that 30 minutes of moderate activity per day almost halve the odds of experiencing depression. Additionally, the Gear Change Strategy states that completing 20 minutes of exercise each day cuts the risk of depression by 31% and increases worker productivity.

### **3. Reduced carbon emissions and air pollution**

<sup>7</sup> Welsh 20mph Task Force Group Final Report (July 2020, page 8

<sup>8</sup> Active travel: local authority toolkit - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<sup>9</sup> Active travel: local authority toolkit - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Active travel: local authority toolkit - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

More walking and cycling, as a result of implementing a 20mph speed limit zone in Porthill and Copthorne, will help reduce carbon emissions and air pollution. Sustrans, the national travel charity, estimates that 28,000 to 36,000 early deaths occur each year in the UK due to air pollution worsening heart and lung disease. As more of our short journeys (43% of all urban and town journeys are under 2 miles) are cycled or walked, the carbon and air quality benefits will be complemented by significant improvements in public health and wellbeing<sup>11</sup>

#### **4. Reduced noise**

Evidence for other changes in health impacts resulting from the implementation of a 20mph speed limit zone include likely reductions in noise as motor traffic will be travelling at lower speeds. Research suggests that higher motor vehicle speeds lead to greater annoyance, but more significantly lower speeds and hence reduced noise could result in positive changes in physical and mental health outcomes including lowering hypertension.

#### **5. An increase in independent mobility for children**

In surveys of children's school travel mode repeatedly across the UK the top concern of parents/ guardians is fear of motor traffic<sup>12</sup>. This then leads to the vicious spiral of increased danger as more people drive their children to school – which amplifies health inequalities. Minimising a child's independent transport is associated with substantial loss of physical, mental and social health benefits and can establish habitual sedentary behaviours across the life-course. A 20mph Speed Limit Zone can play an important part in tackling road danger at source which may lead to reducing parents/guardians fear of motor traffic and allowing their children to travel to school by bike or on foot.

The proposed 20mph speed limit zone is anticipated to present the following neutral or negative impacts:

##### **1. Delayed journey times**

Slower traffic speeds across the study area may result in delayed journey times across the area

##### **2. Traffic displacement**

Introduction of the proposed 20mph speed limit zone may result in an increase in traffic flows on some roads. Traffic modelling undertaken has shown that traffic may re-route across the study area onto those roads that offer the quickest and most direct route. This may result in increased exposure to carbon emissions and air pollution for both residents and people travelling on these roads.

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

<sup>11</sup> Active travel: local authority toolkit - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

<sup>12</sup> Welsh 20mph Task Force Group Final Report (July 2020), page 8.



Specific actions proposed to enhance the anticipated positive impacts will focus upon communication of the benefits of implementing a 20mph speed limit zone across a range of potential audiences.

Monitoring of the following potential impacts of implementing the 20mph speed limit zone will be undertaken six-monthly (in accordance with DfT Guidelines) and will be assessed across a longer term (5 –10 year) period

- Average and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds across the study area
- Number of traffic collisions and the severity of collisions
- Carbon emissions and air pollution levels
- Community satisfaction levels
- Numbers of children walking and cycling to school
- Bike ownership and usage levels
- Numbers and frequency of residents walking and cycling for everyday trips
- Noise levels
- Area-wide traffic levels

The proposed public consultation process with residents and key stakeholders will help identify any additional potential negative impacts of the proposed 20mph speed limit zone in terms of equality, social inclusion and health considerations. This feedback, in turn, will help officers to develop mitigation measures.

Additionally, officers will also continue to monitor and review similar 20mph speed limit zones that are in operation across the UK enabling them to build upon the knowledge gained from the research undertaken to develop this report.

This will draw upon shared learning with Oxfordshire CC, Kent CC, and Bristol City Council, as well as learning from approaches by police forces including West Midlands Constabulary. Officers will continue to share learning with local SC councillors and portfolio holder as well as with the local MP, in their complementary roles as community leaders.

### **Associated ESHIAs**

Relevant associated ESHIAs and ESIIAs include those undertaken for pedestrianisation measures during lockdown, as well as those in relation to economic growth initiatives in Shrewsbury.

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

### ***Climate change***

As per the relevant section in the committee report, the proposed Copthorne and Porthill 20mph speed limit zone point will likely have numerous positive outcomes in terms of climate change through encouraging modal shift from vehicular modes to active modes of transport. Expected outcomes include:

**Reduced energy and fuel consumption:** Mode shift to active transport is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing transport emissions. In 2017, greenhouse gas emissions (GHG emissions) from road transport made up around a fifth of the UK's total GHG emissions<sup>11</sup>. Modal shift to active modes, alongside the adoption of low and no emission cars and vans is key as the UK looks to move towards the government's target of adopting net zero emissions by 2050. In order to encourage modal shift to active modes, there needs to be a large-scale provision of safe active travel corridors that connect people to employment and education as well as key services and shopping facilities.

**Renewable energy generation:** This decision doesn't create any opportunities to generate renewable energy.

**Carbon offsetting:** This decision doesn't create any opportunities for carbon off-setting.

**Climate change adaption:** This decision doesn't create any opportunities for climate change adaption.

**Economic and societal/wider community:**

Streets that enable more walking and cycling produce more cohesive and safe communities for people to live, work and socialise in. The proposed 20mph speed limit zone will help enhance the liveability of the Copthorne and Porthill area by reducing the domination of vehicular traffic in the area which will encourage both individuals and families to walk and cycle both for leisure and for transport purposes and also to 'dwell' in the area. This, in turn, means there is enhanced surveillance of the area thereby reducing the likelihood of crime. More pedestrians and cyclists on streets may also encourage motorists to be more vigilant and adhere to lower speed limits as they will expect to encounter more pedestrians and cyclists.


The proposed 20mph speed limit zone will also provide enhanced access to local shops and facilities by foot or cycle thereby encouraging the local community to visit local shops and services rather than drive to shops further afield. This, in turn, provides an economic benefit for the community as active travel improvements can lead to an increase in shopping footfall, increased spend and increased frequency of return visits.

Increased levels of active travel in the community may lead to the longer-term benefit of reducing road congestion, particularly at peak times, leading to increased productivity and improved movement of goods and services. Sustrans estimated that congestion costs £10 billion per year in 2009 in urban areas, and that this cost could rise to £22 billion by 2025<sup>13</sup>.

**Scrutiny at Part One screening stage**

People involved	Signatures	Date
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<sup>13</sup> Active travel: local authority toolkit - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Lead officer carrying out the screening	Rose Dovey	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2022
Any internal service area support*		
Any external support** <b>Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist</b>		29 <sup>th</sup> April 2022

\*This refers to other officers within the service area

\*\*This refers to support external to the service but within the Council, e.g., the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, the Feedback and Insight Team, performance data specialists, Climate Change specialists, and Public Health colleagues

### Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer's name	Rose Dovey	2 May 2022
Accountable officer's name		

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

### B. Detailed Screening Assessment

#### Aims of the service change and description

The purpose of this Cabinet report is to seek Cabinet's endorsement to go out to public consultation to implement a pilot 20mph speed limit zone in the ward areas of Copthorne and Porthill (Shrewsbury) known in this report as 'the study area'. The aim of the pilot 20mph speed limit zone would be to establish the best methodology for the roll-out of 20mph speed limit zones in other areas.

This report explains how implementing area-wide 20mph speed limit zones can provide a safer and more attractive environment for active modes as well as provide broader environmental, health and community benefits.

The core aim of implementing a 20mph speed limit zone in Copthorne and Porthill would be to reduce overall traffic speeds in the area closer to 20mph rather than to bring average speeds on all roads in the area down to 20mph or below. This would be implemented via a phased approach with the initial introduction of low-cost measures including signage and road markings and a community behaviour change campaign to encourage drivers over time to drive at an appropriate speed without excessive reliance by the Council on enforcement by the Police. It is envisaged that speeds across the area will be monitored as part of the pilot and will be used to inform whether further engineering measures are required to reduce vehicular speeds at problem sites.

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

The proposed pilot scheme will affect all people in the given area, both residents and others who travel through the study area.

This includes children and their families and carers accessing the two schools (Woodfield Infants School and St George's Junior School) in the study area, as well as teaching and support staff.

All vehicles answering emergency calls will be exempt from the proposed 20mph speed limit zone.

Target groups also include the elected Shropshire Council councillor for the ward, along with Shrewsbury Town Council Councillors and the MP for the town.

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

As part of the 'Liveable' Neighbourhood' trials work, WSP were commissioned to undertake traffic surveys and review and analyse the traffic data. As part of this commission, WSP also performed tests within the SATURN Strategic model (which was built for the North-West Relief Road work) to understand the implications of the changes, including a 20mph speed limit zone, to the highway network on traffic flows. The following traffic surveys were undertaken in the study area during November and December 2021.

- Manual Classified Counts (MCCs)
- Queue surveys.
- Automatic Traffic Counts (ATCs) including pedestrian and cyclist counts via camera

A thorough evidence review has been undertaken to inform the screening of the service change. Evidence reviewed included:

- An analysis of other local authorities' 20mph speed limit zone policies and public-facing reports and reviews.
- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), *Road Safety Factsheet: 20mph Zones and Speed Limits Factsheet* (November 2020)
- Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 (January 2013) [Setting local speed limits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Office for National Statistics (ONS), [Road transport and air emissions - Office for National Statistics](#)
- Welsh Government *20mph Task Force Group Final Report* (July 2020)
- ADEPT Speed Management Workshop – *20mph Speed Limits, Recent Developments*, Phil Jones (Phil Jones Associates) (14 January 2022)
- *Quantifying the effectiveness of 20mph speed limits in urban and rural areas*, Dr Adrian Davis, Professor of Transport and Health (Transport Research Institute, Edinburgh Napier University)

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

A 20mph speed limit zone for the study area was put forward as part of the proposed Liveable Neighbourhood Trials Community Engagement Exercise undertaken in late 2021. It received the most support (up to 85%) out of all the proposed measures the community were asked to provide feedback on.

This Cabinet report outlines the need for specific consultation on the proposed 20mph speed limit zone with the community. The initial consultation will focus on the benefits of introducing a pilot 20mph speed limit zone and building support and awareness as well as educating the community to help overcome doubts as to its effectiveness. Core messages can be themed to include community benefits, a sense of place, health and wellbeing as well as road safety. Intended audiences and target groups include:

- Residents
- Key stakeholders (for example bus companies, waste and refuse collection, emergency services)
- Schools - including students, staff and parents/carers
- Businesses
- Disability groups
- Church groups

If the results of the consultation exercise establish that there is a desire in the community to introduce a 20mph speed limit zone, an area-wide behavioural change campaign will be developed and launched into the community alongside the implementation of signage, lining and low-cost speed management measures (via a Experimental Traffic Order).

### **Initial equality impact assessment by grouping (Initial health impact assessment is included below)**

**A. Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through stating this in the relevant column.**

**B. Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.**

<b>Protected Characteristic groupings and other groupings 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, negative, or neutral impact (please specify)</b> <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
<u>Age</u> (please include children, young people, young people leaving care, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group e.g., a child or young person for whom there are safeguarding concerns e.g., an older person with disability)			X	
<u>Disability</u>			X	

(please include mental health conditions and syndromes; hidden disabilities including autism and Crohn's disease; physical and sensory disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; and HIV)				
<b>Gender re-assignment</b> (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Neutral
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Neutral
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			X	
<b>Race</b> (please include ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, Gypsy, Traveller)				Neutral
<b>Religion and belief</b> (please include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Nonconformists; Rastafarianism; Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				Neutral
<b>Sex</b> (this can also be viewed as relating to gender. Please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Neutral
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				Neutral
<b>Other: Social Inclusion</b> (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; households in poverty; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable; people with health inequalities; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; veterans and serving members of the armed forces and their families)			X	

### **Initial health and wellbeing impact assessment by category**

**A. Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have with regard to health and wellbeing, through stating this in the relevant column.**

**B. Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.**

<b>Health and wellbeing: individuals and communities in Shropshire</b>	<b>High negative impact</b> <i>Part Two HIA required</i>	<b>High positive impact</b>	<b>Medium positive or negative impact</b>	<b>Low positive negative or neutral impact (please specify)</b>
<b>Will the proposal have a <i>direct impact</i> on an individual's health, mental health and wellbeing?</b> For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation? .			X medium positive: improvements to perceived safety, road safety and community cohesion.	
<b>Will the proposal <i>indirectly impact</i> an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</b> For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking? .			X medium positive: improved opportunities for safer walking and cycling	
<b>Will the policy have a <i>direct impact</i> on the community - social, economic and environmental living conditions that would impact health?</b> For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, employment opportunities, availability of green space or climate change mitigation? .			X medium positive: improved opportunities for safer walking and cycling	
<b>Will there be a likely change in <i>demand</i> for or access to health and social care services?</b> For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health, Local Authority services including Social Services? .				X neutral

**Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations including climate change and economic or societal impacts**

In terms of **climate change**, a range of mitigation measures could contribute towards improving the health and well-being of Shropshire's residents by facilitating more walking and cycling, in response to the improving perceived safety, and by facilitating the increased use of more sustainable and active modes of transport that can help people to become fitter and healthier.

In terms of **Human Rights**, the proposed Copthorne and Porthill 20mph speed limit zone is likely to be most relevant to Article 2 of the Human Rights Act– The Right to Life. The presence of a 20mph speed limit zone will be likely to have a favourable impact on the likelihood of injury crashes occurring, particularly injury crashes involving pedestrians and motor vehicles and cyclists and motor vehicles (see section 4.1.4).

## **Guidance Notes**

### **1. Legal Context**

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. It is up to us as an authority to decide what form our equality impact assessment may take. By way of illustration, some local authorities focus more overtly upon human rights; some include safeguarding. It is about what is considered to be needed in a local authority's area, in line with local factors such as demography and strategic objectives as well as with the national legislative imperatives.

Carrying out these impact assessments helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes.

These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

These screening assessments for any proposed service change go to Cabinet as part of the committee report, or occasionally direct to Full Council, unless they are ones to do with Licensing, in which case they go to Strategic Licensing Committee.

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

These screening assessments are recommended to be undertaken at timely points in the development and implementation of the proposed service change.

For example, an ESHIA would be a recommended course of action before a consultation. This would draw upon the evidence available at that time, and identify



the target audiences, and assess at that initial stage what the likely impact of the service change could be across the Protected Characteristic groupings and our tenth category of Social Inclusion. This ESHIA would set out intended actions to engage with the groupings, particularly those who are historically less likely to engage in public consultation eg young people, as otherwise we would not know their specific needs.

A second ESHIA would then be carried out after the consultation, to say what the feedback was, to set out changes proposed as a result of the feedback, and to say where responses were low and what the plans are to engage with groupings who did not really respond. This ESHIA would also draw more upon actions to review impacts in order to mitigate the negative and accentuate the positive. Examples of this approach include the Great Outdoors Strategy, and the Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021

Meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty through carrying out these ESHIAs is very much about using them as an opportunity to demonstrate ongoing engagement across groupings and to thus visibly show we are taking what is called due regard of the needs of people in protected characteristic groupings

If the screening indicates that there are likely to be significant negative impacts for groupings within the community, the service area would need to carry out a full report, or Part Two assessment. This will enable more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion.

In practice, Part Two or Full Screening Assessments have only been recommended twice since 2014, as the ongoing mitigation of negative equality impacts should serve to keep them below the threshold for triggering a Full Screening Assessment. The expectation is that Full Screening Assessments in regard to Health Impacts may occasionally need to be undertaken, but this would be very much the exception rather than the rule.

## **2. Council Wide and Service Area Policy and Practice on Equality, Social Inclusion and Health**

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

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

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

- What evidence you have drawn upon to help you to recommend a strategy or policy or a course of action to Cabinet.
- What target groups and audiences you have worked with to date.

- What actions you will take in order to mitigate any likely negative impact upon a group or groupings, and enhance any positive effects for a group or groupings; and
- What actions you are planning to review the impact of your planned service change.

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

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people or households that we may describe as vulnerable.

Examples could be households on low incomes or people for whom there are safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, e.g., Age. Another specific vulnerable grouping is veterans and serving members of the Armed Forces, who face particular challenges with regard to access to Health, to Education, and to Housing.

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

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

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

*Carry out an ESHIA:*

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

For example, there may be a planned change to a leisure facility. This gives you the chance to look at things like flexible changing room provision, which will maximise

positive impacts for everyone. A specific grouping that would benefit would be people undergoing gender reassignment

*Carry out an equality and social inclusion approach:*

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

For example, you may be involved in commissioning a production to tour schools or appear at a local venue, whether a community hall or somewhere like Theatre Severn. The production company should be made aware of our equality policies and our expectation that they will seek to avoid promotion of potentially negative stereotypes. Specific groupings that could be affected include: Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. There is positive impact to be gained from positive portrayals and use of appropriate and respectful language in regard to these groupings in particular.

### **3. Council wide and service area policy and practice on health and wellbeing**

This is a relatively new area to record within our overall assessments of impacts, for individual and for communities, and as such we are asking service area leads to consider health and wellbeing impacts, much as they have been doing during 2020-2021, and to look at these in the context of direct and indirect impacts for individuals and for communities. A better understanding across the Council of these impacts will also better enable the Public Health colleagues to prioritise activities to reduce health inequalities in ways that are evidence based and that link effectively with equality impact considerations and climate change mitigation.

### **Health in All Policies – Health Impact Assessment**

Health in All Policies is an upstream approach for health and wellbeing promotion and prevention, and to reduce health inequalities. The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the supporting mechanism

- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the technical name for a common-sense idea. It is a process that considers the wider effects of local policies, strategies and initiatives and how they, in turn, may affect people's health and wellbeing.
- Health Impact Assessment is a means of assessing both the positive and negative health impacts of a policy. It is also a means of developing good evidence-based policy and strategy using a structured process to review the impact.

- A Health Impact Assessment seeks to determine how to maximise health benefits and reduce health inequalities. It identifies any unintended health consequences. These consequences may support policy and strategy or may lead to suggestions for improvements.
- An agreed framework will set out a clear pathway through which a policy or strategy can be assessed and impacts with outcomes identified. It also sets out the support mechanisms for maximising health benefits.

The embedding of a Health in All Policies approach will support Shropshire Council through evidence-based practice and a whole systems approach, in achieving our corporate and partnership strategic priorities. This will assist the Council and partners in promoting, enabling and sustaining the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities whilst reducing health inequalities.

### **Individuals**

#### **Will the proposal have a *direct impact* on health, mental health and wellbeing?**

For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?

Will the proposal directly affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?

This could include the following: their ability to be physically active e.g., being able to use a cycle route; to access food more easily; to change lifestyle in ways that are of positive impact for their health.

An example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g., green highways), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage. and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve lives.

#### **Will the proposal *indirectly impact* an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?**

This could include the following: their ability to access local facilities e.g., to access food more easily, or to access a means of mobility to local services and amenities? (e.g. change to bus route)

Similarly to the above, an example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g. pedestrianisation of town centres), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage, and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve their health and well being.

### **Communities**

Will the proposal directly or indirectly affect the physical health, mental health, and wellbeing of the wider community?

A *direct impact* could include either the causing of ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation, or the promotion of better health.

An example of this could be that safer walking and cycling routes could help the wider community, as more people across groupings may be encouraged to walk more, and as there will be reductions in emission leading to better air quality.

An *indirect impact* could mean that a service change could indirectly affect living and working conditions and therefore the health and well being of the wider community.

An example of this could be: an increase in the availability of warm homes would improve the quality of the housing offer in Shropshire and reduce the costs for households of having a warm home in Shropshire. Often a health promoting approach also supports our agenda to reduce the level of Carbon Dioxide emissions and to reduce the impact of climate change.

Please record whether at this stage you consider the proposed service change to have a direct or an indirect impact upon communities.

### **Demand**

**Will there be a change in demand for or access to health, local authority and social care services?**

For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?

An example of this could be: a new housing development in an area would affect demand for primary care and local authority facilities and services in that location and surrounding areas. If the housing development does not factor in consideration of availability of green space and safety within the public realm, further down the line there could be an increased demand upon health and social care services as a result of the lack of opportunities for physical recreation, and reluctance of some groupings to venture outside if they do not perceive it to be safe.

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

***For further guidance on public health policy considerations: please contact Amanda Cheeseman Development Officer in Public Health, via telephone 01743 253164 or email [amanda.cheeseman@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.cheeseman@shropshire.gov.uk)***

<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS), Road transport and air emissions - Office for National Statistics

<sup>i</sup> International Transport Forum/OECD, 2018. Speed and Crash Risk. Paris: OECD [www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/speed-crash-risk.pdf](http://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/speed-crash-risk.pdf) accessed 18th July 2018.

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1. Are you a Shrewsbury resident?

- Yes
- No

2. What is your postcode (Important note: this will be used for mapping where survey respondents are from and won't be used to identify you for any other purpose).

3. For what reason do you visit Cophthorne/Porthill (including Cophthorne Rd)? Please choose any/all that apply.

- I am a resident
- I commute through the suburb
- To go to school
- To see friends and family
- I don't visit Cophthorne
- Other (please specify)

4. Approximately how often, if at all, do you use any of the following to get about?

	Daily	2-3 times a week	Weekly	Monthly	Less frequently	Never
Walking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cycling (commuting to/from work/school)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cycling (leisure/fitness)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Car/van	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Motorcycle/moped	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taxi/mini-cab	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Train	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community transport/flexible bus services eg Dial-a-Ride	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Park & ride	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





## Cycle use

5. Do you personally own, or have access to, a bicycle or electric powered cycle that is in good enough condition for riding? Please don't count fixed exercise bikes.

- Own a bike/e-bike
- Have access to a bike/e-bike owned by someone else
- Neither

6. Do you currently cycle in Copthorne/Porthill?

- Yes
- No

## Cycle use

7. How frequently do you use a bike in the Copthorne/Porthill area?

- At least once each day
- Less than once a day but at least 3 times a week
- Once or twice a fortnight
- A few times a month
- Once a month
- Once or twice every six months
- Once or twice a year
- Less than that or never

8. For what purpose are the journeys you mostly make by bicycle to/from or within the Porthill/Copthorne area?

- To or from work
- To or from school, college or adult education
- To or from the shops
- To accompany children or other people
- To or from a leisure/sports activity
- Simply for pleasure
- For exercise or health reasons, not to anywhere in particular
- Other (please specify)

9. What are your main concerns about making journeys by bicycle to/from or within the Porthill/Copthorne area? Please choose any/all that apply.

- Easier/quicker to go by car or public transport
- Lack of time/too busy
- Too lazy/can't be bothered
- Too much traffic
- Traffic is too fast
- Personal security concerns
- Poorly maintained road surfaces
- Drivers' attitudes towards cyclists
- Lack of cycle routes
- Nowhere safe to store a bike at home
- Changed jobs/stopped working
- The weather
- Other (please specify)

10. Do you currently walk in Porthill/Copthorne

Yes

No, never

## Walking in Porthill/Copthorne

11. Thinking about the previous question, how often do you walk to your destination, where the walk takes ten minutes or longer?

- Every day
- More than twice a week, but not every day
- Once or twice a week
- Once or twice a month
- Once or twice every six months
- Once or twice a year
- Less than once a year
- Never

12. For what purpose are the journeys you mostly make when you walk to/from the Porthill/Copthorne area?

- To or from work
- To or from school, college or adult education
- To or from the shops
- To accompany children or other people
- To or from a leisure/sports activity
- Simply for pleasure
- For exercise for health reasons, not to anywhere in particular
- Other (please specify)

13. What are your main concerns about making journeys on foot to/from and within the Porthill/Copthorne area? Choose any/all that apply.

- Easier/quicker to go by car or public transport
- Lack of time/too busy
- Too lazy/cannot be bothered
- Too much traffic
- Traffic is too fast
- Personal security concerns
- Poor surfacing and/or drainage of footways
- Poorly maintained road surfaces
- Lack of crossing points/dropped kerbs or inadequate 'green man' time
- Drivers attitudes
- Changed jobs/stopped working
- The weather
- Other (please specify)

14. Are you mobility impaired?

- Yes
- No

15. If you are mobility and/or visually impaired eg use a wheelchair/mobility scooter, what are your main concerns about making journeys within as well as to/from the Porthill/Copthorne area? Please choose any/all that apply.

- Narrow/obstructed footways
- Poor surfacing and/or drainage of footways
- Poorly maintained road surfaces
- Lack of crossing points/dropped kerbs or inadequate 'green man' time
- Easier/quicker to go by car or public transport
- Too much traffic
- Traffic is too fast
- Inconsiderate behaviour from other users
- Other (please specify)

16. Please add any additional comments on mobility/accessibility concerns here if you wish...

## Liveable neighbourhoods

### What is a 'liveable neighbourhood'?

Many residential areas are used by through traffic which creates noise, air pollution and road safety concerns for residents, pedestrians and cyclists. A liveable neighbourhood is a simple and effective way to cut traffic flow through a neighbourhood's streets without losing access to homes and businesses. Liveable Neighbourhoods use filters that allow people walking and cycling access while preventing cars and other motor vehicles passing through. Filters can simply be bollards or planters placed across one end of a road, or take the form of attractive parklets for residents to use to relax and socialise. Some filters, called bus gates, can allow through local buses. These are enforced by the use of automated number plate recognition (ANPR) technology that can detect and penalise entry by unauthorised vehicles.

Streets that were once noisy, polluted and dangerous can become safe and pleasant places where people can stroll and relax, children can play and businesses can thrive.

17. To what extent do you support or oppose a liveable neighbourhood scheme for the area?

- Strongly oppose
- Tend to oppose
- No opinion/neutral
- Tend to support
- Strongly support

Please provide any other comments to explain your response...

18. Do you support or oppose the following liveable neighbourhood measures?

	Support	Oppose	Don't know/know opinion
Traffic filters (bollards)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traffic filters (planter boxes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pocket parks or parklets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bus gates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20mph zones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)



19. Please provide additional comments to explain your response...

20. Any other comments generally on liveable neighbourhoods?

## Demographic information

21. Are you...

- Male?
- Female?
- Other?
- Prefer not to say

22. Are you aged...

- Under 15?
- 16-24?
- 25-34?
- 35-44?
- 45-54?
- 55-64?
- 65-74?
- 75-84?
- 85+?
- Prefer not to say

23. Your household (A household refers to one person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area). Including yourself, how many individuals aged 16 or over live in your household? Please select one option.

- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-6
- 7 or more
- Prefer not to say

24. How many children aged 15 or under live in your household?

- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-6
- 7 or more
- Prefer not to say

25. Employment - do you...

- Work full time?
- Work part time?
- Not work (unemployed, retired, student, other)
- Prefer not to say

26. Household income - into which of the following bands does your annual household income fall, before tax and other deductions, per YEAR?

- £6,499 or less
- £6,500 to £9,499
- £9,500 to £16,105
- £16,106 to £24,999
- £25,000 to £39,999
- £40,000 to £59,999
- £60,000 to £74,999
- £75,000 and over
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

**Privacy statement**

The information you've provided will be used by Shropshire Council for the purposes of the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 Engagement purposes and to inform the planning and policy work undertaken by Shropshire Council's Place Directorate. We'll only publish anonymised responses, parts of responses, or a summarised version of responses and will ensure individual survey respondents can't be identified. Your response will be stored electronically and kept for five years, in line with Shropshire Council's Retention Schedule.

We won't share your information with any other external third parties. Your information will be held securely, and if shared it will be shared securely.

We work to comply with data protection laws concerning the protection of personal information, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For more information on how information is held by Shropshire Council and your rights to gain access to the information we hold on you, please see [our corporate privacy policy](#).

**Thank you for completing this survey!**



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Cabinet
8 <sup>th</sup> June 2022

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

## **ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY 2022-2027**

**Responsible Officer** Tracy Darke, Assistant Director Economy & Place  
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### **1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 The Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire (EGS) has been refreshed for 2022-2027 across 3 strategic themes: supporting local businesses, strategic locations and employment and skills. Following engagement with businesses, stakeholders and partners, Cabinet approval will precede public consultation.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 The development of the draft Economic Growth Strategy is the outcome of ongoing collaborative work between Shropshire Council and the Economic Taskforce, Shropshire business community, along with partners and key stakeholders. This is a strategy for the County which is co-owned by our business community and will be delivered in partnership for the economic prosperity of Shropshire.
- 2.2 The development of a draft EGS has built upon the Council's and partners response to the Covid 19 pandemic and the impacts of Brexit. The Council established an Economic Taskforce with the Shropshire business community along with partners and key stakeholders to address the priorities and issues facing Shropshire's economy. An outcome of this was to review and refresh the previous EGS for Shropshire to reflect the impacts, changes, and approach to the short-, medium- and long-term prosperity of the County. The Economic Taskforce has helped to shape and guide the development and progress of the strategy to date and the approach has been collaborative.

- 2.3 This report outlines the work undertaken to date, provides details of the stakeholder engagement work and recommends the proposed public consultation that will be undertaken over a period of six weeks.
- 2.4 The draft EGS to be consulted on sets out the key principles of the Strategy, what's next for Shropshire, mission statements, vision, core values, strategic themes, proposed governance, resourcing, impact, and action plan headlines. In so doing, it links very clearly, not only with the recently approved Shropshire Plan, which is the council's own 'corporate plan', but also with the Council's Target Operating Model (TOM), particularly with regard to Commissioning and to Digital Connectivity and uptake/usage. The Shropshire Plan priorities include specific focus on economic growth, housing, infrastructure, and enabling cohesive and sustainable communities in both more rural, and more urban, areas of the county. Place shaping is a central feature of the plan, recognising that the benefits arising from this work reach into enabling improved health and wellbeing and protecting and enhancing the environment. These links will be further reinforced in the development of the action plan for this strategy.
- 2.5 Following consultation, the outcome will inform the final version of the EGS 2022-2027 and will be presented to Council for endorsement. This will guide future activities in line with the EGS vision and aims and will be used to direct funding and support to deliver the EGS.
- 2.6 The proposed Governance approach will look to ensure oversight and collective ownership of the strategy and will be tested with partners to provide the structure to develop an action plan that will sit across all the partners and stakeholders. The Economic Taskforce has been driving forward the EGS to date and this will look to evolve into a Shropshire Economic Partnership. This will ensure that the EGS is collectively owned both internally and externally, ensuring that the outcomes and outputs for the EGS are effectively monitored, reviewed and progress is tracked.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 1) Cabinet agrees the draft Economic Growth Strategy 2022-2027 and that a Final Draft be made available for public consultation for a period of six weeks, to commence from the end of June 2022.

- 2) Cabinet agrees that the officers will report the outcome of the consultation back to Council and present the final Economic Growth Strategy 2022-2027 for endorsement.
- 3) Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Economy, Regeneration and Planning, to develop an action plan and appropriate governance with partners to support the Economic Growth Strategy 2022-2027.

## **REPORT**

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

- 4.1 An Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) has been undertaken to incorporate planned consultation as well as make use of equality impact assessments carried out for the previous Economic Growth Strategy and related policy endeavours. A further screening ESHIA is due to then be carried out following the planned consultation on the draft EGS, due to take place from June 2022. This will enable any adjustments in order to minimise perceived negative equality impacts and maximise perceived positive equality impacts arising, in the light of responses received, as well as set out plans for engagement where low responses may have been received from particular groupings.
- 4.2 Undertaking public consultation on the draft EGS will demonstrate that visible efforts are being made to ensure that the EGS reaches a wide audience beyond the partners, stakeholders and businesses that have been engaged through the development of the strategy. By not undertaking public consultation, opportunities could be missed to capture any ideas/feedback which may help to shape the future economic strategy for the County.
- 4.3 The new Economic Growth Strategy 2022 - 2027 (EGS) is anticipated to have a positive impact on business communities and, in consequence, residents across the whole of Shropshire. There are many benefits in terms of equality, diversity and social inclusion associated with a resilient economy such as increased employment opportunity, greater social mobility opportunity, provision of housing, infrastructure benefits, facilities and utilities, climate change considerations and well-being improvements.

- 4.4 Positive impacts would be intended for a variety of intersecting groupings (Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex, and Social Inclusion) through future engagement process and through the delivery of specific projects developed within the Action Plan for the EGS. This would be due to an emphasis within the EGS on developing the County as a better place to live, to do business, to access and to move about in.
- 4.5 Furthermore, there is potential for an increase in the positive impact in equality terms from low to positive, for the groupings of Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation, if efforts are made to engage with faith communities and LGBT communities and with those undergoing gender reassignment.
- 4.6 There is potential for further positive impacts through the adoption of the new Economic Growth Strategy 2022 – 2027, including stimulation of economic development and investment which will provide jobs and improved workspace. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty on the Council, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, the Council will need to ensure that contractors engaged in commercial development are likewise able to demonstrate compliance with PSED duties. In so doing, they will also be expected to adhere to guidance with regard to equity of access to economic opportunities.
- 4.7 It is also anticipated that the EGS will contribute towards improving on Shropshire’s position as one of the healthiest places to live which will positively influence people’s mental and physical wellbeing, while contributing to the people of Shropshire’s prosperity, improvements in prospects and the commitment to responding to the climate emergency.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The costs incurred in the preparation of the review has been met by Government grants to support Brexit and Covid recovery. There are no further financial implications for Shropshire Council in relation to the adoption of the Strategy document.
- 5.2 As the Action Plan is prepared, and subject to the Council’s role being determined in the delivery of those key actions, it will be subject to further assessment, financial appraisal and the Council’s governance and reporting procedures.

## **6. Climate Change Appraisal**



- 6.1 The draft EGS supports the challenge of climate change through clean growth with increased investment in low carbon innovation and industries with a focus on sectors that support the environment and local green job growth.
- 6.2 Key areas of focus for the economic strategy in terms of climate change and aligning to the climate change strategy are:
- Supporting renewable energy development to mitigate business energy costs and build self-sufficiency and resilience;
  - Energy efficiency retrofit measures for existing buildings (both domestic and non-domestic);
  - Supporting local business to identify their current carbon footprint and measures to improve this, to help address client and supply chain requirements
  - Low carbon vehicle fuels (e.g. electric and green hydrogen fuels) to support our key sectors such as agriculture and minerals;
  - Waste, materials and resource management;
  - Land management, carbon capture & storage.
- 6.3 Sustainability has been identified as a core value to be considered across all proposed EGS activities. As the action plan is developed and activities are finalised, these key areas of focus will be explored further with partners and stakeholders to identify key actions and activities, and these will be thoroughly investigated and appraised against the key Climate Change considerations.

## **7. Background**

- 7.1 In January 2021, Cabinet supported the principles of setting out an economic recovery framework which would inform a new Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire 2022-2027 (EGS) (see appendix1) and replace the current Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021.
- 7.2 The EGS is an external facing strategy for Shropshire, which has been co-developed with our business community and will be directed at government, businesses, and investors with the aim of setting out Shropshire's growth opportunities and how to maximise these to create new jobs, employment opportunities to benefit residents and businesses of Shropshire.
- 7.3 The strategy sits under the wider existing Invest in Shropshire and Economic Recovery branding used by the Council and partners. This is reflected in the style and branding of the

document which showcases the reinvigorated Invest in Shropshire branding.

## Structure of the Strategy

- 7.4 A significant amount of work has been undertaken to inform the evidence base, which has helped to develop the core values and themes of the EGS along with a Logic Model framework which maps out the impact that the EGS will be striving to achieve. The development of the emerging EGS is supported by the University Centre Shrewsbury and has been developed in line with the emerging Shropshire Plan and other key strategies to ensure synergies and interdependencies are reflected.
- 7.5 The four Strategic Objectives of the Shropshire Plan are:
- Skills and employment
  - Safe, strong, and vibrant destination
  - Connectivity and infrastructure
  - Housing
- 7.6 The draft EGS has been co-developed with the members of the taskforce and Shropshire Council colleagues across departments to ensure it reflects the Shropshire plan strategic objectives and the key issues, priorities, opportunities, and challenges facing Shropshire's economy.
- 7.7 The **core values** of the EGS are:
- Resilience
  - Sustainability
  - Inclusivity
  - Wellbeing and Health
- 7.8 These core values run through the key themes of the strategy and will be embedded in the action plan.
- 7.9 The **key themes** are:
- Supporting local business
  - Strategic locations
  - Employment and skills

7.10 The EGS provides a focus for the strategic objectives set out in the Shropshire plan to deliver safe, strong, and vibrant destinations alongside improved connectivity and infrastructure which translates, in a business sense, to the ability to support local businesses and identify strategic locations for business development. The Shropshire plan also sets out to deliver skills and employment opportunities which is a direct link and reflection of a key theme in the EGS and highlights how fundamental this is to being able to live your best life in Shropshire.

## **Engagement and co-development**

7.11 The core values and themes have been developed and tested with the Economic Taskforce for Shropshire and as part of a wider business, stakeholder and partners workshop held in November 2021 at Shrewsbury Town Football club. This hybrid event successfully brought together over 90 participants to discuss, debate, inform and shape the key themes outlined. It also gave our business community the opportunity to tell us about their requirements, asks and wants from a refreshed EGS for Shropshire. The feedback from the event can be found [here](#).

7.12 Following the event, further work was done on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for each of the key themes which can be viewed [here](#).

7.13 The key themes and logic model have been further co-developed and tested through the Economic Taskforce and as part of a series of engagement events and activities including:

- Members update Dec 2021
- Progress meeting with Communities Overview Committee 23 March 2022
- In person workshop for Taskforce and Senior SC officers 30 March 2022
- Second members update given 28 April 2022
- Proposed content of EG Strategy Refresh at Communities Overview Committee Meeting 4 May 2022

7.14 Following feedback from the Communities Overview Committee, discussions with Zero Carbon Shropshire have developed and a representative has now joined the Economic Taskforce.

## **Next Steps**

### **Action plan**

- 7.15 A detailed action plan will be developed over the summer to support the EGS key themes and core values which will set out the key activities, outputs and outcomes we expect to collectively achieve for Shropshire. The development of KPI's of the EGS will be developed in partnership as they will cover a wide and cross cutting agenda to support the aims of the strategy. They will also be developed and tested through Communities Overview committee as well as being aligned to the Shropshire Plan delivery plans and emerging performance management framework.
- 7.16 This also aligns well with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) requirements for Shropshire Council to submit an investment plan to Government by 1<sup>st</sup> August on what collectively we intend to allocate the £12m of funding on for 2022-2025 and the action plan development will help to inform this work.

### **Governance**

- 7.17 The outline Governance approach is provided to Cabinet which will provide the structure to develop an action plan that will sit across all the partner and stakeholders to collectively deliver, monitor and review to ensure the outcomes and outputs for the EGS are effectively monitored, reviewed and progress is tracked.
- 7.18 Future governance and management of this will be reviewed, however the current economic taskforce is potentially looking to evolve into a Shropshire Economic Partnership, which will have overview and oversight of the strategy going forward and will monitor and review delivery. This gives accountability for the actions to all partners involved in the development and delivery of the strategy. This will need to be further defined given the emerging funding landscape regarding UKSPF and requirement to have robust Governance in place to manage this.
- 7.19 The draft EGS has been to two Community Overview committees and following this it was agreed that the development of the KPIs and actions will be shared with the committee and that, going forward, it will have a monitoring and review role of the strategy and the associated action plan.

## **Consultation**

- 7.20 Engagement on the EGS to date has been of a collaborative nature, primarily through the forum of workshops and with external organisations represented through the Economic Task Force. Further consultation of stakeholders is now sought, from representatives of Town and Parish Councils via SALC (Shropshire Association of Local Councils), wider business consultation via Shrewsbury and Oswestry Business Improvement Districts, Shropshire Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses plus businesses supported by and accessed through the Marches Growth Hub.
- 7.21 The consultation process will predominantly be informed by the online survey and portal as well as being publicised on social media with local press releases, responses will be collated via the online portal with opportunities for written feedback for those preferring not to use online facilities being made possible.

## **8. Conclusions**

- 8.1 The draft EGS 2022-2027 provides a high-level strategy to Cabinet setting out clearly the framework on which collectively we are looking to drive forward the economic future for Shropshire. Further work will be undertaken to develop the action plan and Governance to support the implementation and delivery of the EGS 2022-2027.

**List of Background Papers**

Cabinet report 18 January 2021 - Shropshire's economic recovery, transformation and resilience framework.

Council report 12 May 2022- The Shropshire Plan

**Cabinet Member Edward Potter**

**Local Member All**

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire 2022-2027

# SHROPSHIRE'S ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY

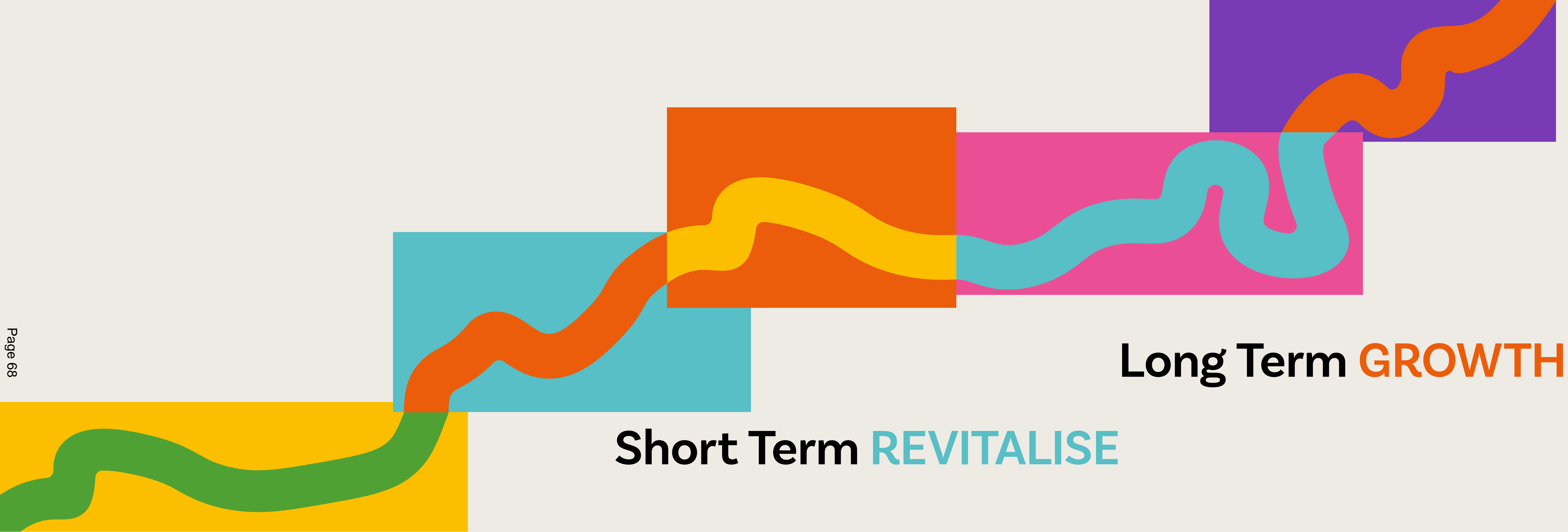
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## 2022 - 2027



**ECONOMIC  
TASKFORCE**  
INVEST IN SHROPSHIRE





**Immediate RESTART**

**Short Term REVITALISE**

**Long Term GROWTH**

**Long Term GROWTH**



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# KEY HEADLINES

The Economic Recovery Taskforce has been instrumental in the refresh of this Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire, created in response to the ‘new normal’ as the country recovers from the pandemic.

It will play a key role moving forward in the governance of this strategy and champion its delivery through the developing Action Plan.

This strategy details the key mission statements for Shropshire alongside the three key strategic themes of supporting local businesses, strategic locations and employment and skills.

The detailed Action Plan will follow and will be updated annually to reflect changes in delivery strategy and achievements, while also serving to ensure that everything we do is consistent with our cross-cutting values of sustainability, inclusivity, resilience and supports the wellbeing and health of the County’s residents.

# THE VISION FOR SHROPSHIRE

*Working together with our business communities and stakeholders, and by utilising our unique environment and high-quality assets, we will co-create a connected, competitive, sustainable and inclusive economy: one that is nationally recognised where businesses and residents are thriving, healthy and resilient.*

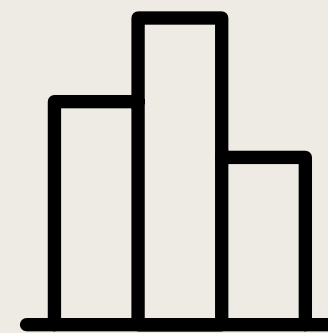
# WHAT WE'RE AIMING TO ACHIEVE

Provide the **right tools and support** to facilitate businesses to invest in research and development, relocate to Shropshire or expand and grow in their physical locations and workforce.

Champion investment in **wider infrastructure** that underpins business investment, focused around town centres and high streets, business parks and growth corridors.

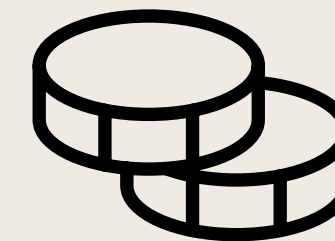
Provide appropriate housing, connectivity, networks and workplace progression through training and upskilling, so the county has the **right workforce to enable economic growth** and prosperity and grows its working age population.

# MEASURING SUCCESS



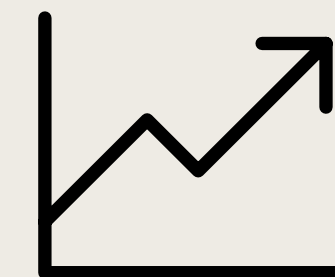
## Productivity

Close the gap by at least 50%



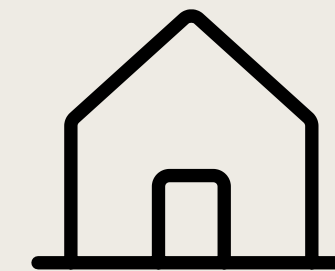
## Wages

Close the gap by at least 50%



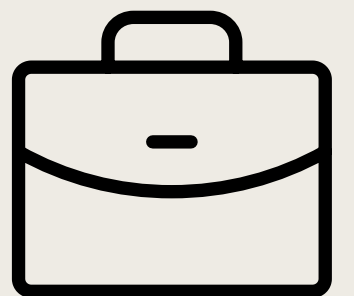
## Investment

£350 million (2022 - 2027)



## Homes

1,400+ per annum



## Jobs

5,000+ by 2027

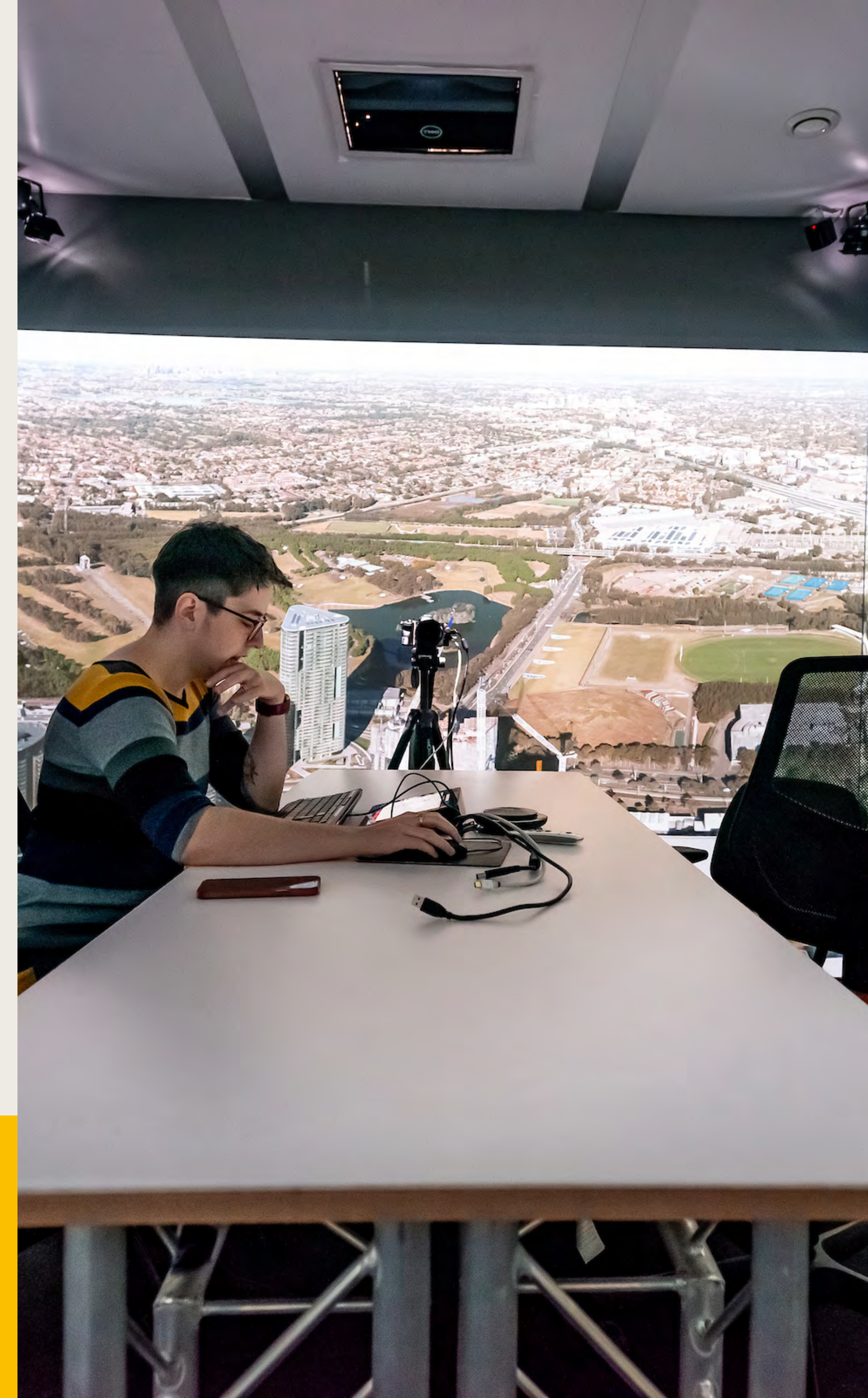
# WHAT'S NEXT FOR SHROPSHIRE

Since the last Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021 was written the world has experienced unprecedented social, economic, political and environment changes i.e. global pandemic, recession, Brexit, Net Zero and climate change including severe localised flooding events.

Identifying the issues and adapting to these changes has been the challenge and to support a **'RESTART'** an Economic Recovery Taskforce was set up in 2020 bringing Shropshire's key partners and stakeholders together to work collaboratively and champion action-focused delivery.

This includes the co-creation of this strategy, seeking funding opportunities and asks of Government for intervention support and streamlining a pipeline of project delivery all of which has been underpinned and driven by a robust data evidence base.

The work of the taskforce and workshops with key partners and stakeholders has collectively shaped the vision, key themes and values, activities, and outcomes for the strategy. This Economic Growth Strategy will deliver and support The Shropshire Plan (Shropshire Council's Corporate Plan) and the key strand of delivering a healthy economy for Shropshire.



To **'REVITALISE'** the Shropshire economy, Shropshire Council used central government grant funding to support the immediate needs of businesses as well as investing in longer-term measures which reflect the transformational aspirations of the business community.

Investment in regeneration within the market towns and on the high street, a business park programme, sustainable infrastructure and environmental resilience has continued. Evidence of private sector investment in the county is high with the [Local Plan](#) enabling future growth conditions and placemaking opportunities.

During this difficult period, pushing the boundaries of delivery partners and stakeholder engagement and widening the scope of interventions into health and social wellbeing, the community and voluntary sector, tourism and the green agenda have all had a proven effect on economic prosperity.

While the uncertainty of public sector interventions remains, a pre-emptive, confident response borne from our economic performance over the last four years is now necessary to provide **'GROWTH'**.

Building on our previous vision and strategy delivery and the creation of new regional working relationships with the River Severn Partnership, West Midlands Combined Authority and Midlands Engine, Shropshire is in a strong position.

This strategy refresh acknowledges that the funding landscape has changed; European Union funding was a key pillar of Business Support and Skills programmes with over £37million being brokered into the county between 2017 and 2021.

The mechanisms for allocation have now changed too - away from Local Enterprise Partnerships and focusing Local Authorities to competitively bid directly into central government alongside considering County Deals and continued Devolution.



**Increase GVA by 12%**

£5.77 billion in 2016

£6.2 billion in 2019

**7.5%**



**At least 3,700 new jobs**

2,900 created by 2019

3,300 projected by end of 2021

**11%**



**£300 million private sector investment**

£325 million by 2021

**8%**



**New homes per annum**

1,375 target per annum

1,795 built per annum

**31%**

# YET CRISIS LEADS TO CREATIVITY

Following unprecedented times and amid continued uncertainty, Shropshire must be confident in getting its 'asks' right. What we want to achieve must be clear and evidenced for when public sector interventions or commercial investment is sought.

The last two years has seen innovative and collective responses to the pandemic from the private, public and voluntary sectors.

That is the new normal and sets the context for this Economic Growth Vision and Strategy refresh.



# SHROPSHIRE MISSION STATEMENTS

## Our aims are to:

Provide the **right tools and support** to facilitate businesses to invest in research and development, relocate to Shropshire or expand and grow in their physical locations and workforce.

Champion investment in **wider infrastructure** that underpins business investment, focused around town centres and high streets, business parks and growth corridors.

Provide appropriate housing, connectivity, networks and workplace progression through training and upskilling, so the county has **the right workforce to enable economic growth** and prosperity and grows its working age population.



## SHROPSHIRE'S VISION

Working together with our business communities and stakeholders, and by utilising our unique environment and high-quality assets, we will co-create a connected, competitive, sustainable, and inclusive economy: one that is nationally recognised, where businesses and residents are thriving, healthy and resilient.



## UTILISING A LOGIC MODEL

The logic model in Appendix B has been used to plan the Economic Growth Strategy Delivery Plan.

It represents the relationship of how interventions will produce target outcomes, through identifying resources, outputs and impact, and will be used to implement and review activities and impact.

The following pages provide more detail on the key activities and outcomes that relate to the strategic themes and the cross-cutting values, which together form the Framework for the Economic Growth Strategy.



Context



Inputs



Overarching  
Activities



Agreed Activities  
and Approach



Outputs



Outcomes



Impact

PLANNED WORK

INTENDED RESULTS

# STRATEGIC THEMES



**Supporting  
Local Business**



**Strategic  
Locations**



**Employment  
and Skills**



To continue to provide comprehensive business support to **new and existing employment markets/sectors**, growing and **attracting high-value sectors** that support the creation of high-value jobs. Enabling resilience planning in all areas and supporting businesses to **enhance their workforce's wellbeing** and their corporate responsibility.

**To be active in identifying and delivering opportunities** for targeted investment locations and a “place-based” approach within the market towns. Putting people’s needs at the heart of housing, infrastructure, employment and local service provision to **create sustainable, prosperous, growing communities.**

**To retain and develop** a skilled workforce where individuals have opportunities to progress in the labour market through up-skilling, re-skilling and developing transferrable skills, through delivering higher level skills to **meet the demands of businesses** within the local economy.



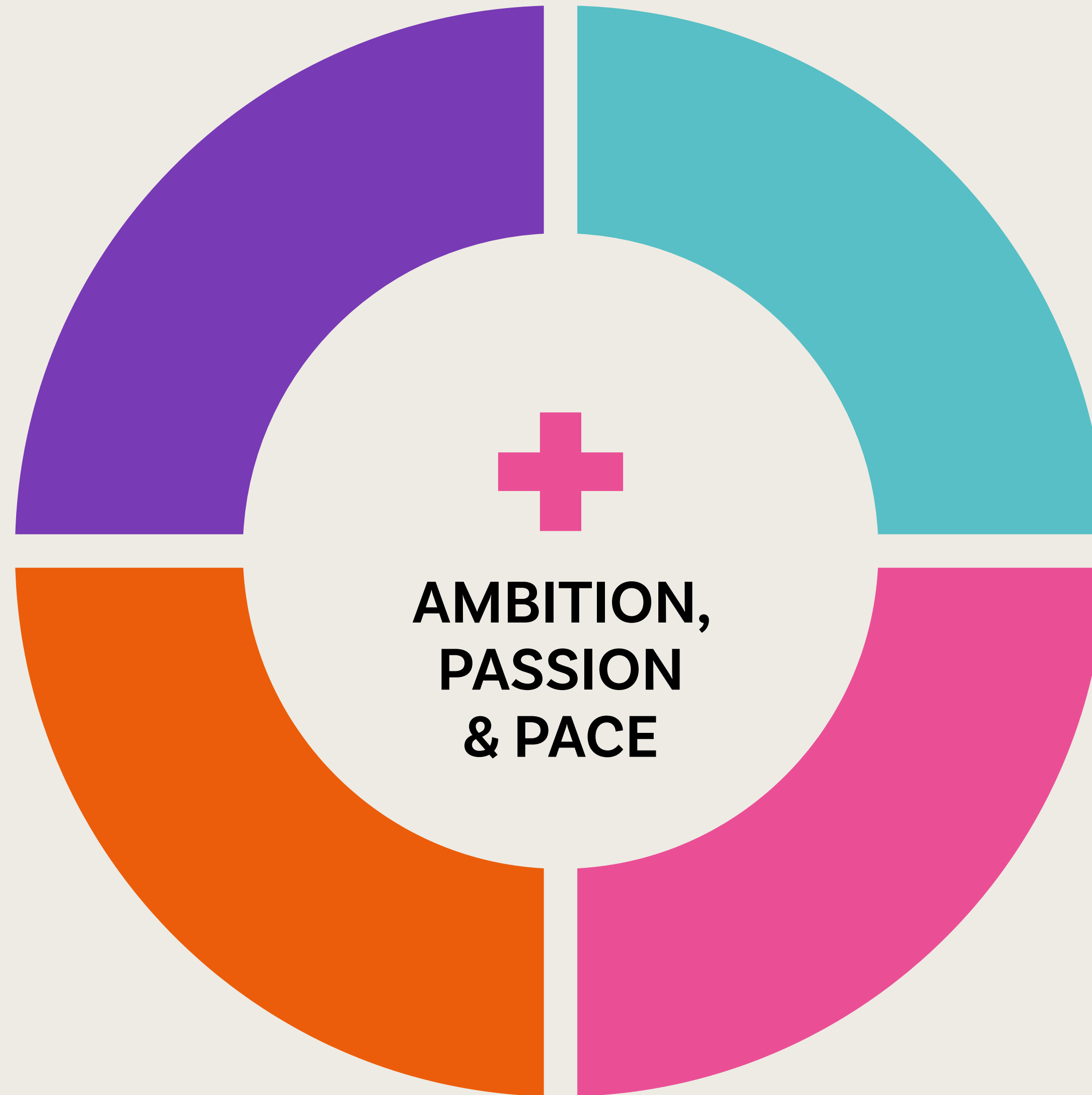
# KEY VALUES

## RESILIENCE

For Shropshire's businesses and organisations to **strengthen their connectivity and partnerships**, demonstrating both continued resilience with the capacity to absorb, and **optimising opportunities to quickly recover from, and contain, adverse shocks**, acknowledging the vital role and contribution of the voluntary sector.

## INCLUSIVITY

To **create a more prosperous economy** with access to opportunities allowing people to find work, stay in work, succeed in work and enjoy life out of work while **recognising Shropshire's rurality and the need for physical and digital connectivity** and access to facilities and infrastructure for all.



## SUSTAINABILITY

To **support the continued innovation and ability** of Shropshire's businesses and economy to develop practices that **support long-term economic growth** without negatively impacting social, environmental, cultural and historic aspects of the current communities or future generations **as we work towards net zero**.

## WELLBEING & HEALTH

To **create places through local economic policy** and enabling infrastructure, education, skills, lifelong learning and labour market programmes to **maximise opportunities to reduce health inequalities**, improve health across the County and to seize opportunities to create economic growth.

# GOVERNANCE OF THE STRATEGY

We will have one Group overseeing all activity related to Shropshire’s Economic Growth, aligning governance for Shared Prosperity Funding through the creation of Investment Boards and sub-groups.

This group will review, monitor and evaluate the Strategy between 2022 and 2027, and oversee updating the Action Plan to reflect the necessary changes and achievements over the time period.

Further work will be undertaken to develop and implement the Governance structure by Autumn 2022.

# RESOURCING THE STRATEGY

This is Shropshire’s economic growth strategy.

Delivery of the strategy will be achieved across a number of actions and interventions of multiple private and public sector partners across Shropshire.

The co-creation of this strategy sets the context to enable partners and stakeholders to provide a multitude of resources from finance, skills and expertise to deliver the Action Plan and key activities as they are developed over the next 5 years



# IMPACT - MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF THE STRATEGY

We will measure the success of this strategy by monitoring a suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each of the key themes.

These will include:



## Supporting Local Business

- Increase in Business Start-Ups
- Sustained high levels of business survival
- Increase in inward investment
- Increase in the number of jobs, especially in higher skilled occupations
- Increase in business profitability / turnover / efficiency
- Levels of business confidence
- Businesses operating or diversifying into new sectors, specifically low carbon, agri-tech, cyber-security and defence

## Strategic Locations

- Increase in number of households with access to ultrafast broadband and 4 and 5G mobile reception
- Net housing completions
- Investment in strategic infrastructure
- Employment land brought forward
- Town centre vacancy rates
- Town centre footfall

## Employment and Skills

- Employment and unemployment rates
- Reduction in hard to fill vacancies
- Reduction in the proportion of businesses reporting skills gaps
- Increase in high value jobs across county
- Improved retention of working age population, especially in younger age brackets

Impact	Metric	Source	Baseline	Target
Improved Productivity	GVA per hour worked	ONS	Shropshire <b>26% less</b> than the national average (2019)	Shropshire to close the gap to national average by <b>at least 50%</b> (2027)
Improved Wages	Median gross workplace earnings for full-time workers	ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Workplace	Shropshire <b>9% less</b> than the national average (2021)	Shropshire to close the gap to national average by <b>at least 50%</b> (2027)
Increased Levels of Investment	£ million of private and public sector investment	Shropshire Council to collect and collate	<b>£325 million</b> (2016-2021)	<b>£350 million</b> (2022-2027)
New Homes Built per Annum	Net increase in dwellings	Shropshire Council Annual Monitoring Report	<b>1,795 pa</b> (2016/17 to 2019/20)	<b>1,400+</b>
Increase in Jobs	Net Increase in Number of Jobs	ONS Business Register of Employment Survey	<b>133,000</b> (2020)	<b>5,000+</b> by 2027

Longer term impact will be measured against the baseline above.



**Productivity**

Close the gap by at least 50%



**Wages**

Close the gap by at least 50%



**Investment**

£350 million (2022 - 2027)



**Homes**

1,400+ per annum



**Jobs**

5,000+ by 2027



# ECONOMIC GROWTH ACTION PLAN

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### Supporting Local Business

- 1 Continue and further strengthen comprehensive business support services. This will build on the strengths of the established business support provision to provide agile business support, network and clustering opportunities and grant solutions in partnership reflecting business need.
- 2 Support Shropshire's' key sectors to target key areas of strength, expand supply chain opportunities and target cross sector development and diversification
- 3 Targeting and nurturing high growth potential and implement marketing and investment plans based on strategic locations

### Strategic Locations

- 1 Support strategic locations through active involvement in place-making with businesses and partners to stimulate investment to the public realm and natural and built environments to ensure businesses are invested in their localities, community value and sense of place are enhanced.
- 2 Delivering sustainable housing and employment opportunities for targeted investment locations "place-based approach" within the market towns, including affordable housing provision, and physical (digital, transport, utilities), sustainable infrastructure and employment sites.
- 3 Bring forward employment land in strategic locations in line with the local plan allocations or in response to identified local need.
- 4 Champion sustainable development and environmental resilience e.g. flooding, water quality, air pollution and climate change.

### Employment and Skills

- 1 Continually map and address skills gaps by working with the community and voluntary sectors
- 2 Continue to work with schools, colleges and businesses to develop and retain young talent alongside increasing employer engagement and take up of apprenticeships in SME's
- 3 Develop and deliver opportunities for retraining and upskilling the workforce including reskilling and the development of transferable skills
- 4 Support initiatives to improve employability and basic skill provision in the workplace
- 5 Work with training providers to meet the skill needs of the business community.



**EARLY ACTIVITY:  
Governance**

# EARLY WINS

  
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## KNOWLEDGE

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**business community**

One place for **your business** | [sbltvknowledge.co.uk](http://sbltvknowledge.co.uk)

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# BISHOP'S CASTLE BUSINESS PARK



# APPENDICES

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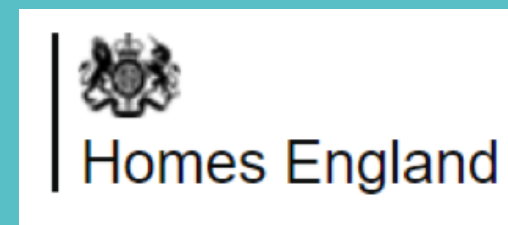
- A) Achievements of Previous Economic Growth Strategy 2017 - 2021**
- B) Logic Model**
- C) Shropshire Infographics**
- D) Evidence Base**
- E) SWOT Analysis**
- F) Business Feedback on Key Themes and Asks**
- G) The Economic Recovery Taskforce**





# ECONOMIC TASKFORCE

## INVEST IN SHROPSHIRE







<u>Committee and Date</u>
Cabinet
8 June 2022

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

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES KEY PERFORMANCE DATA

**Responsible Officer**

Tanya Miles

e-mail: Tanya.miles@shropshire.gov.uk      Tel: 255811      Fax

### 1. Synopsis

As one of our key priorities, we track and monitor Children's Social Care performance via a comprehensive suite of data across a wide range of indicators. This report shows performance throughout 2021/22 providing information to Members and demonstrating the health of the system.

### 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. This report summarises the key performance indicators within Children's Social Care (CSC) at the end of quarter four 2021/22. CSC has a number of statutory key performance indicators which are collated nationally, and this report focuses on these. The Local Government Association good practice guidance advises that Cabinet has regular oversight of CSC performance. This report is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the bi-annual performance reports to Cabinet.
- 2.2 The Children and Young People's performance data set aims to evidence performance in line with statutory responsibilities, demonstrate the 'safety of the system' and identify key areas of declining or improving performance. It is important to note that the activity of Children's Social Care relates to statutory intervention under the Children Act 1989 relating to Children in Need of support and Children at risk of significant harm, and subsequent legislation that relates to the statutory function.
- 2.3 This report is one of a comprehensive suite of performance data that are used daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually to track and monitor performance. It also forms part of the CSC Quality Assurance framework where we link performance data with audit activity to identify learning and areas of improvement required, as well as areas of good practice.

- 2.4 The performance report follows 'the journey of the child' through the system, taking the reader through the statutory points from the 'Front Door' to assessment, child protection, children looked after and Care Leavers.
- 2.5 For some indicators, where available, the benchmarking data nationally (England) and across Statistical Neighbours is included. The latest benchmarking data is for the year 2020/2021. Benchmarking data is published annually in November. The next set of comparator data for 2021/22 is expected Nov 22. For reference, the Statistical Neighbours figure is the average of the 15 local authorities who are most statistically similar to Shropshire.
- 2.6 The key messages from this performance report are detailed as well as any implications and where appropriate what is being done to address any variations. Reference points 2.7 through to 2.12 highlight the main performance areas to highlight to cabinet; further narrative and next steps is provided in the main body of the report. Page numbers referenced refer to the performance dashboard pages (Appendix 1).
- 2.7 A contact is where there is an enquiry, information shared or requested, or a concern is reported from any partner agency, a family or a member of the public. Q4 shows Continued high levels of contacts and referrals, indicating sustained high demand for social care services continues. (Page 2 of Appendix A)
- 2.8 A referral is where information shared relates to a concern about a child's welfare, the threshold for intervention is met and further information or action is required. The main referral source is from the Police with numbers now increasing from schools following reductions during the pandemic.
- 2.9 Re-referrals into CSC remain low, suggesting that children requiring support are new to social care, or have not been supported in some time. Re-referral rates being low indicate effective intervention in the previous period of being open to Children's social care and is therefore an indicator of positive performance.
- 2.10 Social Work Assessment timeliness has decreased, this was anticipated and a result of high levels of Covid-related sickness in Q3 and Q4. Timeliness did improve in the latter stages of the year and remains an area of performance focus. Action plans are in place to address out of timescale assessments and are on track to be improved performance by end of May 2022.

- 2.11 There has been a decrease in children subject to child protection plans. We regularly audit the threshold for Child Protection plans, we know that numbers have been impacted directly by children becoming looked after, as they do not remain subject to a Child Protection Plan. We are also regularly audit the threshold for Sec 47 enquiries, which directly relate to the number of children subject to a child protection plan. We have seen a decrease in the number of large sibling groups that was impacting on our numbers in 2020/2021. In addition, we are working differently with young people at risk of Child Exploitation, using Contextual Safety Plans rather than the traditional Child Protection Plan, to manage the risks of exploitation – this is in line with national practice and relates to where parents are clearly a protective factor within the risk of harm to their children.
- 2.12 The increase in Children Looked After supported by the Council has continued to increase throughout the year. Rates are now higher than the latest available benchmarking data. There are multiple and combined factors for the increase in children looked after, including; large sibling groups, increase in neglect, increasing number of young children especially under 1's coming into care through injuries or significant harm, delays in court proceedings being completed, delays to exiting children's care plans and an increase in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children which is mandatory requirement under the National Transfer Scheme.
- 2.13 In addition to the usual performance reporting, it should also be noted that the Children's Social Care & Safeguarding Service was subject to an inspection of its services in February 2022 by Ofsted. The overall rating of the inspection was Good. The report highlighted a number of strengths in the quality of social work practice and this provides us with confidence of the quality of our services. There were several recommendations for improvement especially in relation to the Public Law Outline (pre-court proceedings) for which there is an action plan in place to track progress, as well as areas for improvement in working with partners in particular the police and health colleagues. A development plan is in progress of being agreed and will be submitted to OFSTED and Cabinet at the beginning of July 2022. (Appendix 2 – Ofsted Report)

### 3. Recommendations

#### Cabinet members are asked to:

- 3.1 Note the issues raised in the report and consider the impact of sustained increased demand on both the Council and children and young people in the county.
- 3.2 Review the performance information and identify any areas that they would like to consider in greater detail or refer to the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee.

## REPORT

### 4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

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

- 4.1. Poor performance could have implications for vulnerable people (including children) who are supported by Council services and economic growth in Shropshire. In turn, there may be significant financial, legal and reputational risk to the Council, Schools (and Academies), and partners from across the public and voluntary and independent care sectors. Performance and financial risk are addressed in the Corporate Risk register and clear mitigations defined, including the financial risks being mitigated by savings being made elsewhere.
- 4.2. Effective monitoring and follow-up against key measures of success provides the opportunity to manage risks and ensure that desirable outcomes are achieved.

### 5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. This report does not have any direct financial implications but presents service and financial information to support decision making. Accountable officers and senior managers may use the information to inform actions or interventions for improving service performance and the prioritisation and use of resources.
- 5.2. The impact of delivering these performance indicators is a provisional "controllable" overspend on Children's Social Care and Safeguarding for 2021/22 of **£3.682m** for the financial year

2021/22. This is a provisional figure; final outturn will be reported to cabinet in due course.

## 6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. Whilst this report does not have any direct climate change or carbon management implications, vulnerable children and adults are most likely to be adversely affected by the environmental and health impacts of climate change.
- 6.2. The delivery of CSC services contributes to the Council's corporate carbon footprint through staff travel, the operation of social care buildings and through the carbon impact of commissioned services. Together with Adult Social Care Services, this represents around 25% of the Council's gross carbon footprint. It will be important in future to collect and report more detailed information about the carbon and climate change impacts of the delivery of CSC services to inform actions or interventions for improving service performance.

## 7. Report

- 7.1 12,818 contacts were received by Children's Services during 2021/22.

The number of contacts has remained similar to the 12,833 received during 2020/21

The average number of contacts received per month was 1,068

50% of contacts required no further action. 13.1% of contacts progressed to Social Care higher than the 11.8% in 2020/21. 12.5% were referred to another agency, 12.5% progressed to an Early Help Episode and 6.2% the provision of information and advice

Benchmarking data for contacts is not collected as part of the annual statutory returns, due to the varied approaches LAs take to managing their social care front door, therefore comparator data is unavailable.

- 7.2 In 2021/22, there were 1890 referrals (threshold for child in need / significant harm is met) to Children's Social Care decreased slightly against the previous year. Falling from 2029 in 2020/21, this represents a decrease of 6.8%.

The referral rate for 2021/22 is 313 per 10,000 children. This is lower than the latest available comparator data for 2020/21.

Latest available benchmarking data for 20/21 indicates that Shropshire's referral levels are below most of its statistical neighbour (SN) group. The average for the group being 396 referrals for every 10,000 U18 residents, where Shropshire's y/e 20/21 figure gives a rate of 336. Nationally the rate is 494.

Most referrals, 94.1% go on to receive a social work assessment, with only 3.6% requiring no further action. This indicates appropriate application of threshold. Of those progressing to assessment, 55% require a Strategy Discussion to be held, which indicates the child may be at a potentially higher level of risk.

76.4% of referrals are recorded with the category of Abuse or Neglect with Child's Disability being the second highest category (10.5%)

During 2021/22, the main referral source was the police (27.4%) which is the same rate as in 20/21. and this has been maintained during 21/22 to date. Data and audit activity have shown referrals from the health system to be low, work is underway to improve this measure with health colleagues across the system and we saw a significant increase in quarter 4.

- 7.3 At the end of 2021/22 the proportion of re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral was 13.8%. This is lower than the re-referral rate of 15% for 2020/21

Shropshire has comparatively low levels of re-referrals, with the 20/21 SN average being 20% and the England average being 23%.

*Re-referrals can be costly to local authorities, but more importantly, they can be stressful and harmful to the children themselves, as well as to their parents or guardians. Potentially, multiple referrals can be detrimental to children's development, as they may imply prolonged periods of unmet needs and recurrent episodes of abuse, neglect, maltreatment, etc. Furthermore, referred children often live in deprived and poor families (Bilson & Martin, 2016)*

- 7.4 During 2021/22 there were 3,870 assessments completed, or 323 per month on average, which is slightly higher than the rate of 316 per month during 2020/21.

At Q4 the annual rate of assessments completed within 45 working days was 79.2% compared to 87.3% in 2020/21. This decrease was expected, following on from sickness and lockdown related delays in Q4 20/21 and a focus on completing the out-of-date assessments caused by this.

There has been a gradual improvement in timeliness during the year with cumulative rates of Q2 (76.5%), Q3 (78.2%) and Q4 (79.2%). In quarter performance for Q4 was 82%.

While Shropshire is now performing below statistical neighbours (86.3%) and the England average (87.6%), based on their 2020/21-year end position, this data is cumulative and has been impacted by decreased timeliness in the first half of the year. An action plan is in place and on target to have improved Performance by end of May 2022.

- 7.5 At year-end 2021/22, there were 609 looked after children in Shropshire, an increase of 105 Children. This represents an increase of 20.8% from the 504 looked after children in 2020/21.

During the year 2021/22, 241 children started to be looked after, this is 24.2% greater than the 194 children starting in the same period in 20/21. However, ceasing levels have also increased, with 136 children ceasing in 21/22, this is 52.8% higher than the 89 who ceased during 2020/21.

The rate of children looked after has increased to 101 children per 10,000 U18s. This is higher than the 2020/21 SN average (61.4) and England average (67).

There are a range of reasons for the increase in children looked after, including large sibling groups, increase in neglect, delays in court proceedings being completed which causes delays to exiting children's care plans.

As part of our obligations under the National Transfer Scheme Shropshire Council was looking after 30 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) as at 31/3/22.

Whilst looked after numbers have continued to increase, the service reiterates that the priority is to provide the right level of support at the right time to protect children from harm.

- 7.6 The rate of children subject to Child Protection Plans (CPPs) has decreased during 2021/22 against year-end 20/21. At the end of March 2022 there were 207 children subject to a plan, which has decreased from 281 at the end of March 2021. This is a decrease of 26.3%. The latest rate per 10,000 Under 18s is 34.3.

Shropshire had a slightly lower rate than the 2020/21 national average (41.4) and statistical neighbours (36.6). Both nationally and within Shropshire's SN group, rates of child protection plans fell during 20/21.

- 7.7 At the reporting date (March 22), 48.3% have neglect listed as their primary category of abuse. 36.7% with emotional abuse, 7.7% sexual abuse and 7.2% physical abuse. Rates for previous years:

	2020	2021	2022
Number of CP	270	281	207
Neglect	51.1%	48.4%	48.3%
Emotional Abuse	40.7%	42.3%	36.7%
Physical Abuse	3.7%	4.3%	7.2%
Sexual Abuse	4.4%	5.0%	7.7%

The rates for neglect have decreased for the last two years but remain the highest primary category. Rates are now similar to national categories. Emotional abuse has seen a decrease in rates. Physical abuse rates have increased over the past two years and are now the same as national rates. Sexual abuse has also seen successive rate increases and is higher than the last available national rates.

During the year there has been a wider variation of rates with emotional abuse ranging from 50% in Q2 and a significant drop to 37% in Q4. Neglect has ranged from 42% in Q2 to 48% in Q4.

Nationally, the categories of abuse are identified as: neglect 46.3%, emotional abuse 40.3%, 3.7% sexual abuse and 7.2% physical abuse. Some authorities also report against multiple categories, nationally this is reported at 2.5%.

7.8 At year end 2021/22, 19.0% of CPPs starting during the year were for children who had had a previous plan at any point. This is lower than the rate of 21.3% at the end of 2020/21. During quarter 4 the rate of CPPs starting for those with a previous plan saw an upturn in rates from 13.3% in Dec 21 to 19% by March 22. The latest rate is lower than the national average (22.1%) and the SN average (23%) for 2020/21.

7.9 Child protections plans that are open for over 2 years can be an indication of drift in casework. Benchmarking for this measure compares the proportion of ceasing CPPs that had been open for 2 years or longer at the point of closure.

At the end of Q4, 5.2% of CPPs ceasing had been open for two years or longer. This is lower than the year end 20/21 position of 6.3%, though remains slightly above the SN average (3.7%) and the national average (3.7%) for 20/21.

7.10 A child in need (CiN) is one that has been assessed by social care to need a service. The rate of CiN in Shropshire increased during Q4 21/22 to 322 children per 10,000 U18s. The service will conduct an audit to investigate the recent rise of CiN.



Shropshire's rate is now above the 2020/21 SN group rate of (277), and is similar to the England average (321).

- 7.11 The age profile of Shropshire's current looked after children (at the end of Q4) is evenly distributed, with 50% of children under 10 and 50% over 10. This is contrasted with the age range of those children who became looked after during the year. Here, the age profile is skewed towards younger children, with the highest proportion (57%) aged between 0 and 9, with 39% aged 0 to 4. This indicates that it is more often younger children who are becoming looked after.

The age profile of those children exiting care suggests that 52% are age 15+, with many of these being young people turning 18.

Slightly more of Shropshire's current looked after children are male (52%) than female (48%).

An audit of the last 50 children to become looked after from 1 March to Mid-April 2022 was undertaken as to what intervention had previously been undertaken with the family. A high % had had no previous intervention through any type of early help provision. The referral to Children's Social Care was at the point where significant harm was such that the child had to become looked after for their own safety. Thresholds for bringing a child into care were robustly explored by the OFSTED Inspection Team and no concerns raised as to children being accommodated unnecessarily

- 7.12 Fostering placements make up the highest proportion of looked after placements in Shropshire, with 70.2% of children placed with foster carers. 10.6% of children are placed in homes/hostels and 8.7% are placed with their parents. 2.4% of Shropshire's looked after children are placed for adoption.

The number of children completing an adoption during 2021/22 was 12 compared to 8 in 2020/21

- 7.13 Most looked after children in Shropshire (87.1%) are subject to a court order, which are usually sought by a local authority in respect of children who they believe are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm.

56.9% are subject to a full care order, 26.3% subject to an interim care order, and 3.9% subject to a placement order.

12.4% are looked after under section 20 of the Children's Act 1989, which means that the parents have agreed for their child to live elsewhere for a period, either to provide time to make changes in their circumstances or to facilitate further investigation.

- 7.14 The remainder of this report discusses performance relating to care leavers. Benchmarking for care leavers is a new development and focuses only on those young people whose 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> birthday in the reporting period. For Q4, this means that all young people having a 19/20/21 birthday in April - March are included
- 7.15 For care leavers in this cohort, there is a proactive duty on the local authority to keep in touch. Shropshire Council is in touch with 97% of all care leavers in this cohort. This is above the 20/21 national average (91%).
- 7.16 97% of the care leavers in the reporting cohort are living in suitable accommodation, which can include independent living, supported accommodation or living with parents. The 2020/21 national average for this measure is 88%.
- 7.17 52% of care leavers in the reporting cohort are in education, employment or training. This is in line with the 2020/21 national average of 52%.

The Care Leaving team received specific recognition for their work from the OFSTED Inspectors.

## 8. Conclusions

- 8.1. Children's Social Care is under increasing pressure from rising demand at many points in the system.
- 8.2. This demand has also created budget pressures with a provisional overspend of £3.682m for the financial year.
- 8.3. Overall performance remains strong and where there have been variances this is understood, and actions been taken to address issues. This contributes to us ensuring we know ourselves well. This is recognised by the recent Ofsted Inspection where a rating of Good was awarded.
- 8.4. There is continued proactive effort in joint working with Legal Services – as well as the courts, CAFCASS and the Local Family Justice Board and families to progress the children's plans that were delayed in being finalised through Covid 19. We have had an increase in Special Guardianship Orders made with 15 granted during 2021/22 and 6 more due for completion in June. The increase in Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) is significant and is placing a demand pressure on the fostering team, additional posts to support this work have been agreed and are in process of being recruited to. SGO is often the plan that is in the Child's Best

interests as it supports continued living with extended family or connected carers in the community.

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

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Cllr Kirstie Hurst-Knight

**Local Member**

All Members

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Q4 Children's Dashboard

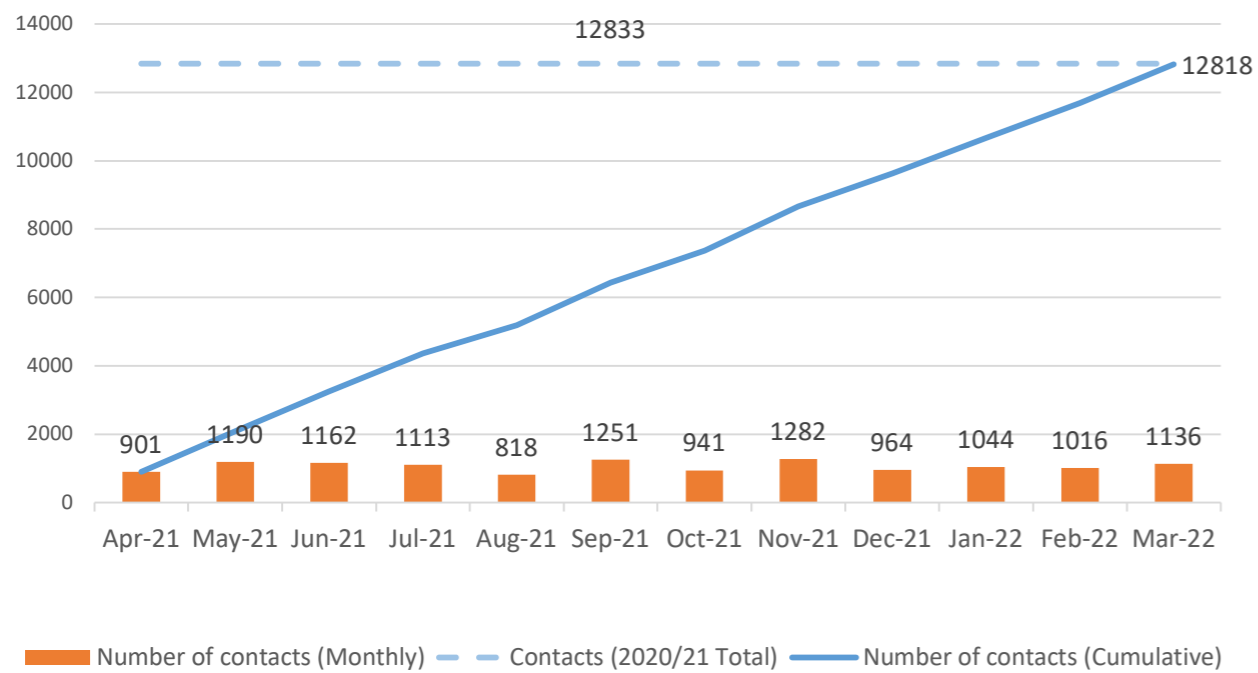
Appendix 2 – Ofsted ILACS Inspection Report

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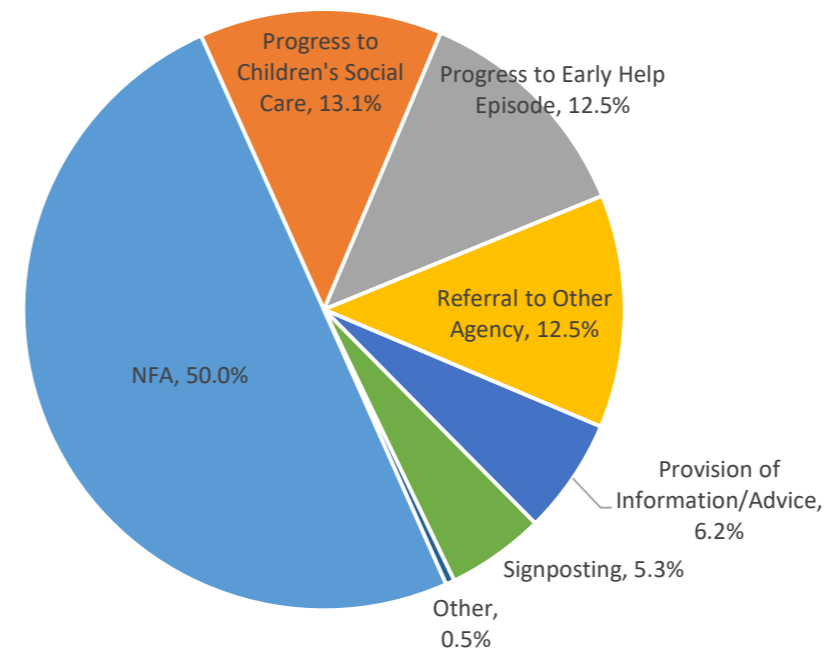
# Children and Young People's Services

Performance Report  
Quarter 4 2021/22

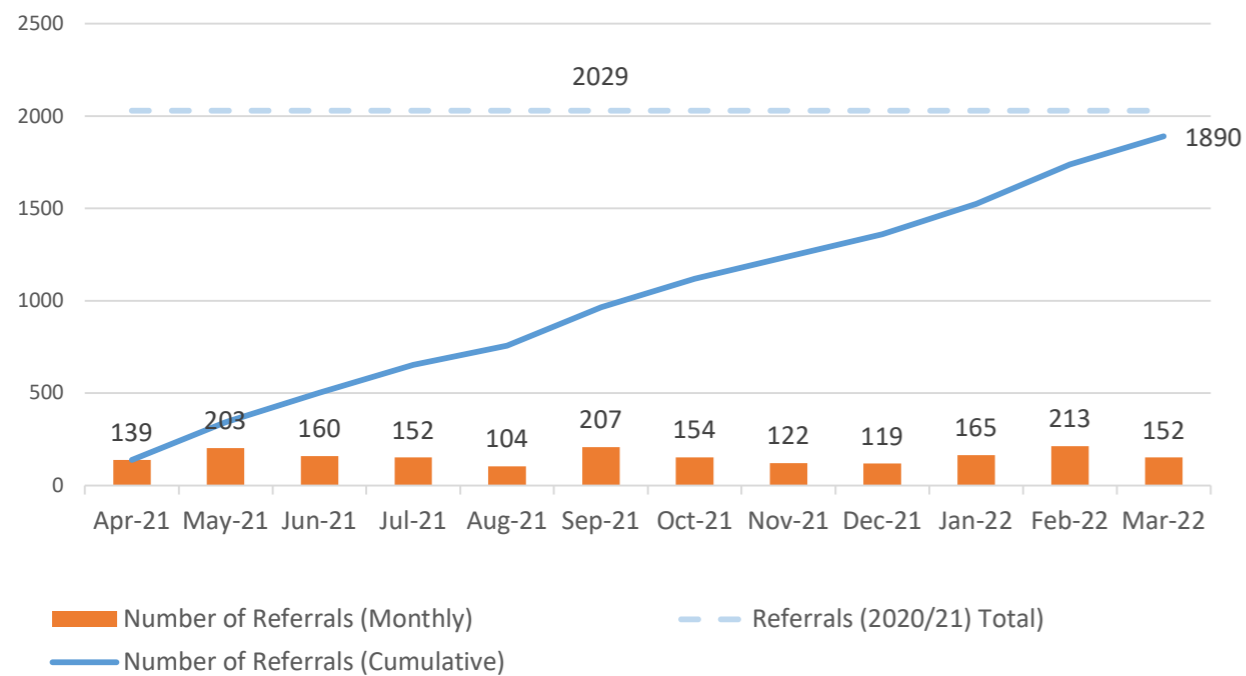
1: Total contacts received



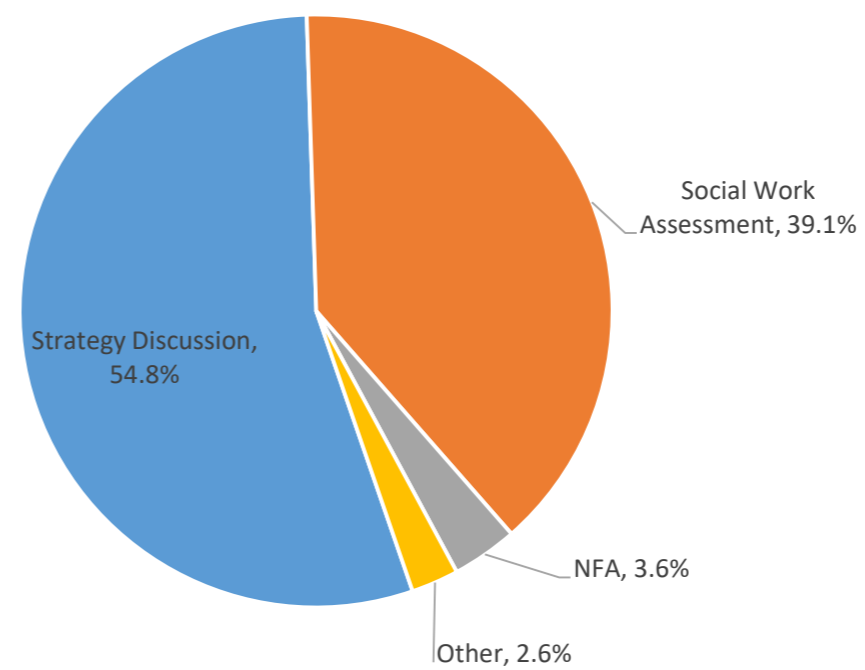
2: Contact outcomes - 2021/22



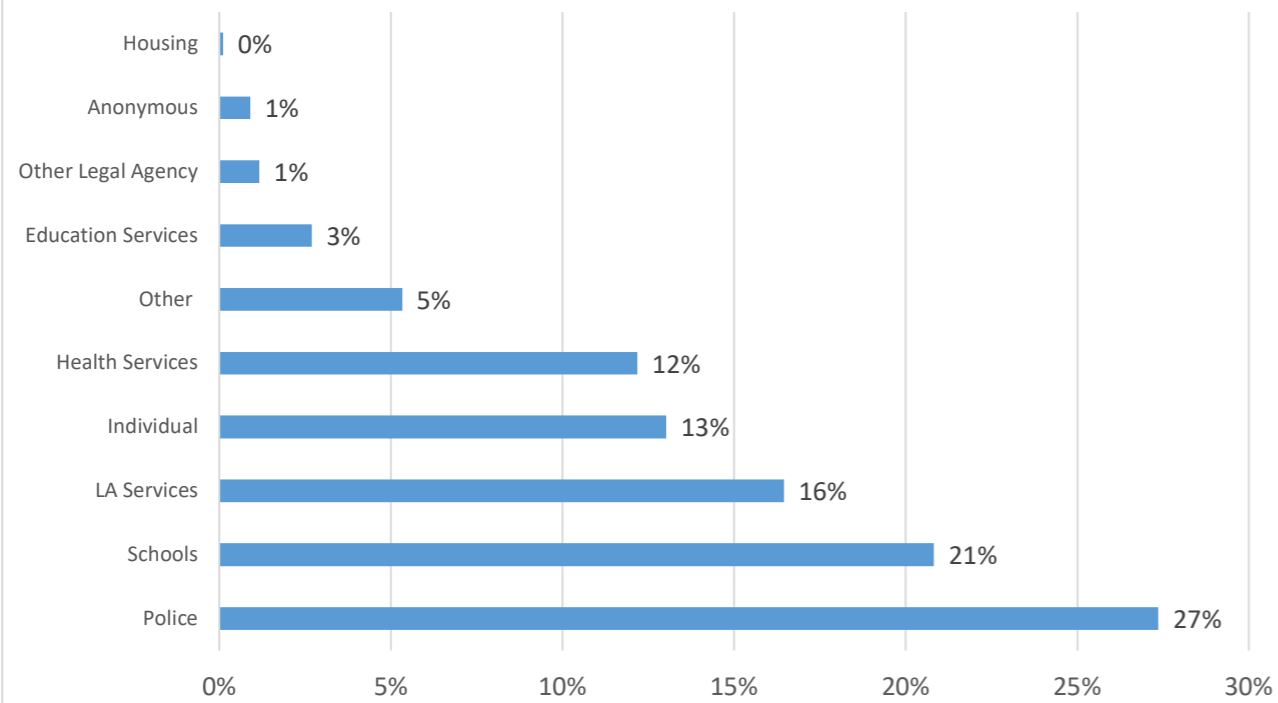
3: Referrals to Children's Social Care



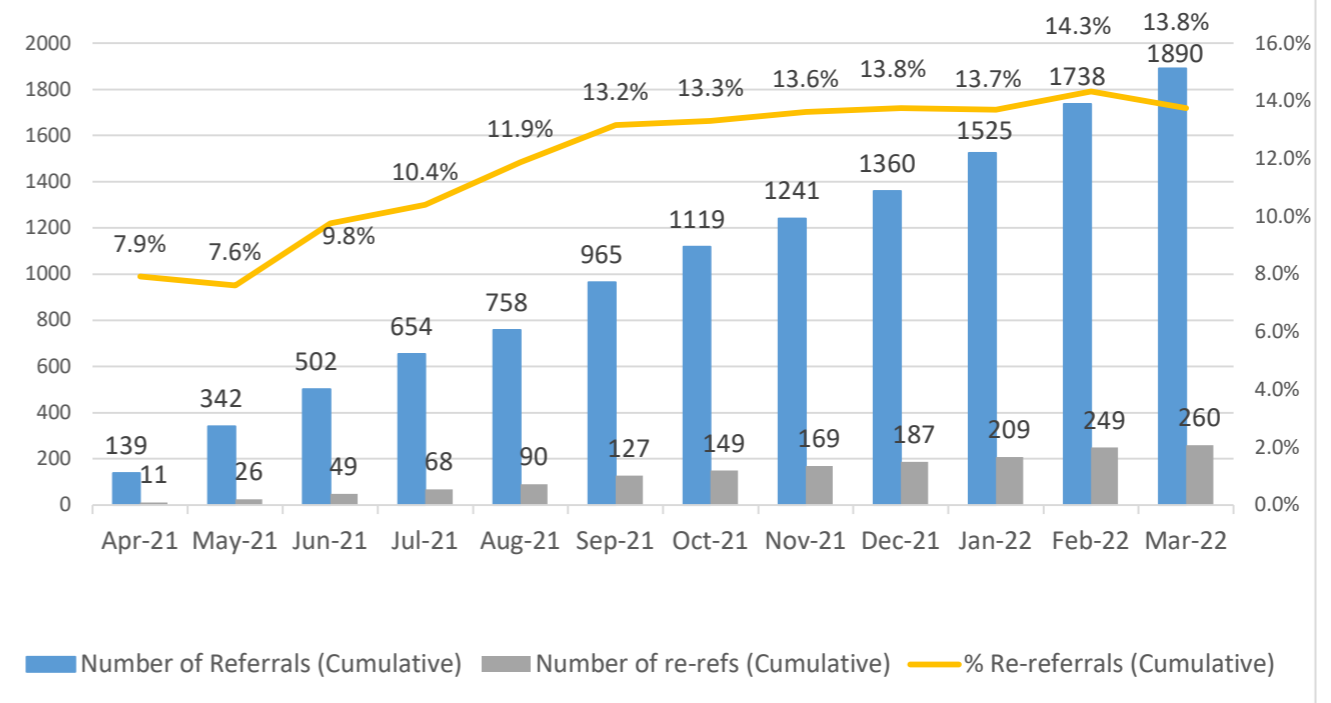
4: Referral outcomes - 2021/22



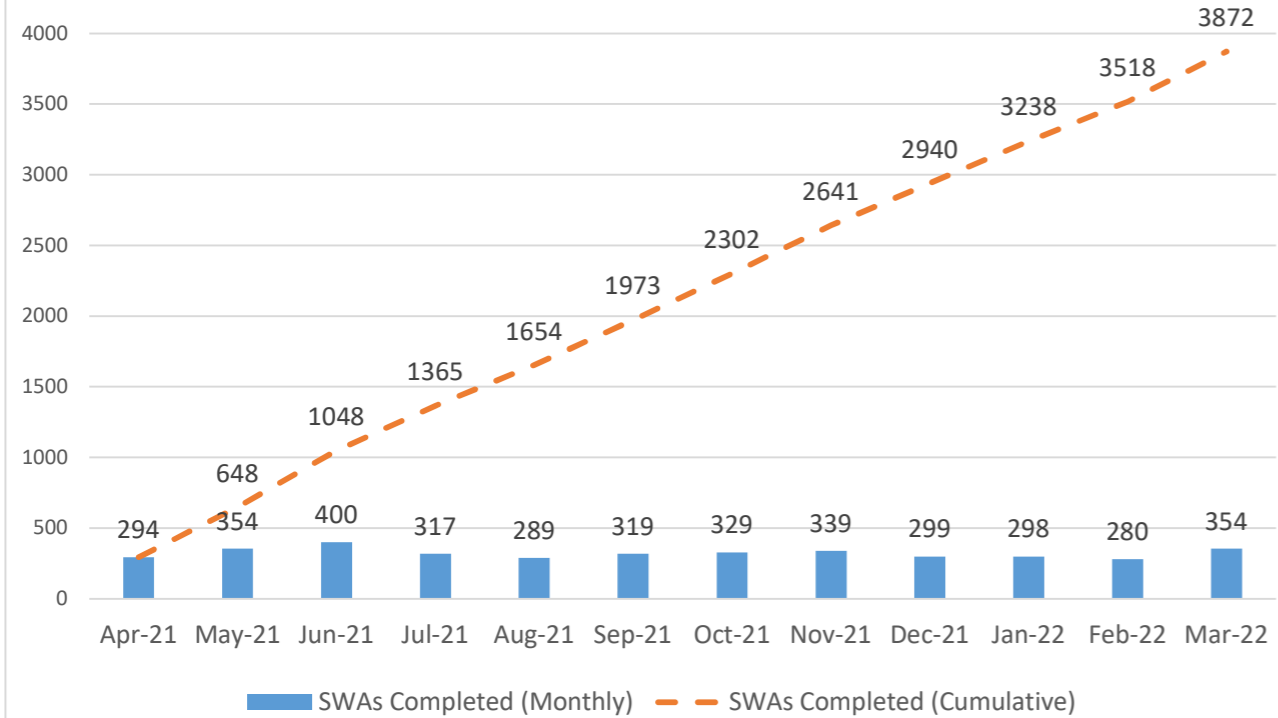
5: Referral sources - 2021/22



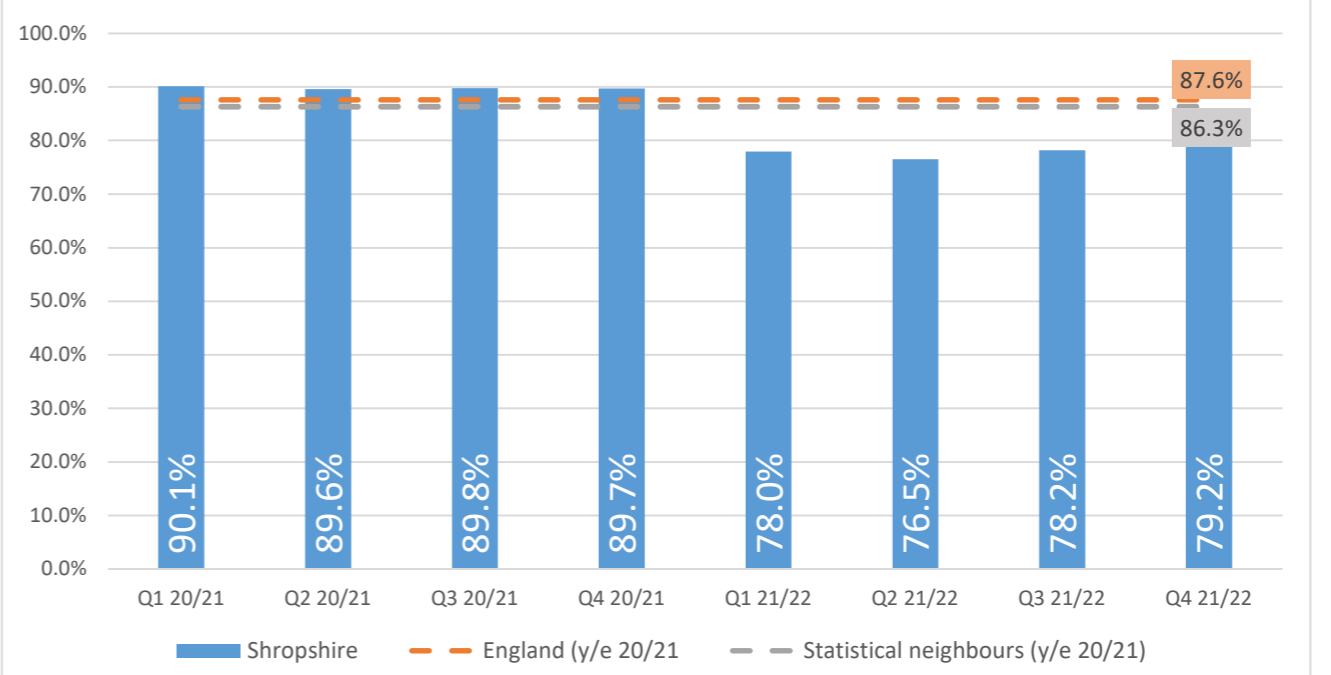
6: Re-referrals to Children's Social Care (cumulative year to date)



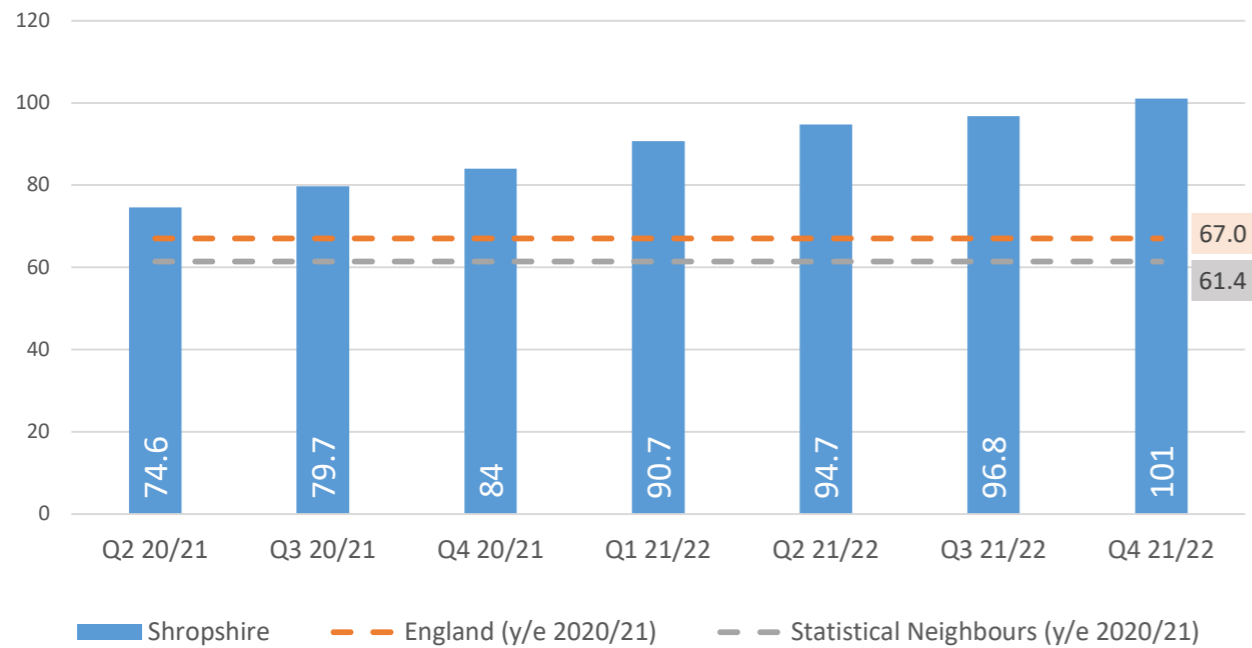
7: Social work assessment completed - year to date



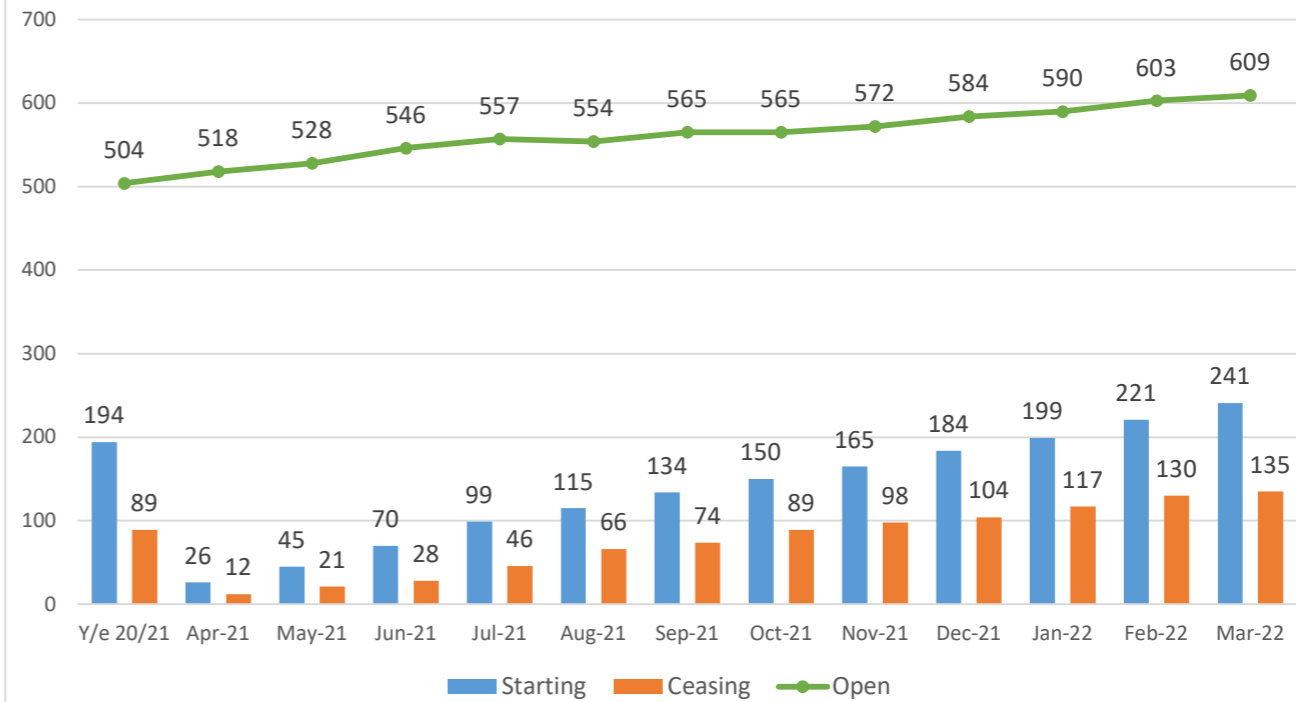
8: % Social work assessments within 45 working days - cumulative from 1st April



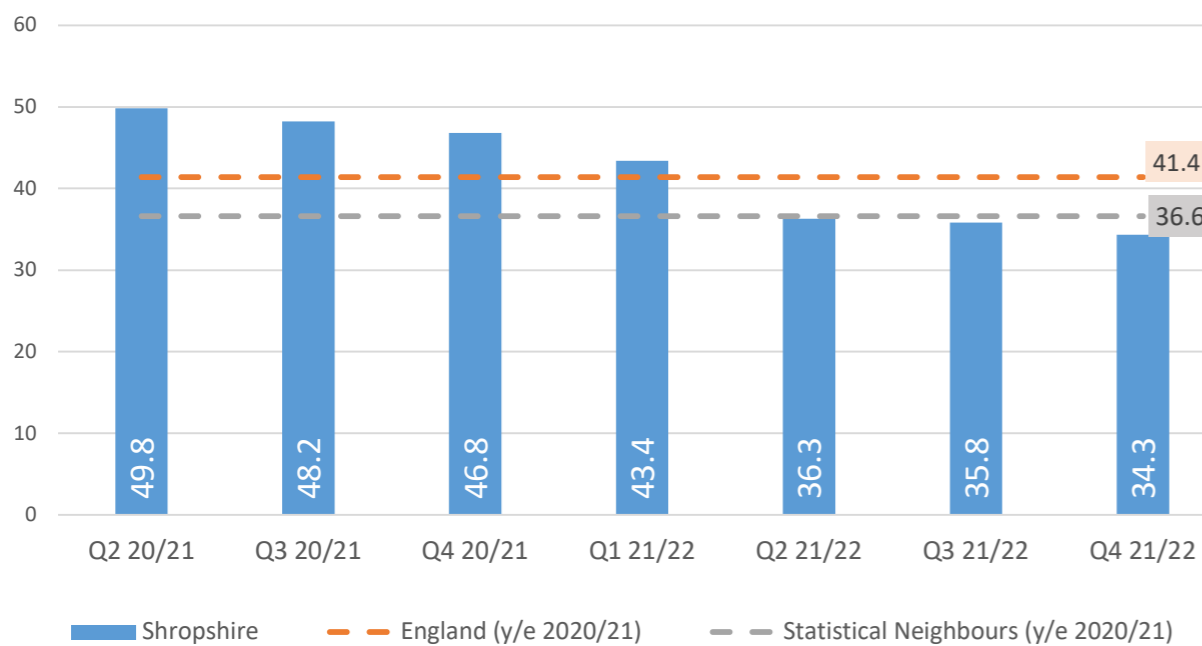
9: Children Looked After - rate per 10,000 U18



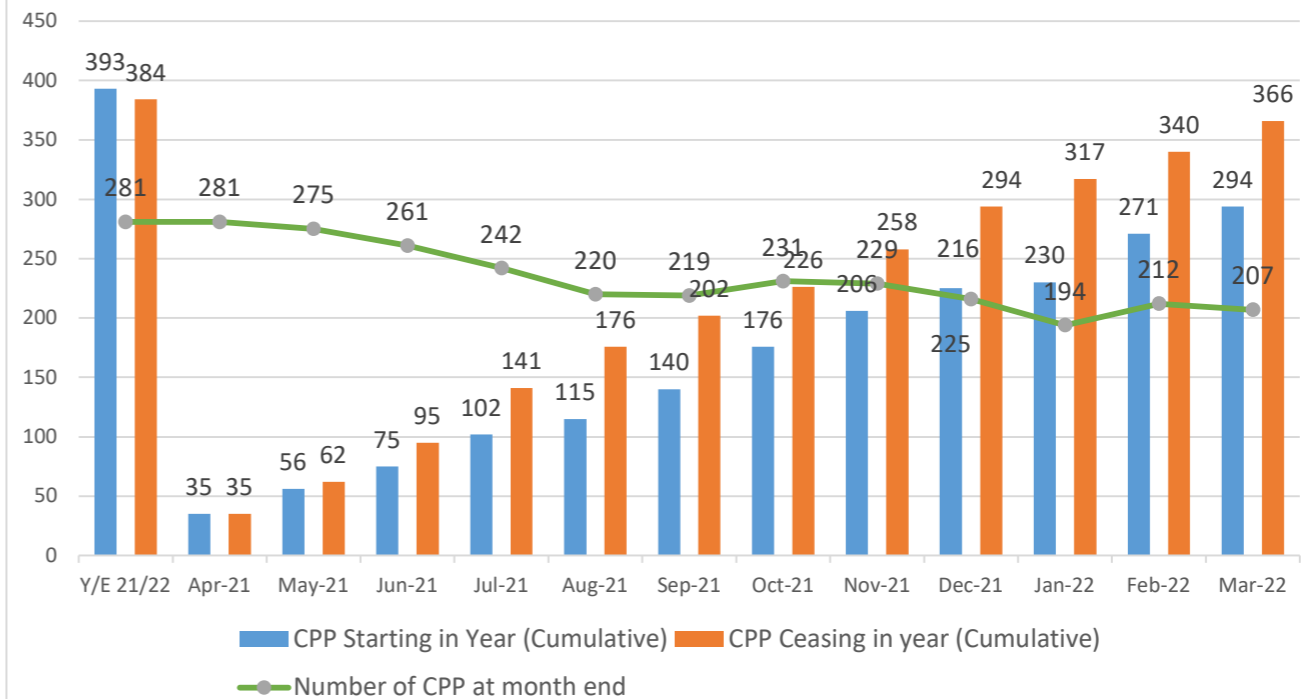
10: Children Looked After - starting, ceasing and number at month end



11: Child Protection Plans - rate per 10,000 U18

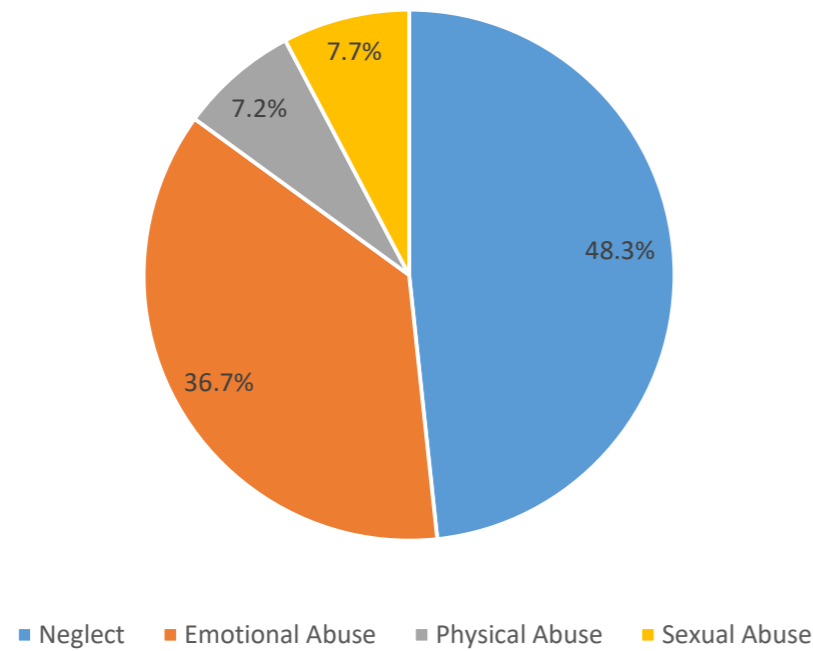


12: Child Protection Plans - starting, ceasing and number at month end

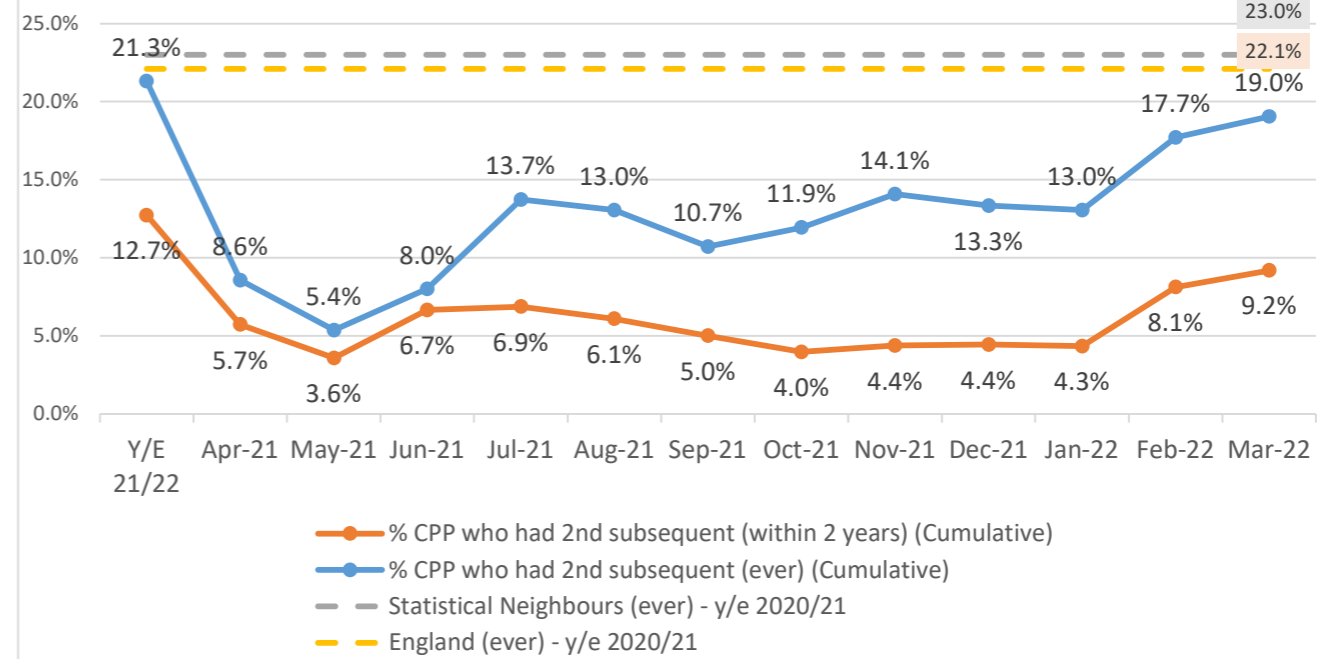




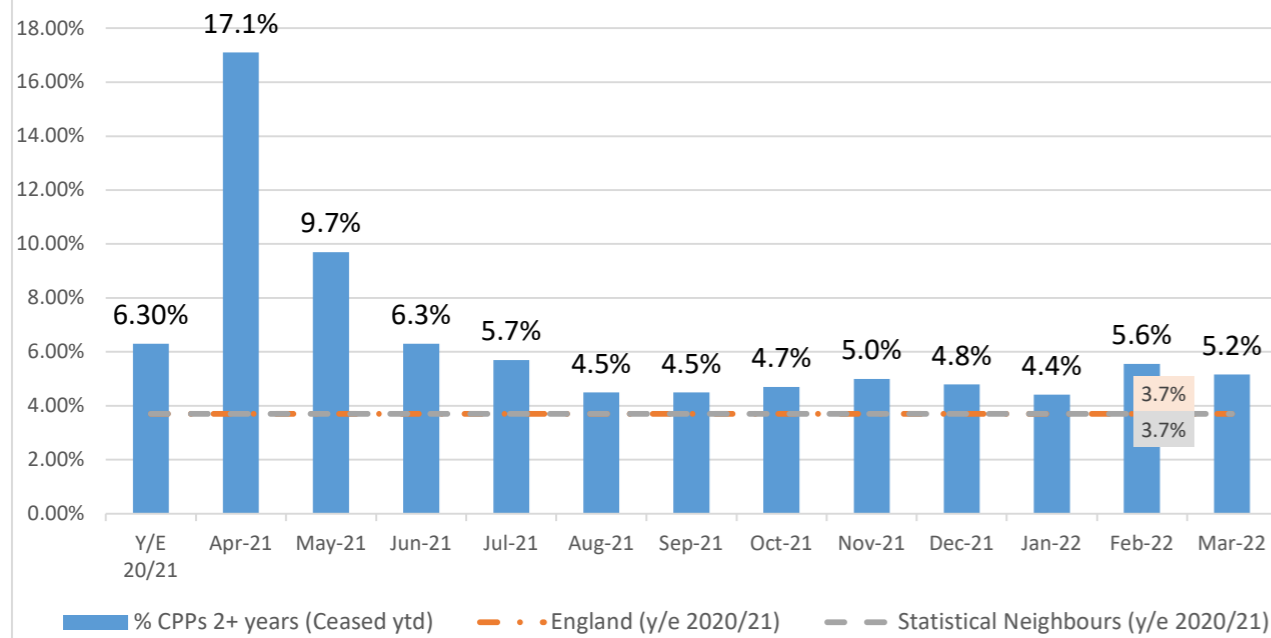
13: Current CPP - latest category of abuse (31/03/22)



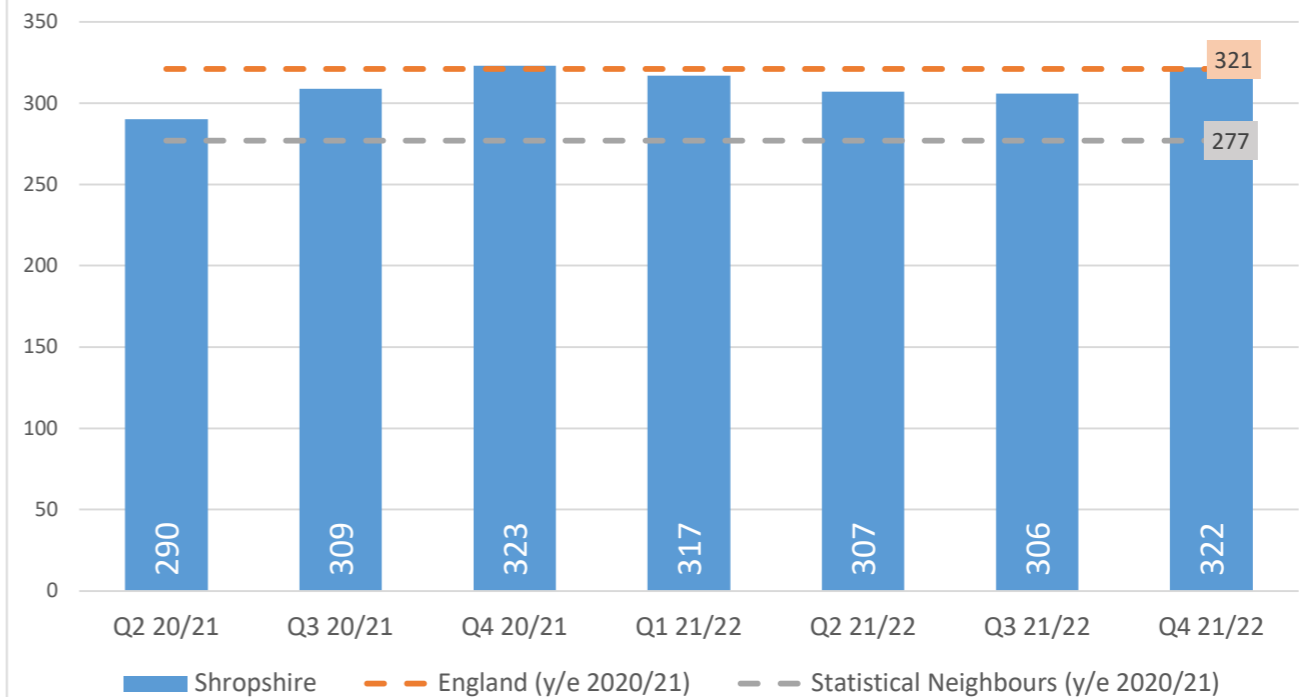
14: % of children who became the subject of a plan for a second or subsequent time



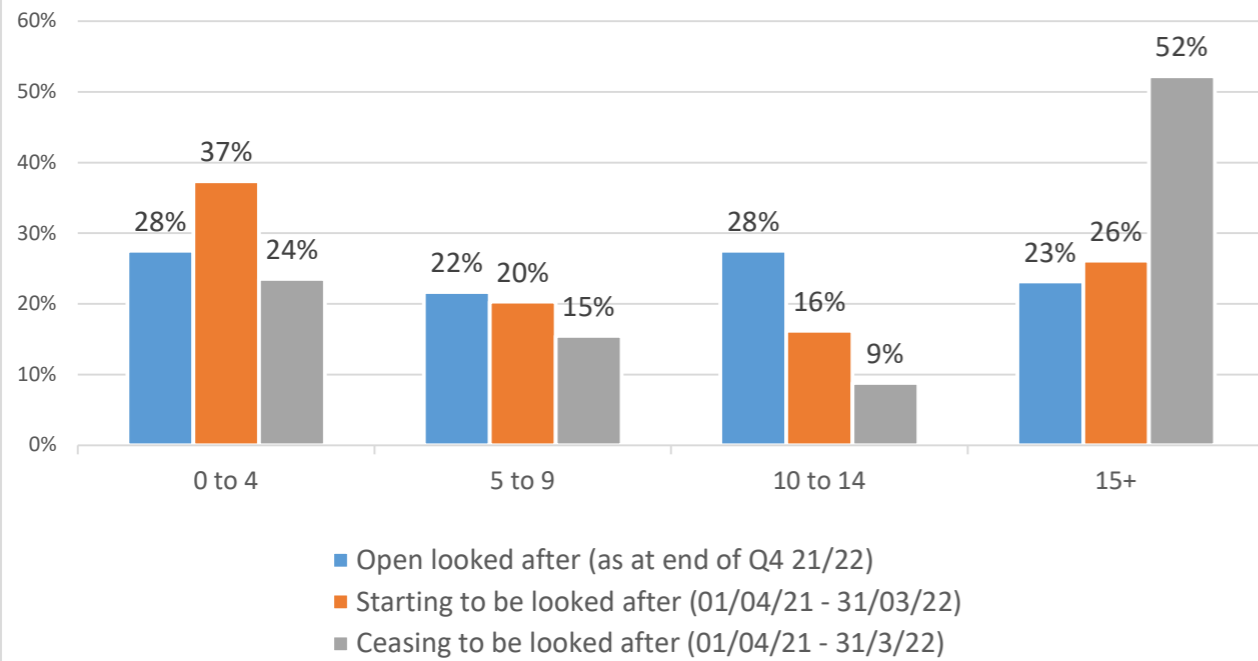
15: % of child protection plans open 2+ years at closure



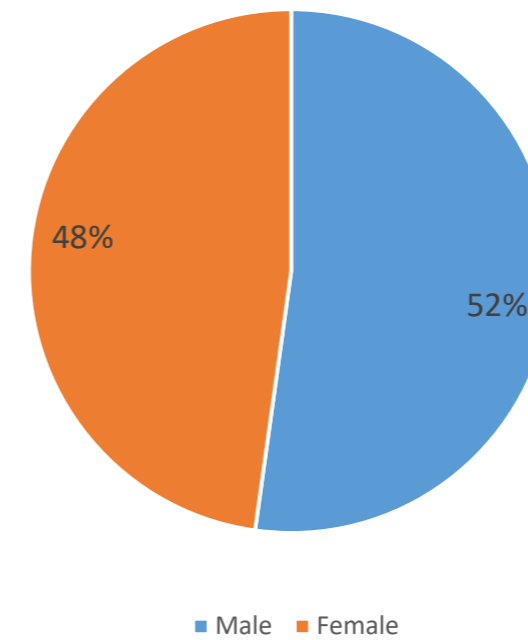
16: Children in need (national definition) - rate per 10,000 u18



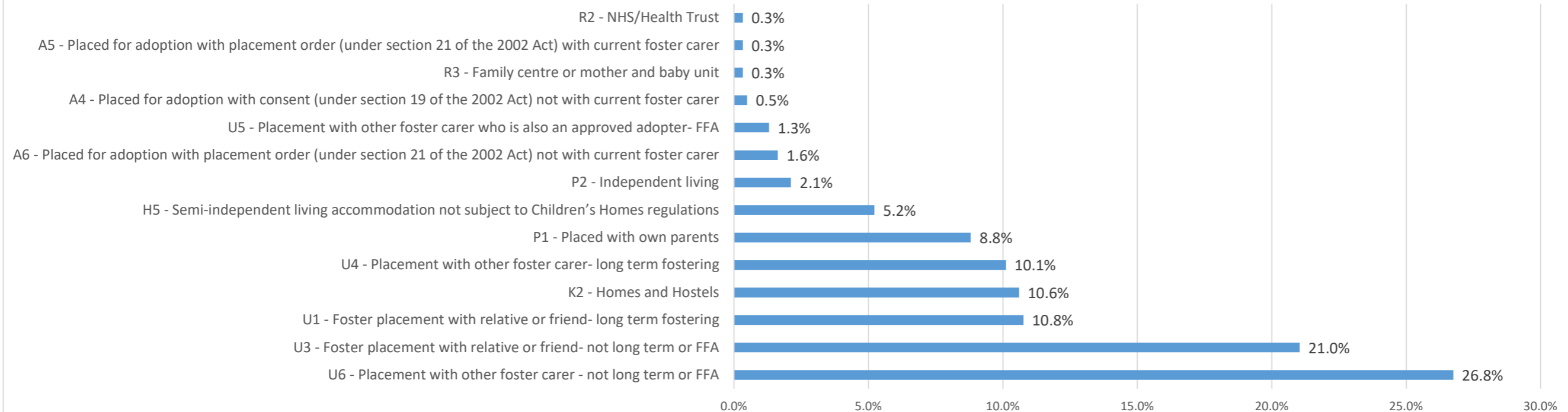
17: Age profiles of looked after children (open at Q4 end and starting/ceasing during 21/22)



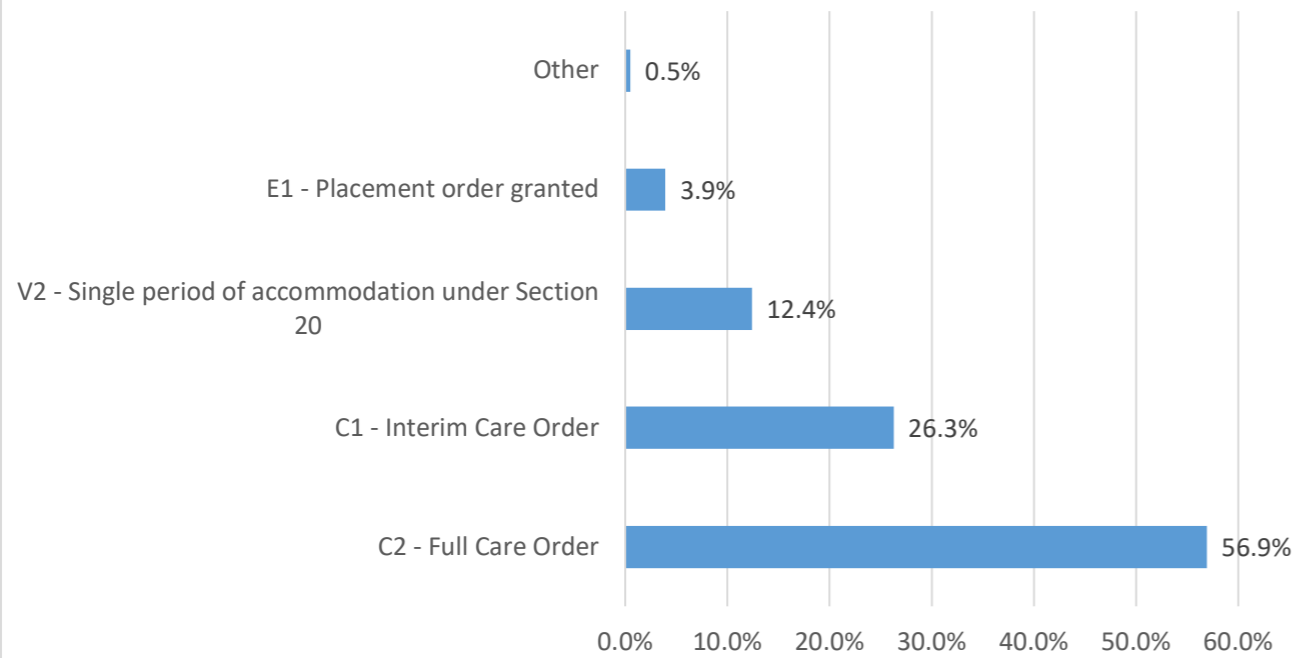
18: Looked after children as at end of Q4 21/22 - gender profile



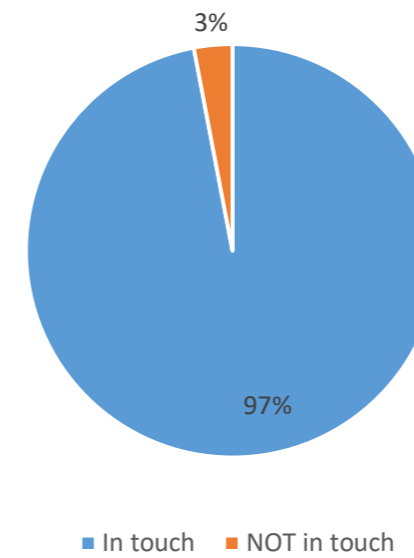
19: Current looked after children (end of Q4 21/22) by placement type



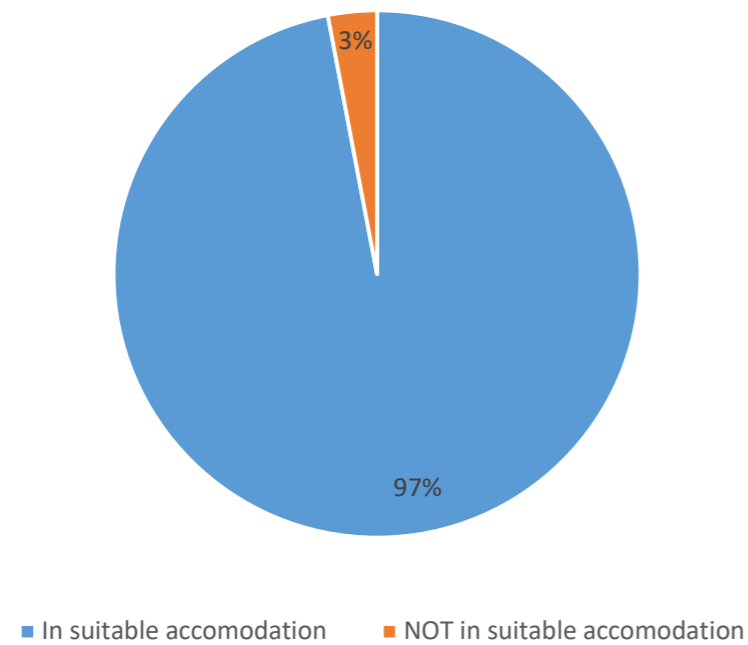
20: Current looked after children (End of Q4 21/22) - current legal status



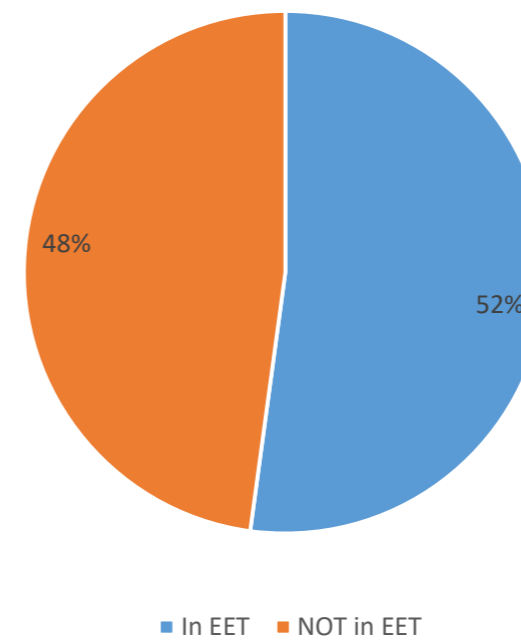
21: Care leavers 19-21 the LA is in touch with  
(all care leavers data in this report uses the West Mids benchmarking definition of those CL who have had their 19/20/21 birthday in reporting period (ytd))



22: Care leavers 19-21 in suitable accommodation



23: Care Leavers 19-21 in Employment, Education or Training



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# Inspection of Shropshire local authority children's services

**Inspection dates:** 7 to 11 February 2022

**Lead inspector:** John Roughton, Her Majesty's Inspector

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

Children in Shropshire are benefiting from the high aspirations of senior leaders for their services to continue to improve children's lives. Since the last inspection, leaders have improved performance and concentrated on getting their preferred practice model and effective processes in place to support managers and social workers to improve experiences for children.

Leaders in Shropshire know themselves well. They are making good use of data and management information and learning from quality assurance to inform service planning and developments within the local authority and across the partnership. However, despite this, there are some areas where progress in responding to or resolving known issues has not been quick enough, for example, the application of the Public Law Outline (PLO) and the domestic abuse triage arrangements.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, children's services have continued to provide a high level of support for all children, including ongoing face-to-face visits to promote their safety and well-being. Where partners were otherwise deployed, the local authority stepped up to ensure that children's needs and risks were responded to. Care leavers in particular have benefited greatly from the enhanced support of their personal advisers.

## **What needs to improve?**

- The effective application of the pre-proceedings stage of the PLO, and the local arrangements for the family group conference service.
- The sufficiency of local placement options.
- The partnership response to the emotional health needs of children in care.

## **The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection: requires improvement to be good**

1. Children in need of help and protection are identified quickly at the single 'front door' (Compass). There is a proportionate response to contacts and referrals. Prompt decision-making is informed through agency checks, consideration of history and discussions with parents. Thresholds between early help and social care are well understood by all the agencies and are appropriately applied, which ensures children get the right help at the right time to meet their needs. Greater consistency needs to be applied to the gathering and recording of ethnicity data to ensure a full understanding of children's potential needs.
2. There has been disruption to the established partnership between children's social care and the police in making triage decisions about domestic abuse. In recent months, the police have withdrawn from these arrangements and have been making these decisions unilaterally, only referring the high-level risk concerns to children's social care. This means that information is not always recorded about the impact of domestic abuse incidents on children, either current or historic, to inform safe and effective decision-making now or in the future. It is of concern that this issue has only been resolved during the inspection.
3. In the majority of cases, decisions to hold strategy meetings are made appropriately. These meetings take place promptly and are well attended by partners, informing clear plans. Health colleague attendance had been identified as inconsistent and funding has now been agreed for two dedicated health workers to join Compass.
4. Single and joint investigations are necessary and proportionate. These are well recorded, with clear rationale for decision-making and evidence of management oversight, confirming appropriate next steps to support and protect children.
5. Children benefit from effective multi-agency working to identify those who are vulnerable to exploitation or are being exploited. Child exploitation triage meetings are in place to review intelligence from the police and exploitation risk assessments, and make decisions which lead to strategy discussions, advice and information or ongoing work and review. The impact of these processes is helping professionals to be informed about risks to individual children, to map activity and networks and undertake disruption and preventative work with children and families to prevent escalation.
6. When children go missing from home, return home interviews (RHIs) are conducted appropriately and effectively by workers from the child exploitation

team. This ensures exploitation risks for these children are identified as soon as possible. Effective collaboration and timely information-sharing are helping to protect vulnerable adolescents, through early interventions or disruption activity. Risks from exploitation that continue to adulthood are now being considered through a pilot project with the adult safeguarding board, so that young people are treated as victims and appropriate support and diversion are provided.

7. Out-of-hours services work effectively with partner agencies to ensure children are protected. Joint visits are completed with police in a timely way and children are seen alone to understand their views. Out-of-hours workers have access to most of the appropriate services they require. Leaders have recently reviewed the current model for out-of-hours provision and identified areas for improvement and enhanced technology to support practice, with new arrangements planned from April 2022.
8. Comprehensive assessments accurately reflect children's and families' experiences. Social workers engage effectively with children and families, using the local authority's preferred model of practice to identify strengths and risks, and are sensitive to individual's identities. Assessments in the disabled children's team are very thorough and provide a detailed understanding of the children's health needs and level of functioning. Parenting capacity, external support, views of parents and the views and observations of children are explored well, leading to appropriate decision-making.
9. Children who present as homeless are well supported. They are appropriately assessed and are offered the right help to remain living at home or are accommodated in suitable alternative placements, including section 20 accommodation where appropriate. Children are made aware of their rights and entitlements and receive the right level of help to promote their welfare.
10. Children in need benefit from well-coordinated and effective partnership working in response to their identified needs. Social workers build positive relationships with children and families, making use of a range of tools and techniques to ensure children's wishes are understood and inform planning. Child in need plans are reviewed regularly and effectively, and are outcome-focused and mainly timebound.
11. Child protection work is demonstrating that children are benefiting from child protection plans which are focused effectively to bring about positive change. Core groups are held regularly, and the plans are used effectively to monitor progress. Plans are, for the most part, realistic and outcome-focused, which means that children and their families are being helped to make progress and reduce risk.
12. Visits to children on plans are child-focused and purposeful. They address relevant issues, celebrate success and make observations of parent and child interactions, as well as gathering children's views.
13. There are delays in establishing family group conferences to explore extended family and community resources. This does not support finding the best

solutions for children to remain living with their families and increases the risk of children needing to come into care.

14. Children are not benefiting from the effective application of the pre-proceedings stage of the PLO and, as a result, some children at risk of harm experience delay in securing safe, permanent care. These children have been exposed to neglect or even injury as a result of a lack of authoritative practice and professional curiosity regarding their circumstances. Decisions to consider PLO are being made too late, letters before proceedings are of poor quality and PLO plans are not consistently reviewed or progressed. Letters before proceedings are overly complicated and do not make it clear to parents what they need to do to ensure that their children remain in their care. During this inspection, senior leaders have acknowledged these issues and produced a comprehensive action plan in response.
15. The local authority designated officer (LADO) service in Shropshire responds promptly and robustly to concerns about adults in a position of trust who present risks to children. The LADO service is working effectively with the police and other partners. It coordinates the work of agencies and reviews progress in investigations, ensuring that all actions are concluded so that children are safeguarded. The LADO service is proactive in ensuring its role is understood and are involved in training newly recruited social workers and in running safer recruitment training for partners across Shropshire.
16. Effective tracking systems allow leaders to have oversight of those children who are missing education and those who are home educated. These systems lead to escalation to the education welfare service when elective home education is not in children's best interests in terms of promoting their welfare, or when children are missing. This service works closely with parents and children to ensure that children's welfare is promoted.

## **The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers: good**

17. Children do well once they come into care. They are making progress and are provided with support to develop their hobbies and interests. Issues of children's culture and identity are carefully considered and appropriate support provided to meet these needs. When children in care are at risk of exploitation, careful consideration is given to where they live and how they can be safeguarded.
18. Children in care are visited regularly and according to their need. Social workers know children very well and many of them have long and well-established relationships with the children, which enable them to better understand their needs. Social workers undertake direct work with children to build relationships, explore feelings and gather their views effectively.
19. Some children have experienced significant issues with their mental and emotional well-being through the pandemic. Their needs in relation to this are not consistently well met by appropriate health provision. The local authority is



mitigating the impact of this through spot purchasing of tailored support to meet individual children's needs and through its own provision. Leaders are working persistently with the clinical commissioning group and health providers to commission services to address this gap.

20. Children's care plans are detailed and specifically focused, with timescales for monitoring progress or completion. Health assessments are routinely taking place and health needs are captured and addressed in children's plans. Plans are helping children to make positive progress in response to their identified needs.
21. There has been a recent dip in RHIs taking place following incidents of children going missing. This hinders a full understanding of risks and the development of strategies to prevent further exposure to harm. Leaders have close scrutiny of this issue and are responding, ensuring that RHIs are routinely prioritised and undertaken and help to support children's safety, through careful analysis of the factors leading to their going missing.
22. Independent reviewing officers (IROs) know children well and maintain contact between reviews. In most cases, IROs are having a positive impact on progressing and escalating concerns, to make a difference for children.
23. New initiatives to address sufficiency issues in Shropshire are being implemented and developed, particularly for those children with complex needs. Significant investment in increasing capacity in residential and semi-independent provision is starting to provide more options for children in care and those approaching adulthood to live more locally, nearer to universal services and family support.
24. Children are benefiting from the effective coordination of permanence arrangements, with more children secured in long-term fostering arrangements and planned moves back into area from out-of-county residential placements.
25. There are increasing numbers of children benefiting from special guardianship orders (SGOs). Viability and connected carer assessments are timely, ensuring there is no delay for children. The provision of pre-SGO advice is clear and this helps inform carers' decision-making. As a result, SGO plans are tailored to meet the needs of individual children and their permanence is being secured in their extended family networks where possible.
26. Children live with foster carers who are well trained and are skilled in meeting their individual needs. The preparation, training and assessment of prospective foster carers enables them to have an understanding of the complexities surrounding the fostering task. There is a clear framework of training for all foster carers. A mainstream foster carer recruitment strategy is in place, however, managers are not on target to meet this year's recruitment goal.
27. Children are benefiting from permanence through adoption and there has been an increase in the number of foster to adopt approvals and older children and sibling groups being matched with adopters. Adopters are positive about the support provided throughout the adoption process. Careful planning ensures

that children's moves are completed sensitively and enables adopters to build meaningful connections with their children.

28. The virtual school and partners work well together to ensure that children in care receive the educational support they need to succeed. Individual children are making strong academic progress. Older children are being helped and supported into higher education, training and employment opportunities, including the council's own apprenticeship scheme, as appropriate to their needs.
29. Children leaving care in Shropshire receive excellent help and guidance from enthusiastic and passionate personal advisers (PAs), who are tenacious in supporting young people to make positive changes to help them to progress in their lives. Pathway plans are collaborative and dynamic, prioritising the areas of work which are the most important to children and young people. They show how risk and behaviours are challenged and support young people to think about what needs to be done to make further progress.
30. The local offer for care leavers is comprehensive and effective. It includes support with housing, finances, the development of a new care leavers hub and dedicated careers advice. Despite the pandemic, there has been substantial improvement in the numbers of 17- and 18-year-olds in employment, education or training and an improving picture for those aged 19 to 21. Apprenticeships offered by the local authority are paid at a rate which supports young people to be able to live independently.
31. Care leavers who spoke to inspectors unanimously agreed that PAs in Shropshire provide them with exceptional support, tailored to their individual needs. The PAs have been working with their young people for many years and it is this level of consistency and reliability that the care leavers value highly.

### **The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families: good**

32. The lead member, chief executive and director of people have made a significant change to the culture of the organisation, with a shift towards people-focused priorities and a clear emphasis on improving outcomes for the most vulnerable members of society. Political leaders are bringing children to the front and center of the council's business. Representation on the corporate parenting board reflects a whole-council commitment to championing children in care and care leavers.
33. Elected members and senior leaders recognise that early help provision has been cut back too far in the recent past, which in part may be reflected in the increased numbers of children coming into care. There is a renewed commitment to investing in preventative services, for example, the 'stepping-stones' service, with a focus on earlier intervention and edge of care support already having a positive impact on supporting children and families. Increased investment in the fostering service is enabling more children to be appropriately cared for under special guardianship arrangements.

34. Partnership arrangements, in particular with health organisations, are focused on the benefits to vulnerable children of early prevention. Leaders are working closely with the clinical commissioning group and health providers to ensure that children with complex emotional needs have access to responsive services within timescales to make a positive difference.
35. Despite frequent communication with police partners, the local authority had not been able to influence a speedy and positive outcome to the lengthy absence of a joint domestic abuse triage arrangement. While this has been reinstated during this inspection, continued work with police partners is needed towards the earlier resolution of such issues as they emerge.
36. Performance data is largely accurate and used effectively by leaders and managers throughout the organisation. Regular performance and quality assurance reports and meetings focus not only on compliance but also on what the findings indicate about the experience of the children, informing audit priorities and practice improvement.
37. Quality assurance arrangements are strong, with a comprehensive approach to learning from audit. There is effective learning from thematic audits. Good communication and training with workers to share learning is helping to improve practice, for example, in testing threshold decision-making in section 47 inquiries.
38. While children's voices routinely inform their own plans, the participation of children in influencing strategic planning is not as sufficiently developed as that which leaders aspire to. In response, a project is starting which will involve children in its steering group and have children's representation at the corporate parenting board, with children actively informing future strategic plans. A care-experienced care ambassador is now employed, supporting children to attend the Care Leavers Forum and working with elected members to raise awareness in the local economy. This is leading to increased work experience opportunities for children in care and care leavers.
39. There is a comprehensive workforce development strategy, helping to build a staff group working to the local authority's practice priorities. Increased numbers of practice educators are being trained to take on more students, newly qualified workers, 'Step-up' students and trainee social workers. Leaders are aware of the need to recruit more experienced social workers due to the current imbalance in the workforce and have invested in a targeted recruitment campaign starting in March 2022.
40. Social workers in Shropshire are benefiting from an organisational culture in which they feel valued and supported, and benefit from a wide range of learning and development opportunities available to them.
41. While social workers report receiving good and regular supervision, this is not reflected in the recording. This means that children may not understand the monitoring of progress against their plans and the rationale for decisions affecting them when they choose to access their records later in life. Leaders have commissioned a comprehensive training programme to support managers

and workers in their recording of supervisions. This had been paused during the pandemic but is now due to restart in the spring of 2022.

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**New Ways of Working:** Agile & Mobile Working  
**Belonging in the Council:** Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion, Leadership Development, Management Essentials  
**Looking After Our People:** Health, Wellbeing & Resilience

### 3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to consider and comment on the contents of the draft Workforce Strategy 2022 to 2025 and to make a recommendation to Council to adopt this as the strategy for the Council going forward.

## REPORT

### 4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1 The Council's Workforce Strategy provides assurance that as an organisation we take a proactive approach to workforce issues, identifying areas of risk and implementing mitigating actions to address these. It identifies the capacity, capability and diversity of workforce and how it needs to operate to deliver outcomes for the residents of Shropshire.
- 4.2 Amongst the Council's Strategic Risks there are two particularly pertinent to the Workforce Strategy: Mental Health and Wellbeing of Staff and Reputation. Mitigation of both risks is considered as part of the four themes identified in paragraph 2.4 above.
- 4.2 The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 as well as being guided by our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the raft of Employment Legislation that protects both the organisation as an employer and the rights of individual employees.
- 4.3 There are no direct environmental, equalities, consultation or climate change requirements or consequences of this report. However, the nature of the report and strategy and its impact on the workforce has indirect implications from an equality perspective, and these are highlighted as part of the action plan in the strategy.

### 5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications from the adoption and implementation of the strategy. Staff costs make up around a quarter of the Council's gross budget, therefore it is important that



the strategy maximises the use of the workforce to meet priorities and provide value for money.

## **6. Climate Change Appraisal**

- 6.1 This report does not directly make decisions on energy and fuel consumption; renewable energy generation; carbon offsetting and mitigation; or on climate change adaption. Therefore, no effect to report.
- 6.2 Indirect climate change considerations are related to the future ways of working and the use of council buildings for the workforce, acknowledged and outlined in the strategy action plan.

## **7. Background**

- 7.1 The council has had a Workforce Strategy in place since 2016 and was last reviewed in 2020. Since the last update the Covid 19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on local authorities across the country and given that the majority of services are delivered through its workforce, this has impacted our people greatly.
- 7.2 The review of the strategy acknowledges the way the organisation responded to the pandemic and is indeed still suffering effects in 2022 as we learn to live with the virus. Our dedicated and committed workforce has adapted to meet the challenges and responded in many ways to keep services running and our residents and communities safe.
- 7.3 Despite the pandemic there have been many achievements to be proud of and these have been acknowledged and celebrated in this updated strategy.
- 7.4 As we look forward to the next 3 years, and learn to live with Covid to some degree, the world of work and therefore our employees will be different. Our plans and actions, set out in Section 8 of the Strategy, look to address the challenges and changes we need to make to ensure that the workforce is effective, efficient, agile and resilient for the future.
- 7.5 Our plans align to not only the priorities and strategic objectives set out in the Shropshire Plan, but our organisation principles – specifically ensuring we operate as a single organisation, engage, empower and develop talented people, provide value for money, continuously improve performance and making digital the preferred way to work and transact.

- 7.6 As Shropshire Council is part of the Shropshire Telford & Wrekin Integrated Care System (ICS) the actions in the strategy have also been closely aligned to the themes of the ICS People Plan to ensure, particularly for our health and social care workforce, we can join up activities wherever possible:

**Growing for the future:** Attract, Recruit & Retain, Apprenticeships & Career Pathways, Workforce Planning

**New Ways of Working:** Agile & Mobile Working

**Belonging in the Council:** Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion, Leadership Development, Management Essentials

**Looking After Our People:** Health, Wellbeing & Resilience

- 7.7 Although a 3-year strategy, there will be an annual review to monitor progress against actions and ensure these remain aligned to council priorities.

## 8. Conclusions

- 8.1 As a public sector body that delivers over 600 services to communities, the majority through people, a talented, engaged and aligned workforce is crucial for bringing the strategic priorities to life and ensures the organisation delivers on its objectives.
- 8.2 The strategy therefore needs to ensure that we utilise our workforce in the best possible way, meeting priorities and our organisation principles.

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

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Gwilym Butler, Finance and Corporate Resources

**Local Member**

**Appendices**

Appendix A - Workforce Strategy 2022 to 2025

Appendix B - Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)

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# Workforce Strategy

2022 to 2025



# Workforce Strategy 2022 to 2025

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## Foreword

### Leader and Chief Executive

Shropshire Council faces major challenges with regards to how our services are funded, despite additional funding from government due to Covid. Meanwhile, demand for some of our services such as adult social care and children's social care is growing all the time.

The pandemic saw our workforce step up and work incredibly hard to deliver new and existing services to keep Shropshire safe and save lives. We have worked in different ways and this has opened our eyes as to what's possible and what we're all capable of. It has undoubtedly accelerated our adoption of new technology, changing the way that we communicate, collaborate and deliver our services.

As the restrictions of the pandemic recede, it could be tempting to return to old ways of working, but the world has changed for good and we need to consolidate what we have achieved and continue to develop to meet future challenges.

Our employees are one of our most valuable assets and we must ensure that all staff feel engaged and motivated so that they can deliver the best possible services to the residents of Shropshire. It is imperative that employees feel they have a voice and can contribute to improving the way we do things – most often it is those on the frontline who know their services and customers the best and how things can be done better to improve the lives of others.

We have updated our Workforce Strategy highlighting achievements over the last two years and to outline our plans for the next few years to demonstrate the ongoing commitment of investing in our employees.



**Lezley Picton**  
Leader



**Andy Begley**  
Chief Executive

## 1. What is a Workforce Strategy?

The Workforce Strategy links to and supports the Council's strategic priorities, outlined in [The Shropshire Plan](#), by identifying what capacity, capability and diversity of workforce and how it needs to operate to deliver outcomes for the residents of Shropshire.

The strategy helps provide the direction and to ensure that we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right level and at the right cost.

It is driven by, but also enables the overall Organisation Strategy – [The Shropshire Plan](#) which has the following priorities, aligned to the vision of

**“Shropshire living the best life”:**

**Healthy People**

**Healthy Economy**

**Healthy Environment**

**Healthy Organisation**

The Strategy is a three year plan that aligns with other key strategies for the organisation but will be reviewed each year to ensure it is still fit for purpose. It also looks further into the future than just the next three years to ensure that our people related policies can adapt and be flexible to the changing world of work.



## 2. Why do we need one?

As a public sector body that delivers over 600 services to our communities, the majority through people, a talented, engaged and aligned workforce is crucial for bringing the strategic priorities to life and ensures the organisation delivers on its objectives.

Direct people costs make up 26% of the council's organisational costs. The cost of getting it wrong can therefore be significant.

A strategy therefore needs to ensure that we utilise our workforce in the best possible way, meeting priorities, strategic objectives and underpinned by our values:



Our Workforce Strategy needs to align with our associated strategies that enable the organisation to function well – ie, the Digital/IT Strategy, [Carbon Reduction Strategy](#) so that the workforce has the tools to do their jobs effectively, can work flexibly and be responsive to customer needs.

It's also important that the Strategy celebrate achievements over the previous years and recognises the hard work that all of our workforce undertakes, as well as setting out clear direction for the future, which we can then measure our progress against.

### 3. How did we develop the Strategy?

We first published our Workforce Strategy in 2016 when we were embarking on a major transformation programme across the council. We then reviewed and published our updated strategy for the period 2019 to 2022.

This review of the strategy has taken stock of the last two years, in particular the challenges brought about by Covid 19, what we have achieved since that time, where we are now and where we need to go (and how we get there). The Covid 19 pandemic had an enormous impact on the workforce who responded to the challenges and ensured that existing services, as well as new ones, continued to be delivered in very difficult times.

Alongside the review of this strategy and the creation of the Shropshire Plan, work has been undertaken to create a 'Getting it Right Guide' for our workforce. The purpose of the guide is to provide clarity for the workforce about how what they do fits into the refreshed Shropshire Plan it's priorities and strategic objectives which sets out the direction for the council over the coming years to continue to deliver excellent services to our communities. The guide will be rolled out to the workforce in 2022.

## 4. The Council's Financial Position

As most councils are, Shropshire Council is facing significant challenges in terms of reduced government funding, increasing pressure on services and having to deliver more with less. In order to meet these challenges, we need to constantly review our services; what we offer and how we offer it; make efficiencies through our systems/processes, ensure our staff are equipped with the right skills and are engaged and motivated to continue to deliver excellent services to residents.

Since our first strategy in 2016, the number of employees that we employ has reduced by 27% through service redesign and restructure. Since 2019, headcount reduced by 2.2% (from 5,911 to 5,776). However, the council still continues to deliver over 600 different services to our communities.

To deliver the priorities set out in The Shropshire plan we need clear plans that set us on the right road. We need to be clear about the destination and what we want to achieve. We also need to be agile to changing circumstances and external factors so that we can respond but also keep on course to that destination.

Over the last five years, we have invested in our infrastructure and systems which will enable us to work differently and much more responsively to customer need. Building on the work that began before the Covid 19 pandemic we have accelerated our approach to mobile and agile working. Utilising technology to make digital the preferred way to work and transact, work is about what you do, not where you do it. This aligns to our Asset Management Strategy – reducing the reliance on a large estate of council buildings for our employees.

Our Financial Strategy has recently been approved by full Council which sets out how we will deliver our priorities with the resources we have available over the next few years.

[Financial Strategy](#)

[Medium Term Financial Strategy](#)

## 5. What does the Council look like now? *(figures as at 31.3.2022)*



We employ:  
**5,776**

staff or (4,223 Full Time Equivalents)

Our workforce has decreased by 27% since 2016.

**2016** 7,911 staff

**2019** 5,911 staff

**2022** 5,776 staff



Of the  
**5,776**  
employees



**2,208**

work in schools



**3,568**

work in non-school functions

How our workforce is made up:



Gender split overall:



Non school split:



## How our workforce is made up continued:

### Ethnicity:

# 1.70%

workforce from Black and Minority Ethnic origin an increase by 0.38% since 2019.

This compares to 1.8% of the population of Shropshire (Census 2011)

### Our levels of sickness absence:

# 9.95

overall average for days lost for all employees

For non-schools the average days lost is the same at

## 9.95 days

Overall, rates have increased since 2019 – in part due to the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic

### Disability

Staff with a declared disability,

# 1.85%

similar levels to previous years.

This compares to 21.7% of the Shropshire population have declared a condition in which their daily activities are limited (Census 2011)\*

### Retention Rates (turnover):

For all employees is

# 9.75%

For non-school this is 9.16%

\*Since the 2001 Census the scope of conditions that fall under the term of disability has broadened. The 2011 Census divides the population with a disability into those whose daily activities are limited a little and those whose daily activities are limited a lot. This figure includes both. The broadening of scope is reflective of the increase in the figure for the Shropshire economically active population with a disability. In 2001 the figure was 6.66%.

## 6. Reflections and Achievements of the last two years

A lot has happened since we launched the first Workforce Strategy in 2016 and refreshed this in 2019. It would have been very hard to predict the challenges that, worldwide, we had to face from the Covid 19 pandemic and how that would impact us as a country, our communities and our workforce in different ways.

However, from the priorities we set out in 2019 there have been many achievements:

- Recruitment to a number of Senior Roles including the Chief Executive, Executive Director of People, Executive Director for Resources and Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Prevention undertaken in a 'hybrid' way – virtually and face to face.
- Creation of the new People directorate in October 2021, merging together Adult and Children's services.
- Commenced a new organisation wide Refocus Programme that will co-ordinate the Council's transformation activities in relation to Organisation and Process; People; Assets and Resources; Tools and Systems and Customers and Partners.
- Created a Management Essentials Handbook and associated Training programme
- Developed a new approach to Performance Management and Appraisals ready for roll out in 2022.
- Implementation of a new employee benefits platform, including car salary sacrifice scheme.
- Creation of a 'Looking After our People' Plan and dedicated Wellbeing resource centre available for employees.
- Created a fast track physiotherapy service jointly with Robert Jones & Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital to fast track employees with musculoskeletal issues to support earlier return to work.

- Since April 2017, we have paid £2.1m into the Apprenticeship Levy; we've processed over 500 applications, have over 200 employees currently on an apprenticeship programme and we've had 64 employees successfully complete an apprenticeship.
- Created 60 Kickstart placements across the organisation to support young people into the workplace. These were fully funded placements for six months for 16-24 year olds at risk of/unemployed. Of these, 11 have already gone onto secure permanent employment within the council or in other organisations.

The Covid 19 pandemic brought about challenges that tested every local authority in the country. However, this brought about real achievements for the organisation which we are incredibly proud of. Some key highlights include:

- Responding rapidly to (daily) government guidance by creating and updating people policies and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Ongoing support to managers and employees on workforce issues – increased cases of Covid/self-isolation/wellbeing of staff.
- Redeployed over 100 employees to other roles throughout the pandemic to support front line services, services under increased pressure, lateral flow testing and supported the NHS with setting up the vaccination centres and supporting the accelerated booster vaccination programme.
- Set up a Shropshire system-wide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) acquisition, mutual aid and issue to front line staff.
- Furlough of Staff unable to work; averaged 350 employees per month on the scheme across schools and corporate, with over 800 per month at the peak of lockdown
- Vaccinations of front-line health and social care staff – working with the NHS to get our priority health and social care staff vaccinated.
- Staff and partner agency Testing Helpline – referrals through HR team to NHS Testing. Partners included Shropshire Towns & Rural Housing, Academies and Veolia.

- Support to managers in managing vulnerable employees through risk assessments, management referrals to Occupational Health as well as a dedicated telephone support for re-opening/operation of schools.
- Provision of a suite of wellbeing initiatives for employees.
- Health & Safety – Covid Secure workplaces/risk assessments/ guidance
- Annual seasonal flu vaccination programmes undertaken to protect our employees.
- Undertook two Staff Surveys (June 2020 and January 2021).
- Published a “We Said, We Have, We Will” document outlining commitments from the responses to the above surveys.
- Online support to Managers and Employees via webinars, examples being:
  - Managing your team remotely
  - Inducting new staff remotely
  - Resilience

## Future Ways of Working

In October 2020 we established a New Ways of Working Group (NWOW) with manager representation from across the organisation as well as our Trade Union colleagues with the focus based on the following themes:

- Use of Admin Buildings
- Support for Homeworking
- Engagement with Staff
- New Deal for Staff
- Health & Wellbeing Support
- Communications & Consultation
- Technology



Aligned to this group we also set up an Employee Reference Group (ERG) made up of over 50 employees from across the organisation. The group has worked closely with the NWOW group, with sub-groups looking at specific projects to inform the overall Future Ways of Working proposals.

Approximately 75% of our office based workforce worked from home from March 2020 (rising to over 90% at the peak of lockdown). A small number of employees who were unable to work from home either due to the role they undertook/access to equipment or personal reasons continued to access our main HQ building.

As lockdowns and restrictions have eased we opened up our admin buildings across the county for employees to book space to meet and collaborate although a large proportion (over 1,000) of our employees have continued to work from home for the majority of the working week.

In September 2021 we launched our Future Working proposals with new categories of office use: Essential, Regular and Occasional. For those Regular and Occasional users, who will continue to work from home for the majority of their working week, we are paying a Home Working Allowance in recognition of the increased costs associated with working from home in this way. This arrangement is temporary for a 12 month period whilst we review usage of our admin buildings for bookable space/hybrid working and review our Asset Management Strategy.

## **7. What does the Council need to look like in future?**

Shropshire Council faces major challenges with regards to how our services are funded, despite additional funding from government due to Covid. Meanwhile, demand for some of our services such as adult social care and children's social care is growing all the time.

The pandemic has seen us work in different ways and has opened our eyes as to what's possible and what we're all capable of. It has undoubtedly accelerated our adoption of new technology, changing the way that we communicate, collaborate and deliver our services.

As the restrictions of the pandemic begin to recede, it could be tempting to return to old ways of working, but the world has changed for good and we need to consolidate what we have achieved and continue to develop to meet future challenges. In April 2021, we launched our new change programme called 'Refocus' to do exactly that.

We also need to be mindful of the changing demographics of the workforce – working lives are lengthening as the UK population ages. As the UK state pension age rises, more older people will be in employment. By 2030, the number of economically active people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by one third. The UK is also now seeing emergence of a four generational workforce (baby boomers, generation X, millennials and the first of generation Z). This brings about fresh challenges to motivate a very diverse workforce.

There is also an increase in non-linear careers rather than 'careers for life'. People are continuing to work later in life. This shift is likely to lead to people having more stages in their career and making changes to new sectors or having 'portfolio careers', where they work in more than one area simultaneously. This, in turn, may lead to higher expectations of employers to make it easier for people to move in and out of roles and to create more opportunities for non-linear progression<sup>1</sup>. Again this brings out a challenge to the traditional progression routes within local authorities and the flexibility of roles within them.

If we get things right, by 2024, our organisation and processes will be fully aligned to the needs of Shropshire citizens, with teams from across all directorates co-operating and sharing their knowledge and experience to maximise efficiency, productivity and outcomes. We'll have a strong grip on the financial management of the council, with everyone having a clear understanding of financial roles and their responsibilities.

Staff will work in an agile way, with less reliance on assets and resources and more use of tools and systems to do the job. We'll have fewer buildings, but those that we do have will be used to work with like-minded organisations, to support local communities and businesses, as well as to generate income. We'll have maximised the use of our key systems, applications and automations to minimise repetitive and time-

<sup>1</sup> The future of NHS resources and organisation development, Prerana Issar

consuming tasks, allowing staff to use their skills on activities that our customers and service users value the most. Everyone will have a clear understanding of the council's strategic objectives, and how they're personally expected to contribute to them. We'll all have access to timely and easy to understand information that tells us if our business and personal goals are being achieved.

We'll continue to invest in our people, appreciating that happy, healthy, supported staff are more engaged, motivated and productive. We'll actively identify and nurture our natural leaders across all levels of the organisation, knowing that they're key to our success. The workforce will have the skills and flexibility to rapidly respond to the changing demands of 21st Century local government. Further, excellent performance will continue to be recognised and rewarded, whilst poor performance will be addressed swiftly and consistently across the organisation.

Our customers and partners will perceive Shropshire Council as a trusted and responsive organisation with high levels of commitment, professionalism, accountability and engagement from its staff. The council will be recognised for its efforts to tackle Shropshire's carbon footprint and for how it supports the people and businesses of Shropshire with high quality infrastructure, such as county-wide broadband.

So, for our workforce of the future this means we need to create an environment where our workforce can achieve the following:

- A more mobile/agile workforce with a reduced need to be based in an office Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm;
- Greater flexibilities about where you can work – it's about what you do, not where you do it;
- Increased use of technology – engaging with our customers in different ways;
- Able to have more timely conversations using technology, decisions can be made quicker;
- The need to physically get together will be more socially driven rather than task based;

- Less travel and commuting to/from work / visiting clients,, contributing to our carbon reduction targets;
- Better work-life balance for a lot of the workforce;
- More flexibility in roles – ability to adapt to emerging challenges, as well as different career progression routes;
- A workforce that acts as a single organisation, focussed on the customer;
- A workforce proud to make a difference and recognised at an annual Staff Awards Ceremony.

However, we do need to be mindful of the long lasting impacts of the pandemic on our people and the change in the way we work which includes:

- The longer term health and wellbeing impacts of the pandemic – PTSD, stress, anxiety, depression, burnout etc. could lead to increased sickness absence levels and support required over a prolonged period of time.
- Long Covid – long term health impacts for some of our employees from having the virus.
- Delays to planned care in hospital may impact on our employees sickness absence levels.
- Confidence of our workforce to return to a more social environment – fear may be there for many for some time to come.
- The drivers and motivations for our employees may be very different - what was important before, may no longer be important now with priorities shifted.
- The impact of the loss of education of children of our workforce and the work to be done to get back to normal routines and levels of education.
- Isolation / loneliness for some of our workforce who live alone
- Home environments not always suitable for regular home working (for many reasons) so we need to provide options for our workforce as to where they work.
- The importance of clarity of roles/objectives for our workforce to deliver what is required to meet the organisation vision.

Based on the above, we need to ensure we recover and build resilience in the workforce through:

- Allowing time for employees to recover, take time out and recharge.
- Continuing to increase our wellbeing offer to support our workforce and monitor sickness trends carefully.
- Renegotiating the psychological contract we have with our workforce – what we expect of them versus what they get in return.
- Building a workforce that is resilient, adaptable and flexible to meet changing demands.
- Clarifying what skills will we need in future that we need to plan for now.
- Supporting our Managers to lead and manage in the new world.
- Ensuring we are clear on priorities, resourced in the right areas and employees have the skills to adapt.
- Maintaining safety at work – PPE, Testing, Vaccination etc to protect our workforce and service users.
- Maximising opportunities from a larger pool of available talent from other sectors to enhance our capabilities as an organisation.

## 8. How do we get there?

### The Shropshire Plan

All of our people related activities should align to the priorities set out in The Shropshire Plan and through the Getting it Right Guide for our workforce. All employees need to feel that their role contributes to achievement of outcomes for our communities.

Our plans also need to align to the wider work of the Integrated Care System (ICS) for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin as set out in the People Plan to ensure that we work collaboratively wherever possible as a system to benefit the wider workforce of Shropshire.

## 9. Our Workforce Priorities

Theme	Project/Activity	What we will do	When by	How these meet our priorities
Growing for the Future	Attract, Recruit and Retain	Review our approaches to recruitment activity to attract a wider and more diverse audience. Ensuring our brand is one of an Employer of Choice.	31 Jul 22	<p><b>Healthy Economy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing access to lifelong learning and building a population with the right skills to prosper, meeting business and enterprise workforce needs and achieving greater productivity and higher wages.</li> <li>• Developing Shropshire as a vibrant destination to attract people to live, work and visit the county</li> <li>• Delivering excellent connectivity and infrastructure, increasing access to social contact, employment, education, services and leisure opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy Organisation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enabling a happy, skilled, healthy, empowered, and proud workforce that influences and leads change</li> <li>• Focusing on diversity and inclusion for the workforce, addressing any inequalities</li> <li>• Putting our resources in the right place to support the organisation's priorities and balance the books</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy People:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackling inequalities and poverty in all its forms, enabling people to achieve their full potential.</li> </ul>
		Induction and onboarding to take account of new ways of working, engaging our future workforce earlier and in different ways.	30 Sep 22	
		Review and reduce our reliance on the agency and interim workforce but where we do require these, ensuring that we engage skilled, engaged workers that provide value for money.	31 Mar 23	
	Apprenticeships and Career Pathways	Adopt an 'Apprenticeship First' approach to recruitment and development, creating growth and career pathways within the organisation, to retain talent.	30 Sep 22	
		Increase the numbers of young people within the organisation through Kickstart and Apprenticeship opportunities.	31 Mar 23	

Theme	Project/Activity	What we will do	When by	How these meet our priorities
	Workforce Planning	<p>Embed workforce planning into service planning to ensure right people, right skills, right time, right place at right cost.</p> <p>Planning for the 'future workforce' and what this will mean for 5, 10 and 20 years time.</p>	<p>31 Mar 23</p> <p>31 Mar 23</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with partners to develop, commission and deliver the right services and support that meet needs in the right place, at the right time, that are high quality and value for money.</li> </ul>
New Ways of Working	Agile/Mobile working post covid	<p>Review our temporary homeworking arrangements and agree permanent future working arrangements.</p> <p>Review of key policies to meet future ways of working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Home Working</li> <li>Smarter Working</li> <li>Flexible Working</li> </ul> <p>Undertake third full Staff Survey Plus smaller 'pulse' surveys</p> <p>Ensure we have an agile/ flexible workforce able to adapt and respond. Continuously improving our performance through reviews and lessons learned.</p> <p>Regular testing of our business continuity arrangements to ensure the organisation can respond to emergency situations effectively.</p>	<p>31 Aug 22</p> <p>31 Aug 22</p> <p>Spring 22</p> <p>31 Mar 23 then ongoing as part of regular reviews.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p><b>Healthy Economy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing Shropshire as a vibrant destination to attract people to live, work and visit the county</li> <li>Delivering excellent connectivity and infrastructure, increasing access to social contact, employment, education, services and leisure opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy Organisation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enabling a happy, skilled, healthy, empowered, and proud workforce that influences and leads change</li> <li>Focusing on diversity and inclusion for the workforce, addressing any inequalities</li> <li>Putting our resources in the right place to support the organisation's priorities and balance the books</li> <li>Working with partners and people to achieve shared priorities to meet current and future need and deliver improved outcomes, with peoples' voices influencing change</li> </ul>

Theme	Project/Activity	What we will do	When by	How these meet our priorities
Belonging in the Council	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Improve awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the organisation. Encouraging and role modelling Allyship amongst our workforce.	1 Apr 22 onwards	<p><b>Healthy Economy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing Shropshire as a vibrant destination to attract people to live, work and visit the county</li> <li>Delivering excellent connectivity and infrastructure, increasing access to social contact, employment, education, services and leisure opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy Organisation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enabling a happy, skilled, healthy, empowered, and proud workforce that influences and leads change</li> <li>Focusing on diversity and inclusion for the workforce, addressing any inequalities</li> <li>Working with partners and people to achieve shared priorities to meet current and future need and deliver improved outcomes, with peoples' voices influencing change</li> <li>Communicating clearly and transparently about what Shropshire Council delivers, signposting to the right places for services and support.</li> <li>Putting our resources in the right place to support the organisation's priorities and balance the books</li> </ul>
		Set up a council wide Workforce Diversity & Inclusion forum.	30 Jun 22	
		Review of our recruitment strategies to ensure these are inclusive.	30 Jun 22	
		Review our policies around Domestic Violence and Bullying and Harassment and look to become accredited to appropriate support organisations i.e. White Ribbon/Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation (DAHA).	30 Jun 22	
		Working with the Integrated Care System (ICS) to develop a system wide employee network, representing all strands of equalities.	31 Mar 23	
		Increase awareness and understanding of working in a democratic organisation and the role of members.	30 Sep 22	



Theme	Project/Activity	What we will do	When by	How these meet our priorities
	Leadership Development	Investment in our Leaders at every level across the organisation to equip them with the skills to engage, empower and develop talented people.  Embedding the Getting it Right philosophy with teams as well as role modelling the characteristics and behaviours we expect of all our employees.	31 Mar 23  31 Mar 23	<b>Healthy People:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackling inequalities and poverty in all its forms, enabling people to achieve their full potential.</li> <li>• Working with partners to develop, commission and deliver the right services and support that meet needs in the right place, at the right time, that are high quality and value for money.</li> </ul>
	Management Essentials	Continue to develop our Management Essentials Handbook and training offer – supporting managers to undertake their roles effectively aligned to new ways of working.	Ongoing	
	Development of Performance	Embed a new Employee Performance Development Review process aligned to priorities set out in The Shropshire Plan and Getting it Right philosophy.  Clarity of objectives for teams and individuals that directly link with our overall purpose and ambitions.  Regular reviews taking place to monitor performance and adapt to changes	Jul 22 onwards  2022/23 Cycle of Performance Reviews  Ongoing	

Theme	Project/Activity	What we will do	When by	How these meet our priorities
	Reward & Recognition	Review and develop Reward and Recognition strategies fit for the future workforce, rewarding high performance.  Development of a Talent Academy where talent is nurtured and supported, with defined career pathways in place to support progression.	31 Mar 23  31 Mar 23	
Looking After our People	Health, Wellbeing and Resilience	We will continue to provide supportive health, wellbeing and resilience interventions to our employees through our Wellbeing Plan (Looking After our People).  Roll out the Trauma Resilience and Management (TRiM) to targeted teams / individuals across the organisation.  Achieve the next level of the Thrive At Work Wellbeing Accreditation.  Regular engagement surveys of the workforce undertaken with feedback on 'We Said We Have, We Will'.  Roll out of mandatory Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Workstation Assessment training for office, home and hybrid workers.	Ongoing  31 Mar 23  1 Sep 23  Ongoing  31 Aug 22	<p><b>Healthy People:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackling inequalities and poverty in all its forms, enabling people to achieve their full potential.</li> <li>• Supporting Shropshire residents to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and achieve better outcomes, reducing need for long term or hospital care.</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy Organisation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with partners and people to achieve shared priorities to meet current and future need and deliver improved outcomes, with peoples' voices influencing change</li> <li>• Communicating clearly and transparently about what Shropshire Council delivers, signposting to the right places for services and support.</li> <li>• Putting our resources in the right place to support the organisation's priorities and balance the books</li> <li>• Enabling a happy, skilled, healthy, empowered, and proud workforce that influences and leads change</li> <li>• Focusing on diversity and inclusion for the workforce, addressing any inequalities</li> <li>• Ensuring members are supported to advocate for their constituents but to also be ambassadors for the Council</li> </ul>

## 10. How will we measure if this is working?

A review will take place annually of this strategy to monitor progress and ensure it remains fit for purpose. Information that will inform this review will come from the following sources:

### Feedback:

- from managers and employees, individually and via forums
- staff survey(s) – regular ‘pulse’ surveys, skills surveys, wellbeing surveys
- Member/Customer/Client/Partner Feedback

Data reporting: (a variety of measures from the quarterly HR Balanced Scorecard):

- Staff turnover
- Vacancy rates/Unfilled vacancies
- Staff sickness/Absence levels
- Recruitment campaigns
- Performance Development Reviews and Training Plans
- Employee learning and development
- Employee volunteer days
- Annual Leave balances
- Employee Surveys

Service Delivery Plans will contain more detail about how we will deliver the Workforce Priorities set out in Section 8 so that we can monitor progress on a regular basis throughout the year.

The strategy, alongside the other key council strategies will be regularly reviewed by the Resources senior management team and outcomes fed upwards to Executive Directors and Cabinet.

# Workforce Strategy

2022 to 2025

**Shropshire Council**  
**Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)**  
**Initial Screening Record 2021-2022**

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

<b>Name of proposed service change</b>
Update of the Workforce Strategy (covering the period 2022/23 to 2024/25)

<b>Name of lead officer carrying out the screening</b>
Sam Williams Assistant Director, Workforce

<b>Decision, review, and monitoring</b>
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<b>Decision</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Initial (part one) ESHIA Only?	<b>X</b>	
Proceed to Full ESHIA or HIA (part two) Report?		<b>X</b>

*If completion of an initial or Part One assessment is an appropriate and proportionate action at this stage, please use the boxes above. If a Full or Part Two report is required, please move on to full report stage once you have completed this initial screening assessment as a record of the considerations which you have given to this matter.*

<b>Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations</b>
<p><i>This is the section in which to outline what the initial assessment indicates in terms of likely impacts for different groupings in the community. For the groups who may be affected, what actions will you currently anticipate taking, to mitigate or enhance impact of the service change? If you are reducing a service, for example, there may be further use you could make of awareness raising through social media and other channels to reach more people who may be affected. If you have recently carried out consultation and there are groupings whose views appear to have been underrepresented, please comment here on the consultation feedback received, and outline what actions you are taking to develop engagement with these groupings.</i></p> <p><i>This section will be the basis for the paragraph that you then need to add into the committee report about what the initial assessment indicates in terms of impacts.</i></p> <p>The Council's Workforce Strategy provides assurance that as an organisation we take a proactive approach to workforce issues, identifying areas of risk and</p>

implementing mitigating actions to address these. It identifies the capacity, capability and diversity of workforce and how it needs to operate to deliver outcomes for the residents of Shropshire.

It impacts all of the workforce delivering all of our services which is approximately 5778 (4,203 FTE). A large proportion of our workforce are also residents of Shropshire. Whilst there are no direct equalities, social inclusion and health considerations, the nature of the strategy and its impact on the workforce has indirect implications from these perspectives.

The council has appropriate policies in place to support employees who feel aggrieved or are being treated unfairly which meet employment legislation as well as equality considerations.

The action plan for the next 3 years is aligned to the high level priorities of the Shropshire Plan, as well as closely aligning to the Integrated Care System (ICS) People Plan:

**Growing for the future:** Attract, Recruit & Retain, Apprenticeships & Career Pathways, Workforce Planning

**New Ways of Working:** Agile & Mobile Working

**Belonging in the Council:** Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion, Leadership Development, Management Essentials

**Looking After Our People:** Health, Wellbeing & Resilience

In delivering these actions, specifically which will result in policy change, a separate EHSIA will be undertaken to ensure the impacts are positive.

The first Workforce Strategy was created in 2016 and reviewed again in 2019 (signed off in 2020). Informal consultation has taken place with colleagues across the organisation as well as recognised Trade Unions.

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

*This is the section in which to outline what actions the service area will be taking to review and monitor the impacts of the service change, and with what frequency. What arrangements will you have in place to continue to collect evidence and data and to continue to engage with all groups who may be affected by the service change, including the intended audiences? For example, customer feedback and wider community engagement opportunities, including involvement of elected Shropshire Council councillors for a locality. Have you looked at comparator good practice? Could you share learning with other rural local authorities, given commonalities around challenges such as ageing demographic profiles, access to facilities and services?*

*This section will be the basis for the paragraph that you then need to add into the committee report about what reviewing and monitoring arrangements you will have in place to mitigate negative impacts or enhance positive impacts of the proposed service change for groupings in the community.*

The Workforce Strategy and associated Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is still relevant and aligned to the overall priorities.

As actions are developed the impact will be monitored through data captured via:

Feedback:

- from managers and employees, individually and via forums
- staff survey(s) – regular ‘pulse’ surveys, skills surveys, wellbeing surveys
- Customer/client/ partner organisation feedback

Data reporting: (from the quarterly HR Balanced Scorecard):

- Staff turnover
- Vacancy rates/Unfilled vacancies
- Staff sickness/Absence levels
- Recruitment campaigns
- Performance Development Reviews and Training Plans
- Employee learning and development
- Employee volunteer days
- Annual Leave balances
- Employee Surveys

Workforce data is also published as part of the council’s annual diversity monitoring report and annual Equality Action Plan.

In addition, the council is required to publish an annual pay and reward policy, alongside information relating to the Gender Pay Gap.

### **Associated ESHIAs**

*Please use this section to note any associated ESHIAs and timelines, including previous impact assessments using the Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment template. For example, this may be the second screening ESHIA carried out at the end of a period of consultation: it will be helpful for the public to be able to refer to the initial ESHIA. This will also serve to demonstrate ongoing approaches to continuous engagement with Protected Characteristic groupings.*

*It will be helpful to the public to show how a proposed service change fits into the policy approach of a service area and of the Council, e.g. the Culture Strategy ESIIA made reference to the “Shropshire Great Outdoors Strategy” as well as to the Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021.*

N/A

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

*This is the section in which to please outline any actions to mitigate negative or enhance positive impacts in terms of economic, environmental, or wider societal considerations, and actions to review and monitor the overall impact of the service change accordingly.*

**Climate change**

*Please use this section to insert the Climate Change Appraisal completed for the committee report associated with this ESHIA, or internal record of appraisal if this is a working document.*

Whilst there are no direct environmental or climate change requirements or consequences, the nature of the strategy and its impact on the workforce has indirect implications related to the future new ways of working, particularly in relation to the use of council buildings and associated business travel for the workforce and this is acknowledged and outlined in the strategy action plan. This work will be undertaken working with the Climate Change team in the council.

**Health and well being**

*Cabinet gave approval in February 2020 to the use of health impact assessments. Interim guidance was subsequently developed and included within the template, in order to start to capture the health and wellbeing benefits anticipated. With the fuller revision of the template, please outline any potential actions in this regard. There is a table included in section B of this screening document for you to record anticipated impacts with regard to individuals and with regard to the wider public.*

The Strategy outlines achievements and interventions around health, wellbeing and resilience of the workforce and identifies future actions to take forward over the next 3 years. The strategy recognises the importance of maintaining and enhancing the health, wellbeing and resilience of the workforce to deliver high quality services to residents.

**Economic and societal/wider community**


*This may be actions to enhance place shaping approaches and efforts to promote and sustain economic growth for the wider community in an area, e.g., as part of a Levelling Up Fund bid, or actions to mitigate negative impacts if a facility or service is being withdrawn or altered such as a public transport offer, an education offer or a library or cultural offer.*

Shropshire Council is the largest employer in the county with the majority of the workforce living in the county. Achievements and actions outlined in the strategy, particularly around recruitment, retention, skills development and health and



wellbeing will therefore have an indirect positive impact on the economic and societal/wider community.

**Scrutiny at Part One screening stage**

<b>People involved</b>	<b>Signatures</b>	<b>Date</b>
<i>Lead officer carrying out the screening</i>  Sam Williams Assistant Director, Workforce		10.5.22
<i>Any internal service area support*</i>		
<i>Any external support**</i>  Lois Dale Rurality & Equalities Specialist		

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

*\*\*This refers to support external to the service but within the Council, e.g., the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, the Feedback and Insight Team, performance data specialists, Climate Change specialists, and Public Health colleagues*

**Sign off at Part One screening stage**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Signatures</b>	<b>Date</b>
<i>Lead officer's name</i>		
<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**

*Please use this box to describe the aims and purpose of the service change. This ESHIA may well be the only document associated with a service change that the service user or advocates may read, rather than any committee reports or other associated documents. Please therefore regard it as a stand-alone document. It is a good plan to put more into it rather than less, even if it may feel like duplication to you. Use content from your committee report to help you in this regard.*

*Include any background that you think is helpful for someone reading this ESHIA, e.g., if there is a new policy, why is it being introduced? If there is a change to an existing service, what are the reasons for this? For example, a redesign and rationalisation of Customer Service Points may seek to concentrate provision strategically on areas where there is a mix of population density and customer need.*

*Further details giving context would also always be helpful here and might include tables and charts. For example, a planned reduction of opening hours for a library or a leisure centre might be helpfully viewed alongside comparative analysis of usage across a number of libraries, leisure centres, etc, including any known and anonymised data about numbers of service users and potential service users likely to be affected, and whether or not people are in Protected Characteristic groupings.*

*This will also help to demonstrate objectivity of the approach and show that, even where difficult decisions might be being planned or made, they are being made in the light of careful consideration of the negative or positive consequences for all groupings. It is not about changing the decision, it is about showing the thought given to the anticipated impact, and also showing that data will continue to be collected about service usage and actual impact to help develop and deliver any mitigating actions.*

The Workforce Strategy links to and supports the Council's strategic priorities, outlined in The Shropshire Plan, by identifying what capacity, capability and diversity of workforce and how it needs to operate to deliver outcomes for the residents of Shropshire.

The strategy helps provide the direction and to ensure that we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right level and at the right cost.

It is driven by but also enables the overall Organisation Strategy – [The Shropshire Plan](#)

It is a 3 year plan that aligns with other key strategies for the organisation but will be reviewed each year to ensure it is still fit for purpose. It also looks further into the future than just the next 3 years to ensure that our people related policies can adapt and be flexible to the changing world of work.

As a public sector body that delivers over 600 services to our communities, the majority through people, a talented, engaged and aligned workforce is crucial for bringing the strategic priorities to life and ensures the organisation delivers on its objectives.

Direct people costs make up 23% of the council's organisational costs. The cost of getting it wrong can therefore be significant.

We first published our Workforce Strategy in 2016 when we were embarking on a major transformation programme across the council. We then reviewed and published our updated strategy for the period 2019/20 to 21/22.

This review of the strategy has taken stock of the last 2 years, in particular the challenges brought about by Covid 19, what we have achieved since that time, where we are now and where we need to go (and how we get there). The Covid 19 pandemic has an enormous impact on the workforce who responded to the challenges and ensured that existing services, as well as new ones, continued to be delivered in very difficult times.

### Our Workforce

The number of staff we employ is 5,778 (4,203 Full Time Equivalents)

2016	2019	2021
7,911	5,911	5,778

Our workforce has decreased by 27% since 2016. Of the 5,778 employees, 2,197 employees are in Schools and 3,581 are employed in non-schools functions.

#### **How our workforce is made up:**

60% are Part Time, 40% Full Time

Males make up 19% of the workforce and females 81%.

For non Schools this is slightly different at 24% males compared with 76% females.

The % of the workforce from Black and Minority Ethnic origin is 1.66%. This has increased by 0.34% since 2019.

The % of the workforce who have declared a disability is 1.94%, remaining at similar levels to previous years.

#### **Our levels of Absence:**

Average lost days of 8.01 for all employees.

For non-schools employees this is 7.8 days.

Overall, rates have reduced since 2019

#### **Retention Rates (turnover):**

For all our employees this is a rate of 7.36%

For non-schools this is 7.37%

### The Future

Shropshire Council faces major challenges with regards to how our services are funded, despite additional funding from government due to Covid. Meanwhile, demand for some of our services such as adult social care and children's social care is growing all the time.

The pandemic has seen us work in different ways and has opened our eyes as to what's possible and what we're all capable of. It has undoubtedly accelerated our adoption of

new technology, changing the way that we communicate, collaborate and deliver our services.

We also need to be mindful of the changing demographics of the workforce – working lives are lengthening as the UK population ages. As the UK state pension age rises, more older people will be in employment. By 2030, the number of economically active people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by one third. The UK is also now seeing emergence of a four generational workforce (baby boomers, generation X, millennials and the first of generation Z). This brings about fresh challenges to motivate a very diverse workforce.

There is also an increase in non-linear careers rather than ‘careers for life’. People are continuing to work later in life. This shift is likely to lead to people having more stages in their career and making changes to new sectors or having ‘portfolio careers’, where they work in more than one area simultaneously. This, in turn, may lead to higher expectations of employers to make it easier for people to move in and out of roles and to create more opportunities for non-linear progression<sup>1</sup>. Again this brings out a challenge to the traditional progression routes within local authorities and the flexibility of roles within them.

### Workforce Priorities

Below are the actions to be taken as outlined in the strategy:

Theme	Project/Activity	What we will do	When by
Growing for the Future	Attract, Recruit & Retain	Review our approaches to recruitment activity to attract a wider and more diverse audience. Ensuring our brand is one of an Employer of Choice.	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2022
		Induction and onboarding to take account of new ways of working, engaging our future workforce earlier and in different ways.	30 September 2022
		Review and reduce our reliance on the agency and interim workforce but where we do require these, ensuring that we engage skilled, engaged workers that provide value for money.	31 March 2023
	Apprenticeships and Career Pathways	Adopt an ‘Apprenticeship First’ approach to recruitment and development, creating growth and career pathways within the organisation, to retain talent.	30 September 2022
		Increase the numbers of young people within the organisation through Kickstart and Apprenticeship opportunities.	31 March 2023

<sup>1</sup> The future of NHS resources and organisation development, Prerana Issar

	Workforce Planning	<p>Embed workforce planning into service planning to ensure right people, right skills, right time, right place at right cost.</p> <p>Planning for the 'future workforce' and what this will mean for 5, 10 and 20 years time.</p>	<p>31 March 2023</p> <p>31 March 2023</p>
New Ways of Working	Agile/Mobile working post covid	<p>Review our temporary homeworking arrangements and agree permanent future working arrangements.</p> <p>Review of key policies to meet future ways of working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Working</li> <li>• Smarter Working</li> <li>• Flexible Working</li> </ul> <p>Undertake 3<sup>rd</sup> full Staff Survey Plus smaller 'pulse' surveys</p> <p>Ensure we have an agile/ flexible workforce able to adapt and respond. Continuously improving our performance through reviews and lessons learned.</p> <p>Regular testing of our business continuity arrangements to ensure the organisation can respond to emergency situations effectively.</p>	<p>31 August 2022</p> <p>31 August 2022</p> <p>Spring 2022</p> <p>31 March 2023 then ongoing as part of regular reviews.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Belonging in the Council	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	<p>Improve awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the organisation. Encouraging and role modelling Allyship amongst our workforce.</p> <p>Set up a council wide Workforce Diversity &amp; Inclusion forum.</p> <p>Review of our recruitment strategies to ensure these are inclusive.</p> <p>Become accredited to the White Ribbon campaign and review our policies around Domestic Violence and Bullying and Harassment.</p>	<p>1 April 2022 onwards</p> <p>30 June 2022</p> <p>30 June 2022</p>

		Working with the Integrated Care System (ICS) to develop a system wide employee network, representing all strands of equalities.	30 June 2022  31 March 2023
	Leadership Development	Investment in our Leaders at every level across the organisation to equip them with the skills to engage, empower and develop talented people.  Embedding the Getting it Right philosophy with teams as well as role modelling the characteristics and behaviours we expect of all our employees.	31 March 2023  31 March 2023
	Management Essentials	Continue to develop our Management Essentials Handbook and training offer – supporting managers to undertake their roles effectively aligned to new ways of working.	Ongoing
	Development of Performance	Embed a new Employee Performance Development Review process aligned to priorities set out in The Shropshire Plan and Getting it Right philosophy.  Clarity of objectives for teams and individuals that directly link with our overall purpose and ambitions.  Regular reviews taking place to monitor performance and adapt to changes	July 2022 onwards  2022/23 Cycle of Performance Reviews  Ongoing
	Reward & Recognition	Review and develop Reward and Recognition strategies fit for the future workforce, rewarding high performance.  Development of a Talent Academy where talent is nurtured and supported, with defined career pathways in place to support progression.	31 March 2023  31 March 2023
Looking After our People	Health, Wellbeing & Resilience	We will continue to provide supportive health, wellbeing and resilience interventions to our employees through our Wellbeing Plan (Looking After our People).	Ongoing

		<p>Roll out the Trauma Resilience &amp; Management (TRiM) to targeted teams / individuals across the organisation.</p> <p>Achieve the next level of the Thrive At Work Wellbeing Accreditation.</p> <p>Regular engagement surveys of the workforce undertaken with feedback on 'We Said We Have, We Will'.</p> <p>Roll out of mandatory Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Workstation Assessment training for office, home and hybrid workers.</p>	<p>31 March 2023</p> <p>1 September 2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>31 August 2022</p>
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### Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

*This box relates to the people or groupings of people concerned, organisations involved, any other interested parties, etc. For example, if the change will affect people receiving adult social care services and their families and carers, please say so here. If the change will affect the whole population, please say so here.*

*If the change could affect strategic partnership working, or work with our neighbouring local authorities, or other rural authorities, for example by the West Midlands Combined Authority, or through the Rural Services Network or County Councils Network, please mention such partnerships and authorities as well.*

*It is a good idea to include local elected councillors due to their community leadership roles.*

The Workforce Strategy and action plan will impact on the following audiences/groups:

- All Employees of the council
- Temporary workforce (i.e. agency workers)
- Trade Unions
- Integrated Care System (ICS) partners
- Apprenticeship Training Providers
- Elected Members

### Evidence used for screening of the service change

*This box relates to use made of evidence in developing the change to the service. This could be Census analyses, community demographic profiles, results of surveys, or previously collected evidence material. The contextual comparator data tables you may have featured above could equally be inserted here, or referred to here, to show use made of such evidence.*

*If the evidence is on the Council website, please insert hyperlinks. Please comment on the use of evidence in enabling the service area to identify its proposed policy or service change.*

*If this ESHIA is a screening one carried out at the end of a period of consultation, please use this box to outline the feedback and whether as a consequence there are any adjustments now envisaged to what was originally proposed.*

In undertaking the review of the existing Workforce Strategy, the following evidence has been used:

Workforce Strategies:

[Layout 1 \(shropshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.shropshire.gov.uk):

Annual diversity monitoring reports/Gender Pay Gap:

[Equality, diversity and social inclusion | Shropshire Council](#)

Pay & Reward Policy

[Pay and reward policy | Shropshire Council](#)

Quarterly HR Balanced Scorecard - information contained within the on trends over the period of time since the last Workforce Strategy was approved has been analysed to inform the review of the strategy and creation of the action plan.

Staff Surveys – information from the 2 staff surveys undertaken since 2020 have been used to inform the review of the strategy and subsequent action plan.

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

*This box relates to any specific consultation with the audiences for the service. This could be online surveys, use of social media, one off focus groups, events, drop-in sessions, meetings with stakeholder groups, etc.*

*Please also use this box to say if you have not carried out consultation but are planning to do so. For example, this might be an ESHIA at the beginning of a proposed consultation period. You could therefore give timelines and intended methods of communication and engagement.*

In reviewing the strategy and action plan, informal consultation has taken place with the following:



- Cross section of managers across the organisation
- Trade Unions

**Initial equality impact assessment by grouping (Initial health impact assessment is included below)**

*Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through stating this in the relevant column.*

*Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.*

<b>Protected Characteristic groupings and other groupings 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, negative, or neutral impact (please specify)</b> <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
<u>Age</u> (please include children, young people, young people leaving care, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group e.g., a child or young person for whom there are safeguarding concerns e.g., an older person with disability)		<b>X</b>		
<u>Disability</u> (please include mental health conditions and syndromes; hidden disabilities including autism and Crohn's disease; physical and sensory disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; and HIV)		<b>X</b>		
<u>Gender re-assignment</u> (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)		<b>X</b>		
<u>Marriage and Civil Partnership</u> (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			<b>X</b>	
<u>Pregnancy and Maternity</u> (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			<b>X</b>	
<u>Race</u> (please include ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, Gypsy, Traveller)		<b>X</b>		
<u>Religion and belief</u>		<b>X</b>		

(please include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Nonconformists; Rastafarianism; Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				
<b>Sex</b> (this can also be viewed as relating to gender. Please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)		X		
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)		X		
<b>Other: Social Inclusion</b> (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; households in poverty; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable; people with health inequalities; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; veterans and serving members of the armed forces and their families)		X		

### **Initial health and wellbeing impact assessment by category**

*Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have with regard to health and wellbeing, through stating this in the relevant column.*

*Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.*

<b>Health and wellbeing: individuals and communities in Shropshire</b>	<b>High negative impact</b> <i>Part Two HIA required</i>	<b>High positive impact</b>	<b>Medium positive or negative impact</b>	<b>Low positive negative or neutral impact (please specify)</b>
<b>Will the proposal have a <i>direct impact</i> on an individual's health, mental health and wellbeing?</b>  For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation? .		X		
<b>Will the proposal <i>indirectly impact</i> an individual's ability to</b>		X		

<p><b>improve their own health and wellbeing?</b></p> <p>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</p> <p>.</p>				
<p><b>Will the policy have a <i>direct impact</i> on the community - social, economic and environmental living conditions that would impact health?</b></p> <p>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, employment opportunities, availability of green space or climate change mitigation?</p> <p>.</p>				<p><b>X</b> (neutral)</p>
<p><b>Will there be a likely change in <i>demand</i> for or access to health and social care services?</b></p> <p>For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health, Local Authority services including Social Services?</p> <p>.</p>				<p><b>X</b> (neutral)</p>

**Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations including climate change and economic or societal impacts**

*This is the section in which to please outline any other considerations, which may be in terms of economic impact, environmental and climate change assessments, or any wider societal considerations. We are not looking for financial or legal impacts, which will be picked up in committee reports. This section is more a record of other likely impacts that may adversely or positively affect those who live in, work in, and visit Shropshire.*

*Please use this section to insert background to any Climate Change Appraisal completed for the committee report associated with this ESHIA, or internal record of appraisal if this is a working document*

*You could also usefully indicate at this point*

- *if there are any potential Human Rights implications. For example, is there a potential breach of one or more of the human rights of an individual or group?*
- *If the service change as proposed may have a positive or negative impact on fostering good relations and/or on promoting social inclusion.*

Whilst there are no direct environmental or climate change requirements or consequences, the nature of the strategy and its impact on the workforce has indirect implications related to the future new ways of working, particularly in relation to the use of council buildings and associated business travel for the workforce and this is acknowledged and outlined in the strategy action plan. This work will be undertaken through the New Ways of Working group, working with the Climate Change team in the council.

The Strategy outlines achievements and interventions around health, wellbeing and resilience of the workforce and identifies future actions to take forward over the next 3 years. The strategy recognises the importance of maintaining and enhancing the health, wellbeing and resilience of the workforce to deliver high quality services to residents. As we move forward with different ways of working, the health and wellbeing of the workforce needs to be at the forefront of any changes made and the workforce engaged in any decisions that will impact on them

Shropshire Council is the largest employer in the county with the majority of the workforce living in the county. Achievements and actions outlined in the strategy, particularly around recruitment, retention, skills development and health and wellbeing will therefore have an indirect positive impact on the economic and societal/wider community.

## **Guidance Notes**

### **1. Legal Context**

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. It is up to us as an authority to decide what form our equality impact assessment may take. By way of illustration, some local authorities focus more overtly upon human rights; some include safeguarding. It is about what is considered to be needed in a local authority's area, in line with local factors such as demography and strategic objectives as well as with the national legislative imperatives.

Carrying out these impact assessments helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on

us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes.

These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

These screening assessments for any proposed service change go to Cabinet as part of the committee report, or occasionally direct to Full Council, unless they are ones to do with Licensing, in which case they go to Strategic Licensing Committee.

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

These screening assessments are recommended to be undertaken at timely points in the development and implementation of the proposed service change.

For example, an ESHIA would be a recommended course of action before a consultation. This would draw upon the evidence available at that time, and identify the target audiences, and assess at that initial stage what the likely impact of the service change could be across the Protected Characteristic groupings and our tenth category of Social Inclusion. This ESHIA would set out intended actions to engage with the groupings, particularly those who are historically less likely to engage in public consultation eg young people, as otherwise we would not know their specific needs.

A second ESHIA would then be carried out after the consultation, to say what the feedback was, to set out changes proposed as a result of the feedback, and to say where responses were low and what the plans are to engage with groupings who did not really respond. This ESHIA would also draw more upon actions to review impacts in order to mitigate the negative and accentuate the positive. Examples of this approach include the Great Outdoors Strategy, and the Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021

Meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty through carrying out these ESHIAs is very much about using them as an opportunity to demonstrate ongoing engagement across groupings and to thus visibly show we are taking what is called due regard of the needs of people in protected characteristic groupings

If the screening indicates that there are likely to be significant negative impacts for groupings within the community, the service area would need to carry out a full report, or Part Two assessment. This will enable more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion.

In practice, Part Two or Full Screening Assessments have only been recommended twice since 2014, as the ongoing mitigation of negative equality impacts should serve to keep them below the threshold for triggering a Full Screening Assessment. The expectation is that Full Screening Assessments in regard to Health Impacts may

occasionally need to be undertaken, but this would be very much the exception rather than the rule.

## **2. Council Wide and Service Area Policy and Practice on Equality, Social Inclusion and Health**

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

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

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

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

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

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people or households that we may describe as vulnerable.

Examples could be households on low incomes or people for whom there are safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, e.g., Age. Another specific vulnerable grouping is veterans and serving members of the Armed Forces, who face particular challenges with regard to access to Health, to Education, and to Housing.

We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views

when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging, or delivering services.

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

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

*Carry out an ESHIA:*

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

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

*Carry out an equality and social inclusion approach:*

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

For example, you may be involved in commissioning a production to tour schools or appear at a local venue, whether a community hall or somewhere like Theatre Severn. The production company should be made aware of our equality policies and our expectation that they will seek to avoid promotion of potentially negative stereotypes. Specific groupings that could be affected include: Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. There is positive impact to be gained from positive portrayals and use of appropriate and respectful language in regard to these groupings in particular.

### **3. Council wide and service area policy and practice on health and wellbeing**

This is a relatively new area to record within our overall assessments of impacts, for individual and for communities, and as such we are asking service area leads to consider health and wellbeing impacts, much as they have been doing during 2020-2021, and to look at these in the context of direct and indirect impacts for individuals and for communities. A better understanding across the Council of these impacts will also better enable the Public Health colleagues to prioritise activities to reduce health inequalities in ways that are evidence based and that link effectively with equality impact considerations and climate change mitigation.

#### **Health in All Policies – Health Impact Assessment**

Health in All Policies is an upstream approach for health and wellbeing promotion and prevention, and to reduce health inequalities. The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the supporting mechanism

- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the technical name for a common-sense idea. It is a process that considers the wider effects of local policies, strategies and initiatives and how they, in turn, may affect people's health and wellbeing.
- Health Impact Assessment is a means of assessing both the positive and negative health impacts of a policy. It is also a means of developing good evidence-based policy and strategy using a structured process to review the impact.
- A Health Impact Assessment seeks to determine how to maximise health benefits and reduce health inequalities. It identifies any unintended health consequences. These consequences may support policy and strategy or may lead to suggestions for improvements.
- An agreed framework will set out a clear pathway through which a policy or strategy can be assessed and impacts with outcomes identified. It also sets out the support mechanisms for maximising health benefits.

The embedding of a Health in All Policies approach will support Shropshire Council through evidence-based practice and a whole systems approach, in achieving our corporate and partnership strategic priorities. This will assist the Council and partners in promoting, enabling and sustaining the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities whilst reducing health inequalities.



## **Individuals**

### **Will the proposal have a *direct impact* on health, mental health and wellbeing?**

For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?

Will the proposal directly affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?

This could include the following: their ability to be physically active e.g., being able to use a cycle route; to access food more easily; to change lifestyle in ways that are of positive impact for their health.

An example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g., green highways), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage. and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve lives.

### **Will the proposal *indirectly impact* an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?**

This could include the following: their ability to access local facilities e.g., to access food more easily, or to access a means of mobility to local services and amenities? (e.g. change to bus route)

Similarly to the above, an example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g. pedestrianisation of town centres), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage, and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve their health and well being.

## **Communities**

Will the proposal directly or indirectly affect the physical health, mental health, and wellbeing of the wider community?

A *direct impact* could include either the causing of ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation, or the promotion of better health.

An example of this could be that safer walking and cycling routes could help the wider community, as more people across groupings may be encouraged to walk more, and as there will be reductions in emission leading to better air quality.

An *indirect impact* could mean that a service change could indirectly affect living and working conditions and therefore the health and well being of the wider community.

An example of this could be: an increase in the availability of warm homes would improve the quality of the housing offer in Shropshire and reduce the costs for households of having a warm home in Shropshire. Often a health promoting approach also supports our agenda to reduce the level of Carbon Dioxide emissions and to reduce the impact of climate change.

Please record whether at this stage you consider the proposed service change to have a direct or an indirect impact upon communities.

### **Demand**

#### **Will there be a change in demand for or access to health, local authority and social care services?**

For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?

An example of this could be: a new housing development in an area would affect demand for primary care and local authority facilities and services in that location and surrounding areas. If the housing development does not factor in consideration of availability of green space and safety within the public realm, further down the line there could be an increased demand upon health and social care services as a result of the lack of opportunities for physical recreation, and reluctance of some groupings to venture outside if they do not perceive it to be safe.

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

***For further guidance on public health policy considerations: please contact Amanda Cheeseman Development Officer in Public Health, via telephone 01743 253164 or email [amanda.cheeseman@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.cheeseman@shropshire.gov.uk)***



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Cabinet 8 June 2022

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

## **INTERIM REPORT ON RIVER SAFETY IN SHROPSHIRE**

**Responsible  
Officer**

Jane Trethewey, Assistant Director Homes and  
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### **1. Synopsis**

Following recent incidents in the River Severn at Shrewsbury resulting in the tragic loss of lives, Council passed a motion requesting a report to Cabinet to provide an interim update on Shropshire Council's actions in relation to river safety in Shropshire.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. This report provides a summary of the evidence currently available in relation to river deaths, and of current and future planned activity to address the causes of such incidents and safeguard our residents.
- 2.2. At the Full Council meeting of 12 May 2022, the following Motion was passed:

**The Council Notes:**

1. The recent deaths in the River Severn at Shrewsbury and a notable rescue of a man from the water who was in serious risk of drowning.
2. The dangers posed by flooding which are not always understood by the public.

**The Council Resolved:**

To join with other partners, landowners, stakeholders, and the general public to undertake a countywide review of the circumstances and siting of river deaths and serious life-threatening incidents and to use this evidence and other risk assessment outcomes to:

1. Consider where additional appropriate barriers may be necessary to improve safety in risk assessed locations
  2. Ensure that all existing safety measure and equipment is adequate and in good order
  3. Ensure that there is improved CCTV coverage and monitoring in areas of risk and that there is adequate lighting operating in such areas on a 24/7 basis
  4. Work with stakeholders to produce promotional material regarding risk and river safety and ensure that such material is prominently displayed in relevant premises. This to include the provision of learning material in schools, colleges, youth facilities, etc.
  5. Call a meeting of the Strategic Licensing Committee to clarify the obligations on liquor licensees regarding care and protection of their users and work with the Police to ensure that the responsibilities are exercised, including giving advice to vulnerable people on leaving such premises.
  6. Work with Police, existing providers, and other volunteers to establish whether greater surveillance can be organised in areas of risk.
  7. Take account of representations made by the public throughout our communities
  8. Present an interim and progress report to Cabinet on 8th June 2022
  9. Devise a promotional campaign warning people of the dangers from floodwater to include more signage and public information in news articles/social media postings/adverts/posters
- 2.3. River deaths in Shropshire in the last 20 years have occurred predominantly in and around Shrewsbury. This is likely to be linked to the town's geography, creating a close connection between river and town, in particular the location of pubs, bars and clubs, and the need for people occasionally to cross the river when making their way home. The focus of review is therefore proposed to be upon Shrewsbury.
- 2.4. Shropshire Council works in partnership with Team Shrewsbury, a group of key local statutory and voluntary service providers, to address issues of safety in the town including around the river. Team Shrewsbury continues to review river safety, as well as the wider factors that contribute to river emergencies and deaths, and coordinate responses from a range of partners. This is the key channel for further activity to improve safety.
- 2.5. Reports on river safety have previously been commissioned, most recently in 2010, and Shropshire Council, along with Shrewsbury Town Council, has undertaken riverbank safety works in response to

the recommendations received. A further review of riverbank safety in Shrewsbury has now been commissioned from the Council's contractor WSP, which will consider what further measures, such as those referenced in the agreed Council Motion, would be most effective in reducing any identified risk represented by the river. Once received this review will be shared with partners and contribute to an action plan and reported back to a future Cabinet meeting.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1. That Cabinet notes the contents of this report.
- 3.2. That Cabinet agrees to receive a further report on river safety when the planned review has concluded, and key partners have had the opportunity to consider its findings and propose appropriate action.

## **REPORT**

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

- 4.1. River safety is significant issue for all of Shropshire's community. Any loss of life or injury is unacceptable, and measures are required to avoid this. To understand better the key risks that have contributed to river deaths, data on incidents over past years is being reviewed, to establish any patterns and identify common issues, geographies, or characteristics. This will allow any proposed measures to be targeted to the factors most likely to prevent further loss of life.
- 4.2. Evidence from the county Coroner shows that over the last 20 years there have been 41 river deaths recorded in Shropshire. Appendix 1 indicates the number of these deaths recorded in each year. Whilst there were some years with no loss of life, it is evident that most years have seen one or more incidents. Twelve of these deaths were ruled to be suicides, with the remainder found to include a combination of accidental deaths, misadventure, unascertained causes or open verdicts.
- 4.3. The location of river deaths is shown to be predominantly in the Shrewsbury area. Other locations of accidental deaths are Cressage, Atcham and Preston. It is notable that the river in Shrewsbury routes directly through the town centre, near the town's night-time economy venues, as well as some residential areas, and has footpaths and bridges which are commonly used as walking routes. This characteristic is not shared with other locations in Shropshire and is therefore likely to be a key factor in the number of incidents here.

- 4.4. River deaths have tended to be associated with a younger demographic, and with males, with a ratio of 33:8 male to female Shropshire river deaths in the last 18 years. The timing of deaths, and non-fatal incidents, is often associated with weekends when people are out drinking, and then make their way home alone at night. An excess of alcohol, and in some cases drug use too, can result in poor physical coordination, as well as reduced awareness and judgement of risks.
- 4.5. This is so significant a causal factor nationally that the Royal Life Saving Society runs an ongoing [Don't Drink and Drown](#) campaign. A key focus of activity to address the number of river incidents must therefore be upon raising awareness of the risks of excessive drinking, and of travelling home alone in these circumstances.
- 4.6. It is notable that of approximately 300 unnatural deaths that were the subject of an inquest over the last year to April 2022, river deaths accounted for 2. However, there are links to alcohol and drug use in many of the other deaths that have occurred. This indicates that alcohol and drug use is a key risk to Shropshire's younger population and must therefore be a focus of education and information beyond the issue of river deaths. The large number of suicides in the river also indicate that support for mental health, particularly for men, must remain a key priority.
- 4.7. The tragedy of recent river deaths in Shrewsbury has resulted in a strong community response, from friends and family of those who have lost their lives, as well as from wider groups, organisations and stakeholders. Team Shrewsbury has met with representatives of the Make Our River Safe facebook group, to hear their concerns and requests. A range of measures have already been initiated in response, from a variety of key partners in Shrewsbury, as listed at Appendix 2.
- 4.8. The current safety measures provided on the River Severn in Shrewsbury were upgraded following previous reviews of river safety, and now comprise a range of physical installations including:
- Railings at key points along both sides of the riverbank, including at all points where footpaths join the river path
  - Chains fixed to sheer riverbank edges to allow anyone falling into the river to gain a hand hold
  - Ladders, pontoons and slipways at various points along the river, allowing access to and exit from the river
  - Lifebuoys placed along the riverbank for public use in emergency
  - Throwlines located at key points on the riverbank with instructions for use

- Information signs indicating points of significant risk, such as the weir
- Street lighting along the river path to support safe passage
- Gates at key points to prevent access to the river path during times of flood

4.9. These physical measures are complemented by the following provision to support safety:

- Regular checks take place of lifebuoys and throwline boards
- Provisions are in place to close barriers in times of flood
- The Street Pastors work to warn late-night drinkers of the dangers of being near the water
- Shropshire Fire and Rescue have an ongoing programme of throwline training for the Street Pastors, door staff from town centre pubs, and Shrewsbury Town Council staff
- West Mercia Police officers are throwline trained and carry water safety equipment
- Key partners meeting as Team Shrewsbury monitor river safety issues alongside a range of town centre safety matters

4.10. A fresh review of river safety in Shrewsbury has now been commissioned from the Council's contractor WSP, funded jointly by Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council. WSP's water division has accredited water safety specialists with public risk advisors and works with the Environment Agency and the Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs to manage safety around their assets and are therefore appropriately qualified to provide the necessary advice.

4.11. The review will reflect on any changes to the riverbank, as well as to the town's relationship with the river, such as new developments, changes of land use, etc., which may mean that the existing measures require strengthening to support safe use of the riverbank both at night and during the day. It will also reference any implications for future river safety arising from the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan.

4.12. A report on the findings of this review will be brought back to Cabinet, along with recommendations of any works that are identified to improve safety. Proposed measures may require planning approval and should be subject to public consultation to balance the amenity and leisure value of the River Severn in Shrewsbury with the safety of all users. Whilst the focus of the review is upon Shrewsbury, the findings can subsequently be applied to other locations where the river passes through towns in Shropshire, where appropriate, to ensure that the river safety benefits are shared.

- 4.13. Whilst further physical measures to protect residents from harm when walking home along the river will be considered, the significant number of fatal incidents associated with alcohol, whether river-related or not, means that this must be a major focus of attention in prevention of unnatural deaths in the community. In addition, the number of river deaths which are suicides means that this is also a key issue to consider.
- 4.14. Options to improve public safety through behavioural change, both in Shrewsbury and throughout Shropshire, will be reported back to Cabinet alongside the physical safety review findings and proposals.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1. Responsibility for river safety lies with a range of different landowners and partners throughout Shropshire. Addressing safety through physical measures is the responsibility of the landowner. Shropshire Council already undertakes maintenance and replacement of a range of river safety measures as part of its current responsibilities, and this is covered within existing budgets. Any additional costs arising from measures planned or undertaken on Shropshire Council land in response to the safety review will be reported back to Cabinet.
- 5.2. In partnership with Shrewsbury Town Council, Shropshire Council has commissioned a river safety review from WSP, the findings of which will be reported back to Cabinet with recommendations for further action. The costs of the review will be funded by a contribution from Shrewsbury Town Council and from existing revenue budgets in Highways.

## **6. Climate Change Appraisal**

- 6.1. No impact is anticipated because of changes to support river safety or other safety measures in Shropshire, in respect of energy and fuel consumption, renewable energy generation, carbon offsetting or mitigation, or climate change adaptation.
- 6.2. The impact of climate change is likely to result in more frequent incidents of flooding from the River Severn and other rivers in Shropshire. Given the potential for greater risk during times of flood, this emphasises the need for effective measures to reduce risks associated with water.

## **7. Background**

- 7.1 The 6 September 2010 Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Group received a report titled Incidents of Accidental Drowning on the River Severn in Shrewsbury. This reflected on incidents of



deaths by drowning of people walking home alone when drunk after an evening out in Shrewsbury. Following this loss of life, a review of river safety was commissioned by the Council, which recommended safety upgrades along the river. These were undertaken and have been added to further over the years since. In addition, publicity campaigns were initiated, which highlighted the dangers for those drinking in venues close to river courses.

- 7.1 Evidence from the county Coroner indicates that of 41 river deaths in Shropshire between 2004 and April 2022 the majority have occurred in Shrewsbury. All deaths recorded were in the River Severn. Of river deaths which were not recorded as suicides, only five have occurred in locations other than Shrewsbury since 2004, meaning that the focus for river safety review should primarily be upon Shrewsbury. Of the 41 river death cases in Shropshire that have occurred in that 18-year period, 12 were listed as suicides, with 9 listed as accidental deaths. Others are listed as open verdicts, misadventure, narrative verdicts or unknown circumstances.
- 7.2 The focus of river deaths in Shrewsbury is likely to be the result of the town's geography, creating a close connection between river and town, in particular the location of pubs, bars and clubs, and the need for people occasionally to cross the river when making their way home. The focus of the river safety review now planned is therefore proposed to be upon Shrewsbury.
- 7.3 According to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) there were 442 water-related fatalities in England in 2021, which is a figure consistent with previous years. Of these 155 were suicide suspected fatalities. Of the remaining fatalities, the following key points are noted:
- 86% of accidental fatalities were male
  - Males 30 – 39 and 50 - 59 were the highest group for accidental fatalities
  - Recreational activities accounted for 56% of accidental fatalities
  - 49 accidental fatality reports noted the presence of drugs or alcohol
  - The rate of accidental drowning is reducing
- 7.4 Shropshire Council works in partnership with Team Shrewsbury, a multi-agency partnership established as part of the Department for Communities & Local Government Our Place Programme. The Partnership is made up of representatives of Shropshire Council, Shrewsbury Town Council, West Mercia Police, Shropshire Fire & Rescue, Shrewsbury Business Improvement District, Safer Shrewsbury Partnership, Shrewsbury Street Pastors, & Shrewsbury Shopping Centres.

- 7.5 The partnership works at both a strategic level bringing senior decision makers together to look at management issues for the town, but also at operational level ensuring that operatives from all partners work more collaboratively, sharing information, supporting each other and working on the delivery of projects and outcomes together. This includes issues of safety in the town including around the river. Team Shrewsbury continues to review river safety, as well as the wider factors that contribute to river emergencies and deaths, and coordinate responses from a range of partners. This is the key channel for further activity to improve safety.
- 7.6 The further review of riverbank safety in Shrewsbury now commissioned will audit the current safety measures, their condition and utility, and consider whether any further measures, such as those referenced in the Council Motion, would be most effective in reducing any identified risk represented by the river. Once received this review will be shared with partners and contribute to an action plan.
- 7.7 The review will include consideration of the adequacy of existing river safety measures, the maintenance and of this provision, and where additional measures of any kind might provide improved safety.
- 7.8 It will also consider the role of education and awareness raising of the risks both of alcohol and water and look at ways in which to enhance this consistently for the future.

## **8. Additional Information**

- 8.1. Strategic Licencing Committee Members currently receive training as part of their role, to capture their responsibilities, the extent of licencing law, and what can be required of licensees operating licenced premises in Shropshire.
- 8.2. A further update session, to focus upon the licencing objective of public safety, is planned to provide committee members with refresher training, awareness raising and focus on the role of the Council, Councillors and licensees in this matter.

## **9. Conclusions**

- 9.1. River safety in Shropshire is an issue that primarily concerns Shrewsbury, due to the close connection between the river and the town centre. The Council will continue to work in partnership with Team Shrewsbury to focus upon river safety, as well as the wider issues that contribute to river deaths and other alcohol related deaths, to coordinate responses from a range of partners.

- 9.2. A report on river safety has been commissioned to consider what further measures, such as those referenced in the agreed Council Motion, would be most effective in reducing any identified risk represented by the river. Once received this review will be shared with partners and contribute to an action plan and reported back to a future Cabinet meeting.
- 9.3. The findings of the Shrewsbury river safety report and action plan will be considered for applicability to other locations in Shropshire where the river passes through towns, to ensure that the river safety benefits are shared.

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

6 September 2010, Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Group report, 'Incidents of Accidental Drowning on the River Severn in Shrewsbury'

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)** Dean Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Highways, Assets & Built Housing

**Local Member** - All

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 Shropshire River Deaths to April 2022  
Appendix 2 Team Shrewsbury River Safety Responses

**Appendix 1: Shropshire River Deaths to April 2022**

<b>Year</b>	<b>River deaths</b>
2004	3
2005	1
2006	5
2007	6
2008	2
2009	3
2010	3
2011	2
2012	4
2013	1
2014	3
2015	1
2016	None
2017	3
2018	1
2019	None
2020	1
2021	None
2022	2
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>41</b>

## Appendix 2 Team Shrewsbury River Safety Responses

<b>Partners</b>	<b>Planned responses</b>
PubWatch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance with education to premises managers about river dangers</li> <li>• Creation of an educational video</li> <li>• Poster campaign regarding safe walking routes</li> <li>• Training for over-serving and aftercare</li> <li>• Closer working with Street Pastors and Samaritans.</li> </ul>
Street Pastors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a recruitment campaign for patrols and monitoring the Donkey (mobile recovery facility)</li> <li>• Produce safe place posters for the Donkey</li> </ul>
Samaritans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate bar staff with mental health support</li> <li>• Consider directional signage to the throwline boards and water safety messages</li> </ul>
Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate installation of additional throwline boards, subject to funding and landowner permissions</li> <li>• Advertise NFCC campaigns and national water safety campaigns</li> <li>• Advertise Home &amp; Dry course available on websites</li> <li>• NTE throwline responder training</li> </ul>
Royal Life Saving Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue education and resources from early years to sixth form college, including class-based water safety education</li> <li>• Review river incidents over the past 10 years to generate appropriate campaigns</li> </ul>
Shrewsbury Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Problem Solving Hub for Safety Streets 4 funding bid for Street Rangers and possibly Taxi Marshalls</li> <li>• Liaise with CityCo for information on river safety</li> <li>• Update notice board at Frankwell canoe launch site</li> </ul>
Shrewsbury BID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the viability of night bus provision and improved taxi information</li> </ul>
West Mercia Search and Rescue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to advertise free online water safety courses to schools, colleges and clubs</li> <li>• Continue river patrols, working with Street Pastors and the Donkey</li> </ul>
Shropshire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River safety risk assessment to be commissioned and reported back</li> <li>• CCTV review to consider increased river monitoring</li> <li>• Coroner's findings from river deaths to be shared with Team Shrewsbury</li> </ul>

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Committee and Date

08/06/22 Cabinet

Item

Public

## **POLICY - BAN ON THE RELEASE OF SKY LANTERNS AND BALLOONS FROM ANY COUNCIL OWNED OR MANAGED PREMISES AND PROPERTY**

**Responsible Officer** Steve Law, Head of Property and Development  
e-mail: Steve.law@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743253219

### **1. Synopsis**

1.1. Shropshire Council agreed to ban the use of balloons and sky lanterns from any Council owned or managed premises and property updated through a motion to full Council in February 2022, in recognition of the associated risks; this report seeks to support and implement that decision.

### **2. Executive Summary**

2.1. A motion was presented to the Council by Cllr Dan Morris expressing concern that the use of balloons and sky lanterns is still not outlawed and proposed that the Council should ban outright the use of balloons and sky lanterns on its land. That motion was passed, and this report seeks to set out the policy to support that resolution.

### **3. Recommendations**

3.1. Following the motion passed to ban balloons and sky lanterns previously, the Cabinet is asked to:

3.1.1. Agree the policy outlined in Appendix 1 is adopted

3.1.2. Delegate to the Head of Property and Development to carry out a review of the current policies and the terms and conditions of the leases, licences and hire of Council owned land and premises to ensure that they reflect the Council's position as regards the use of balloons and sky lanterns on Shropshire Council owned land.

3.1.3. Delegate to Head of Communications and Engagement, Shropshire Council to implement a media campaign to discourage all such releases within the County.

## **REPORT**

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

4.1. Although many local authorities have adopted the ban of using balloons and sky lanterns on their land, it should be noted that the ban has not been tested in law. So there remains a risk that there may be aggrieved customers who may seek to challenge the legality of the decision. However, it is considered that the likelihood of such a challenge being lodged is very slim due to the public's change of attitude

towards these practices. This includes a greater awareness of the dangers towards wildlife and pets as well as towards farm animals.

- 4.2. The ban will mitigate risk of accidental fires breaking out due to lantern releases on Council land.
- 4.3. An Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) approach has been utilised by the service area, in consideration of the likely negative equality impacts or positive equality impacts arising from implementation of this agreed policy. This has enabled the service area to assess at this stage that the anticipated equality impacts will be neutral or low positive across the nine Protected Characteristic groupings set out in the Equality Act 2010, given increased safety and increased perception of safety for individuals and for households.
- 4.4. There is potential for the equality impact to move from low positive to medium positive with regard to people in the groupings of Age and Disability, including families with younger children, and older people living alone or with pets, for whom the risk of fire can cause emotional and mental distress and for whom the reduced risk can therefore bring reassurance. The health and wellbeing impacts may be considered to be low to medium positive for people across all groupings, particularly with regard to people that the Council considers to be vulnerable.,
- 4.5. The service area will maintain a record of the impact assessment, and utilise this for reference and review, in order that ongoing feedback may be sought from households as well as from the local farming sector, businesses such as equine centres, kennels and catteries, and wildlife and wildfowl charities. The impact assessment screening approach will also facilitate recording of engagement with Defra and associated Government agencies and sharing of comparator approaches with other local authorities.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1. A standard clause is to be inserted in the licences and hiring terms and conditions which sets out clearly that the release of balloons and sky lanterns in Council owned, or managed land and premises is prohibited because they can potentially lead to; loss of life; damage to property; risk to wildlife and farm animals, and increase in pressure on the police, fire service and medical emergency services, and that the prohibition is reasonable.
- 6.2. Where it is not possible to amend existing contractual arrangements, these will be addressed whenever a renewal or new contract is put in place for a lease, license or hire arrangement.
- 6.3. Currently, there is no legal process of imposing a fine on people who are in breach of this ban. The only recourse is to revoke their licences or hire agreement and evict them for breach of such a ban.

## **7. Climate Change Appraisal**

- 7.1. The ban will ultimately support in conservation terms the removal of debris which presents a risk to wildlife, flora, and fauna.



- 7.2. The ban will mitigate risk of accidental fires breaking out due to lantern releases on Council land.

## 8. Background

- 8.1.1. In February 2022: A motion was received from Councillor Simon Harris and was supported by Councillors Tom Biggins, Richard Marshall, Ian Nellins and Chris Schofield. A Link to the recording of this meeting is in the background papers. The following motion was carried unanimously:
- 8.1.2. All Sky Lantern and Balloon releases are to be banned from all Shropshire Council property.
- 8.1.3. Shropshire Council will request the Government to classify all such releases as littering, and thus they should be made illegal.
- 8.1.4. Shropshire Council will run a media campaign to discourage all such releases within the County.
- 8.2. In respect of 8.1.1, 8.1.2, and 8.1.4, these have been addressed through the recommendations in this report, in terms of 8.1.3, this will be dealt with separately through an appropriate letter to central government.
- 8.3. The reason for the decision is that the Council recognises the fire hazard associated with the use of sky lanterns (sometimes known as Chinese lanterns) which can potentially lead to the loss of life, damage to property, risk to wildlife and farm animals and increase the pressure on the police, fire service and medical emergency services.
- 8.4. Therefore, by issuing an outright ban of such activities on all Council owned or operated land and properties, the Council will send a clear message of its commitment to ensure the welfare of human life, animals, the environment, and property, and help reinforce the message that these practices are no longer desirable in our community.
- 8.5. For clarity, the tenants of STAR Housing are excluded from the recommendations of this report as they are governed by the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreements. Planned consultation will take place with STAR Housing to implement the ban subject to the approval of the recommendations within this report.
- 8.6. Sky lanterns, sometimes known as ‘Chinese lanterns’ or ‘Kong Ming lanterns’ are any unmanned device which relies on an open flame or other heat source to heat air within it with the intention of causing it to lift into the atmosphere. Once released sky lanterns travel completely uncontrolled and they therefore pose a risk of fire to anything they encounter. Indeed, they have been cited as the cause of some significant fires, the most notable being a ‘major incident’ fire at a recycling plant in Smethwick in July 2013 [Ban for sky lanterns in Black Country and Staffordshire](#) (please see attached for information in Appendix 2). A more recent ‘major incident’ occurred on New Year’s Eve 2019 at a zoo in Germany that killed more than 30 animals - [Sky Lantern Fire at Zoo in Germany](#) (please see attached for information in Appendix 3).
- 8.7. Balloon refers to any inflatable flexible bag filled with gas, such as helium, hydrogen, nitrous oxide, oxygen, or hot air, made from materials such as rubber, latex, natural latex, paper, polychloroprene, foil, mylar or nylon fabric.

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

Council Agenda 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=125&MId=4263&Ver=4> : Recording: <https://youtu.be/TSzIlxhDNlw?t=21211>

Council Agenda and Minutes 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=125&MId=3755>

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Dean Carroll

**Local Member**

N/A

**Appendices**

- 1 Proposed Policy Document
- 2 German zoo fire: Mum and daughters who set off sky lanterns questioned by police: <https://news.sky.com/story/german-zoo-fire-mum-and-daughters-who-set-off-sky-lanterns-questioned-by-police-11899807>
- 3 Ban for sky lanterns in Black Country and Staffordshire: <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/2015/01/13/ban-for-sky-lanterns-in-black-country-and-staffordshire/>



- 3.1 The submission of four bids: Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Craven Arms and a county-wide transport bid in the second round of the Levelling Up programme.
- 3.2 Delegation to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Section 151 officer and the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning to submit the final bids for the 6 July 2022 deadline.
- 3.3 Delegation to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Section 151 officer and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning to submit the UKSPF Multiply Investment Plan by 30 June 2022 and the main Investment Plan for UKSPF to Government by the 1 August 2022.

## **REPORT**

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

#### **Do nothing option.**

- 4.1 No bids are submitted from Shropshire in round 2, and the opportunity to bring in additional capital resource is lost. Potential reputational damage for not submitting bids to help address the imbalance across the Country in economic prosperity. The LUF has had a high profile nationally.
- 4.2 There is no guarantee that a future round will be announced, nor when or what changes there will be to the investment themes. Also spend could still need to be defrayed by 2025 regardless of the timing of any further future rounds.

#### **Submit fewer bids.**

- 4.3 Submitting fewer bids is possible. However, given that there are four projects or package of projects which are ready and able to be submitted applications, having received positive feedback on three of these bids in the first round, it is considered this could be detrimental to the economy of our local communities and areas. There is no indication of further rounds of funding at this point.

#### **Submit bids for all areas.**

- 4.4 Shropshire submitted three strong bids in the first round of the fund to support identified projects in these areas with the potential to support infrastructure, redevelopment, sustainable growth and movement. All three bids progressed through the gateway criteria stages and have received

positive and encouraging feedback. The application guidance has indicated that those elements of the submitted application that could weaken the overall application will affect the appraisal and scoring for that submission. Refining of the existing projects to be submitted is therefore required to submit robust proposals.

- 4.5 Shropshire is also submitting a large transport bid of up to £50 million. The Department for Transport have directed those LA's that were not awarded funding through the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) scheme to apply through the second round of the LUF. This will support the County's aspirations and requirements to improve rural sustainable public transport network to service our towns and rural communities across Shropshire. It should also be noted that the Council has been proactive in making a response to a call for evidence by the House of Commons Transport Select Committee for its inquiry into progress with the National Bus Strategy, and in contributing to a County Council Network collegiate response. The Council was one of only five local authorities to take the opportunity to do so, setting out our strategic activity as well as our asks of Government within our context as a large and sparsely populated rural authority.
- 4.5 As part of the application, a Risk Register is required for each of the projects. These risk registers are in place and will be reviewed as part of the refining of the projects to ensure that the risks are being robustly managed to support the proposals. Each application will be required to demonstrate that robust internal financial governance, reporting and evaluation processes are in place. If successful, we will scrutinise the terms of the contract agreement and conditions, as well as any project development impacts prior to acceptance by the S151 Officer.

### **Resources**

- 4.6 Due regard is required to consider the impact on resources if any of the bids were successful and the impact if all of the bids were to be funded. Appropriate staffing and client-side support would be required and needs to be built into the business cases and bids to ensure sufficient resource to deliver the projects.

### **Human Rights Act Appraisal**

- 4.6 The recommendations contained in the report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.

### **Equalities and Opportunities Appraisal**

- 4.7 The UK government has committed to levelling up across the whole of the United Kingdom to ensure that no community is left behind, particularly as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are part of government's broader offer to level up opportunity across the UK.
- 4.8 As such, there is clear complementarity with the Council's own strategic approaches, within which equality, social inclusion and health impact assessments (ESHIA) are integral to efforts to ensure that the likely impacts of policy decisions upon and within our diverse communities are considered as fully as possible. This is in order that negative impacts may be minimised and positive impacts maximised, and that these may be monitored and reviewed, recognising the need for ongoing engagement with our communities and our service users.
- 4.9 ESHIAs for the four bids will be carried out as screening assessment at stocktake moments during the progress of the bids. Links will be made to ESHIAs already carried out or in train for related economic growth endeavours, for example for the Shrewsbury Redevelopment report to Cabinet in February 2022, and for the Enhanced Bus Partnership report to Cabinet in March 2022. There will be explicit cross-referencing, to emphasise that, in all four bids, delivery should have positive impacts across all areas of the community. There is potential for a Low Positive impact across all nine Protected Characteristic groupings set out in the Equality Act 2010, as well as the tenth grouping of people that we think about in Shropshire, who we may consider to be vulnerable.
- 4.10 For people we consider as vulnerable, due to circumstances including rurality and income, public transport via bus needs to present as a safe and economically viable proposition, as well as one on which they may reasonably depend in order to access education and training, employment, health care, and cultural, leisure, shopping and sporting facilities and services. This then links in with Active Travel efforts within our market towns. If equitable outcomes are to be achieved across the country through the Levelling Up agenda, Government funding needs to more explicitly recognise and factor in these social inclusion challenges and their nuances in rural areas and market towns.

## **5. Financial Implications**

### **Levelling Up Fund round 2**

- 5.1 The Levelling Up Fund is a competitive fund, with funding distributed on the basis of successful project selection. Each bid, or package of bids, can submit for up to £20m of capital funding to support priority projects. Transport bids can be submitted for up to £50m of capital fund. Projects will be prioritised if they are able to demonstrate deliverability on the ground in the 2022-23 financial year and it is expected that all funding will be spent by 31 March 2025 and by 2025-26 on an exceptional basis.
- 5.2 The guidance to support 'levelling up' bids require at least a 10% match which can be made up from public and private funding. At this stage in the process, the bids are giving a high level of indication of the likely match funding which will be available to support proposals. The proposals in all 3 areas are looking at a range of match funding to support the bids, including land acquisitions/land holdings, developer contributions including S106 and CIL, funding allocated as part of current Council commitments and in-kind support. Where possible we will also look to utilise existing match funding to support bids.
- 5.3 The County wide transport bid will be submitted using the financial analysis from the BSIP bid submitted in October 2021. The various elements that make up this bid of c£50 million is currently being revisited to ensure that it reflects the changing costs within the transport sector.
- 5.3 The full financial details and business cases for each bid would need to be prepared and considered in further detail and, where appropriate, decisions made to support these if any of the bids were successful to move to the next stage in the process. This would involve determining and securing all match funding elements of the bids before contractually committing to their delivery, as well as recognising the current risk of inflationary pressures and material stability within Construction projects which may result in the requirement to include considerable project contingencies within the individual project costings.
- 5.4 Once funding awards are decided, responsibility for their delivery will sit with Shropshire Council. Further contributions will not be provided, and any cost overruns will need to be managed by Shropshire Council.

### **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

- 5.5 Through the UKSPF, Government has offered each qualifying local authority £20,000 to support the development of the

Investment Plan. This will be used to support the appointment of a consultant to assist with the development of the Investment Plan. This amount will be supplemented by the council's own resources by a further £5,000 to reflect the additional support required to align priorities and the governance arrangements with the proposed Economic Growth Strategy Board.

- 5.6 It will be the responsibility of the council to administer the UKSPF funds totalling £12,255,281 as per the requirements set by Government but this will only be agreed at the point that Government has assessed the Investment Plan which the council submits.

## 6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1 The Council's Climate Strategy has three main objectives as a **route map** to zero carbon:

- **Mitigate** the causes of climate change through carbon reduction of our services
- **Adapt** services and their delivery to respond to changes in the climate
- **Promote** sustainable practices via all services.

- 6.2 The LUF bids to be submitted work towards reducing carbon impacts and mitigating increased carbon outputs through sustainable and balanced growth in existing communities, reducing the need to travel for work, providing more sustainable options for travel as well as growth opportunities for new low carbon development. Capturing and quantifying the impact of carbon activity of the bids if successful, will be explored and undertaken through future monitoring. To support greater resilience to climate-induced extreme weather, design features will be considered in designing and developing projects.

### 6.3 Transport Bid

In its recently published Decarbonising Transport Plan, the Government set out its vision for a net zero transport system. In that plan, public transport and active travel will be the natural first choice for residents' daily activities. The bus can be the most efficient user of road space and a vital part of an environmentally friendly local sustainable transport system.

## 7. Background

### Levelling Up Fund round 2



- 7.1 Government first announced its plan for 'levelling up', decentralising power and working more directly with councils, local partners and communities across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It is considered that they are best placed to understand the needs of their local areas and more closely aligned to the local economic geographies to deliver quickly on the ground.
- 7.2 The Levelling Up Fund was first announced in the 2020 Spending Review. The Fund focuses on capital investment in local infrastructure, building on and consolidating prior programmes such as the Local Growth Fund and Towns Fund. A further Levelling Up White Paper was published in February 2022 where Government announced how it intends to spread opportunity more equally across the UK. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill was published in May 2022.
- 7.3 The Levelling Up Fund has been designed to invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities. This includes a range of high value local investment priorities, including local transport schemes, urban regeneration projects and cultural assets. The Fund is jointly managed by HM Treasury (HMT), the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the Department for Transport (DfT). The Fund will focus investment in projects that require up to £20m of funding for each constituency area.
- 7.4 Details of the second round of the LUF and the prospectus were announced in March this year and will focus on three themes: local transport projects that make a genuine difference to local areas; town centre and high street regeneration; and support for maintaining and expanding the UK's world-leading portfolio of cultural and heritage assets, in particular:
- **Transport investments** including (but not limited to) public transport, active travel, bridge repairs, bus priority, local road improvements and major structural maintenance, and accessibility improvements. LUF is requesting proposals for high-impact small, medium and, by exception, large local transport schemes to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, cut congestion, support economic growth, and improve the safety, security and overall experience of transport users.
  - **Regeneration and town centre investment**, building on the Towns Fund framework to upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure, acquire and regenerate brownfield sites, invest in secure community infrastructure

and crime reduction, and bring public services and safe community spaces into town and city centres.

- **Cultural investment** maintaining, regenerating, or creatively repurposing existing cultural, creative, heritage and sporting assets, or creating new assets that service those purposes including theatres museums, galleries, production facilities, libraries, visitor attractions (and associated green spaces), sports and athletics facilities, heritage buildings and sites, and assets that support the visitor economy.

- 7.5 The Fund states that investment proposals should focus on supporting high priority projects that will make a visible impact in local areas, recognising what constitutes priority investment will vary across local authorities and geographies, including in rural areas of the UK.

### **For Shropshire**

- 7.6 Following the announcement of the LUF round 2, Officers have been reviewing the guidance and applications forms in more detail. Shropshire is, again, in a position to submit 3 bids, one for each MP constituency area fully within the authority boundary. There is potential to submit a cross boundary bid with Telford and Wrekin Council, where MPs span more than one Local Authority, we are currently exploring this with Telford and Wrekin Council to understand the potential to do this to support the east of the County. Shropshire can also submit a single transport bid. Each local authority has been prioritised in a category of tier 1, 2 or 3, with tier 1 being the highest priority. Shropshire remains in tier 2, although it should be noted that some authorities have moved up tiers since the last round of funding, again making it more competitive to attract funding.
- 7.7 Following the first round of bids being unsuccessful, Shropshire received feedback on these to understand the issues. The fund was hugely oversubscribed, and the majority of bids supported were tier 1 areas. The feedback in summary suggested that all 3 bids were strong and indicated some areas for additional work to strengthen them for round 2. Shropshire has been strongly encouraged to resubmit these bids in round 2. Officers have been reviewing, refining and building on the previous bids to strengthen and enhance the current bids to increase the likelihood of being successful in this next round.

7.8 The fundamental gateway for bids is projects which are ready to mobilise quickly and meet the criteria set out in the technical guidance [Levelling Up Fund Round 2: technical note](#). This includes being able to spend within year this financial year 2022/23.

7.9 There will be a three staged approach to assessment and decision making that Government are using.

**Stage 1 Gateway:** The first stage is a pass/fail gateway criterion, where bids will be assessed against whether they can deliver some LUF expenditure in 2022/2023. Bids that do not meet this gateway criteria will not be assessed further and will not be eligible to be considered for funding in this round.

**Stage 2 Assessment and Shortlisting Bids:** Bids will be assessed against the criteria set out in the Prospectus to deliver a shortlist of the strongest bids. To create a shortlist, applications will be assessed at the bid level against place characteristics, strategic fit, economic case and deliverability.

**Stage 3 Decision Making:** Once bid assessment and moderation has concluded, and the shortlist is drawn up, Ministers will make funding decisions.

7.10 The timescale for the submission of bids is extremely tight and they must be made by 6<sup>th</sup> July at 12pm.

7.11 The four bids, which we are recommending to Cabinet should be put forward in the second round of levelling up funding, need to meet the key objectives of the funding and critically can show spend in 22/23.

7.12 **South – Craven Arms** - A major infrastructure project to include a new roundabout / new junction on the A49, a road bridge over the railway line, and spine roads and utility provision on key employment sites. This supports the planned growth of Craven Arms through accelerating the delivery of infrastructure to unlock the allocated Local Plan housing and much needed employment growth on the northern edge of the town. This will enable sites within the town centre to be redeveloped for more appropriate town centre uses, including housing.

7.13 This is a key growth project and the LUF round 2 bid submission will show progression from feasibility stage through to optioneering. The original scope will be developed

up to provide a viable preferred option design with planned phasing to bring forward the employment land to meet strong business demand for growth on space/expansion and business start-ups and attract further inward investment. The bid will be developed with the use of an up to date, reliable and robust evidence base collected through LUF round 1 i.e.

- Constraints mapping
- Site and land assessment
- Transport modelling
- Key stakeholder engagement and support
- Review / update of initial cost and programme feasibility outputs from LUF1

7.14 Developing up a preferred option will enable the bid to include a more accurate costing profile comprising: projected optimum bias, forecasted S106/CIL and private contributions, anticipated match funding and access to other funding streams, e.g. WMCA and third party/partner support, i.e. Network Rail and National Highways, with due consideration of inflation and increasing construction costs. A high-level project delivery plan and programme of activity will be developed. There is a minimum revenue cost associated with commissioning this work of circa £50k, which could be considered as a cost of the project if the bid is successful but is a necessary requirement to further develop the bid at this stage.

7.15 As part of the review process, due diligence has been given to the project risks and opportunities. The following high-level risks have been identified:

- Project/Scheme exposed to climate change risks and opportunities. Mitigation – adaptive planning.
- Insufficient match finding. Mitigation – explore required match from private contributions including National Highways and Network Rail and factor in Highways Maintenance Grant.
- Land acquisitions and inflation land values. Mitigation – Early negotiations to agree value.
- Material costs and availabilities leading to cost and programme overrun at the Council's expense. Mitigation – Assess market during preconstruction and include impact of inflation in revised costing profile.
- Limited project development. Mitigation – The impact of securing award funding will influence project prioritisation.

7.16 Generally, the risks identified as having a high-risk exposure, i.e. high likelihood and high impact, are predominately around programme overrun and cost uplift and these will essentially inform the review process and the preferred option costing. The Council will have to be cognisant of the current market conditions around inflationary pressures on similar major infrastructure projects at this time and be aware of the potential for increased exposure to overspend due to this, mid-term in project delivery. Adequate contingency allocations to the project through capital commitment at the point of grant acceptance will need to be assessed and put in place as a result. The Council will have to be acutely aware of the reputation impact from a bid versus no bid action. A No bid removes the opportunity to access circa. £20m to bring forward much needed employment land and economic growth in the South of the County. A successful bid may result in the project becoming untenable and the Council are unable to accept the funding award, or the Craven Arms project becomes a committed high priority project on the capital programme.

7.17 **North – Oswestry**

A package of projects is proposed focussing in two key locations.

- Town centre investment to support the regeneration and recovery of the centre, through increased footfall supported by public realm improvements and through measures to support businesses to stimulate economic growth. Current projects under consideration include public realm improvements on Church Street and Cross Street and extending capital grants available to re-purpose underused buildings in the town. These proposals were included within the recent Masterplan Vision consultation and complement existing activities and schemes such as the High Street Heritage Action Zone scheme.
- Improvements to support the planned housing and employment developments around Mile End, through site preparation for the employment land. These proposals will be complemented by existing works to improve the road network and proposed improvements to walking and cycling connectivity through the emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

- 7.18 The combined interventions will stimulate growth, support businesses through the provision of new business space, and increase town centre footfall to support the turnover of existing businesses and the visitor economy. These improvements are not standalone projects but build on current plans, as part of a wider strategy to improve the town supported by existing activities and public/private investment already secured.
- 7.19 **Central area – Shrewsbury Big Town plan** package of two projects which consists of:

### **Transforming Movement and Public Spaces in Shrewsbury: Key Routes & Corridors Improvements.**

The project includes measures to enhance the public realm and bring forward the transformation of public spaces along key routes and connections, to create an attractive urban environment stimulating greater numbers of visitors/users, higher spend and activity.

Several key linked routes are identified for improvement with proposals for traffic management measures including new pedestrian crossings and public spaces, enhancements to pedestrian and cycle links within and around the 'river loop' to create a connected town centre for people.

### **Shrewsbury Redevelopment Programme**

Smithfield Riverside is a transformative plan for the regeneration of an important site of circa 4 hectares in freehold ownership of Shropshire Council. Many of the buildings on the site are beyond economic repair/investment resulting in high levels of vacancy, are dated and in generally poor condition. The area is subsequently unattractive, unwelcoming and underutilised.

The project will accelerate the transformation of a major opportunity site in the town centre and act as a catalyst for regeneration and growth of Shrewsbury as a whole. Smithfield Riverside will capitalise on its strategic advantages, including its waterfront setting and proximity to the railway station.

The project proposes to address significant and 'abnormal' levels of demolition and ground remediation works associated with the site's adjacency to the River Severn; thereby de-risking the site and improving its viability and suitability for vibrant mixed-use development in line with the Big Town Plan

aspirations and the emerging Economic Growth Strategy and Shropshire Plan.

A temporary new public open space and meanwhile uses will be implemented to activate and energise the area, to not only provide immediate economic, cultural and leisure benefits, but also to create excitement, investor, occupier and commercial interest. The works will facilitate longer-term redevelopment of the wider Riverside site for permanent leisure, commercial, retail and residential uses. The area will become a distinctive and vibrant mixed-use neighbourhood that will become a centrepiece of Shrewsbury's economic and residential growth.

## **7.20 Cross border bid potential with Telford and Wrekin**

There is potential for Shropshire to jointly submit a bid with Telford and Wrekin Council in the East of the County where the MP's area covers the two authorities. Early conversations have been held on the potential opportunity this may bring for the area in terms of supporting the market towns with infrastructure. This will be explored further and any bid will be subject to Shropshire Council's agreement.

## **7.21 Transport Bid for Shropshire**

The Department for Transport recommended that for those Local Transport Authorities who did not receive funding through the BSIP process, they should consider submitting a revised bid through the Levelling Up Fund.

The transport bid will be centred around Shropshire Connect, the transformation of Shrewsbury Park & Ride (Shrewsbury Connect) and Rural Connect which will see increased connectivity and travel options for the county's rural residents.

Smaller more demand responsive services will be developed to reflect new and developing travel patterns, providing services where residents currently have limited or no travel options available to them other than the car.

A more integrated transport system will benefit both Shropshire residents and those visiting our County, whilst positively impacting key national strategies such as the Decarbonisation of Transport and the wider Climate Change Agenda. Both these ambitions would be extremely difficult to achieve without a viable public transport network.

## **UKSPF for Shropshire**

- 7.22 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a Government fund which is intended to reduce inequalities between communities, as part of the Government's wider "levelling up" agenda.
- 7.23 Since the 2020 Spending Review, Government has promoted the largely billed UKSPF as being the programme which replaces the EU funds of the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund, for which Shropshire received an approximate £50m through since 2016.
- 7.24 Government released details of the UKSPF prospectus and funding allocations on 13 April 2022 ([UKSPF prospectus](#)). The Shropshire allocation is £12,255,281 for spend between Oct 2022 and Mar 2025, but this comprises £10,845,217 through the main fund and £1,410,064 through DfE 'Multiply' funding. 4% of the total allocation can be top sliced for the management and administration of the fund.
- 7.25 This allocation has been based on the following formula:
- 70% is allocated on a per capita basis, within each region based on Local Authority population size
  - 30% of the allocation uses the same needs-based index previously used to identify UK Community Renewal Fund
- 7.26 The overarching objective of the fund is, "*Building pride in place and increasing life chances*".

The programme covers 3 investment priorities:

- Community and Place
- Supporting Local Business; and
- People and Skills (including the ring-fenced Multiply allocation for improve the core skills and employability of adults)

The indicative interventions that are covered by these investment areas are provided in full detail through the guidance provided by Government.

- 7.27 Shropshire Council has the responsibility for administering the fund subject to submitting Investment Plans for both the main and Multiply allocations. The deadlines for which are 1 Aug 22 and 30 Jun 22 respectively.



- 7.28 Shropshire Council has been awarded £20k by Government to support the development of the Investment Plans and this will be used to contract a consultant to support the Council officers which are taking forward the development of UKSPF in Shropshire. We will also use this opportunity to explore linkages with Shropshire's emerging Economic Growth Strategy, both in terms of prioritisation and future governance arrangements.
- 7.29 Comprehensive and balanced local partnerships will be a core component of how the Fund is administered locally, this could be an existing partnership, already in place, that could fulfil the role. The local partnership will be convened by the lead local authority. Discussion is ongoing, regarding how the emerging Shropshire Economic Strategy Board could fulfil this function within UKSPF.
- 7.30 MPs should be engaged in the design and delivery of the Fund. In most cases, all MPs in the area should be invited to join the local partnership group. They should provide an advisory role to lead local authorities, reviewing the investment plan prior to submission. The plan will need to detail the MPs involved in the local partnership group and whether each are supportive of the final plan submission.
- 7.31 The Fund can be used flexibly to support interventions via:
- grant to public or private organisations
  - commissioning third party organisations
  - procurement of service provision
  - in-house provision
- 7.32 The mechanism on how the funding will be awarded to the projects will need to be set out in the Investment Plan.
- 7.33 As custodians of UKSPF, Shropshire Council will need to apply the usual scrutiny and safeguards to the awarding, and use of, the public funds and this will need to equally apply to projects delivered internally or externally of the Council.
- 7.34 The process for allocating the funds will have to be robust and transparent, such as through a commissioning model and/or funding applications. All activities will need to be assessed and approved through standard appraisal and contracting procedures, which provide fair access to the funds for all appropriate delivery bodies.

## 8. Conclusions

8.1 Government publishing the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and this included details of a new devolution framework, the establishment of a new independent data body and a new Levelling Up Advisory Council.

8.2 The Bill provided details of **12 new missions** across four broad areas:

- boosting productivity and living standards by growing the private sector spreading opportunities and improving public services;
- restoring a sense of community;
- local pride and belonging; and,
- empowering local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency.

The Bill set out a series of next steps: a comprehensive programme of engagement across the UK; consultation on missions and metrics and the devolution framework; the establishment of a new body focusing on local government data; rolling out Levelling Up Directors across the UK; simplifying growth funding; creating three sub-groups to support the levelling up advisory council; and introducing future legislation to create an obligation on the UK Government to publish an annual report on progress and to strengthen devolution legislation in England.

8.3 Shropshire is continuing to work with Government, along with our partners, to ensure that our economic agenda is recognised, opportunities are maximised and the governance and funding to support Shropshire’s priorities can be realised. Progressing LUF round 2 bids and the investment plan for UKSPF are the first steps in ensuring Shropshire’s levelling up agenda is being robustly put forward to Government.

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
<b>Cabinet 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021 - UK Levelling Up Fund – Shropshire’s opportunity.</b>
<b>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Cllr Edward Potter</b>
<b>Local Member All</b>
<b>Appendices</b>