



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

Date: Tuesday, 8 October 2024

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Wednesday, 16 October 2024

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Shrewsbury/Oswestry 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. If you wish to attend the meeting please email democracy@shropshire.gov.uk to check that a seat will be available for you.

Please click [here](#) to view the livestream of the meeting on the date and time stated on the agenda

The recording of the event will also be made available shortly after the meeting on the Shropshire Council Youtube Channel [Here](#)

Tim Collard Assistant Director - Legal and Governance

Members of Cabinet

Lezley Picton (Leader)

Cecilia Motley

Ian Nellins

Robert Macey

Gwilym Butler

Dean Carroll

Kirstie Hurst-Knight

Mark Jones

Dan Morris

Chris Schofield

Your Committee Officer is:

Ashley Kendrick Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01743 250893

Email: ashley.kendrick@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 - 10)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2024.

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 12 noon on Thursday 10th October 2024.

5 Member Question Time

To receive any questions from Members of the Council. Deadline for notification is not later than 12 noon on Thursday 10th October 2024.

6 Scrutiny Items

a Developer Contributions Task and Finish Group (Pages 11 - 28)

Lead Member – Councillor Joyce Barrow, Chair of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Contact: Claire Braddock (Tel: 01743 258913)

7 Financial Monitoring Period 5 (Pages 29 - 46)

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

Lead Officer - Ben Jay

8 Draft Financial Strategy 2025/26 - 2029/30

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

Lead Officer - Ben Jay

REPORT TO FOLLOW

9 CCTV in Shrewsbury (Pages 47 - 78)

Lead Member – Councillor Rob Macey, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital

Lead Officer – Nigel Newman

10 Annual Report- Sustainable Travel Team (Pages 79 - 110)

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

Lead Officer – Rhiannon Letman-Wade

11 Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 20 November 2024.

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Committee and Date

Cabinet

16 October 2024

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2024

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

Responsible Officer: Ashley Kendrick

Email: ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 250893

Present

Councillor Lezley Picton (Chairman)

Councillors Cecilia Motley, Ian Nellins, Robert Macey, Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll, Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Mark Jones and Dan Morris

187 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Chris Schofield.

188 Disclosable Interests

There were no disclosable interests.

189 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2024 be confirmed as an accurate record.

190 Public Question Time

Public questions were received from:

Mandy Garrott, read by Jean Childs, in relation to the future of swimming in Shropshire.

The full question and response provided can be found on [Response to Public Questions - Cabinet 11 September 2024.pdf \(shropshire.gov.uk\)](#)

191 Member Question Time

Members' questions were received from:

Councillor Rob Wilson, in relation to the Welsh Bridge, Shrewsbury. By way of supplementary question, the estimated costs required to bring the bridge up to safe standards were requested.

Councillor Andy Boddington, in relation to food waste collections. By way of supplementary question, Councillor Boddington asked that the council revisit collecting food waste alongside garden waste. The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport advised that it was not possible to charge for food waste, however by 2026 it will have to be collected.

Councillor Alex Wagner, in relation to The Square, Shrewsbury. In response to a supplementary question, the Portfolio Holder for Highways advised that there would be a parking order in place to enable enforcement by next week.

The full questions and answers provided can be found on [Response to Member Questions - Cabinet 11 September 2024.pdf \(shropshire.gov.uk\)](#)

192 **Scrutiny Items**

Councillor Claire Wild, Vice Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Chair of the Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee, brought forward the following recommendations from each committee.

From the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers

- *That Cabinet should write to the relevant bodies, including the Police, to highlight the impact of delays in completing enhanced DBS checks on key roles and functions, including the recruitment of social workers and foster carers, and ask what actions are being undertaken to address the causes of delays.*

Q4 2024/Performance report

- *That more support staff in the People Directorate should be further enabled in their roles by extending the number of licences for artificial intelligence (AI) software (to increase their productivity by reducing the amount of manual handling of data and information they have to carry out).*

It was confirmed that the Portfolio Holder had been contacted and was happy to take the recommendations forward.

From the Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2024/25

- *That the Chief Executive be invited to the first meeting of the Transformation Task and Finish Group with a plan to reduce 3rd party spending by 10% and to provide a plan to deliver the savings within the Place directorate.*

It was confirmed that the recommendation would be taken to full Council on 26th September 2024. The Portfolio Holder welcomed the recommendation and looked forward to the response from the Chief Executive at the first meeting.

193 Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2024/25

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities presented the report which provided a detailed review of the Council's financial position as at the 30 June 2024, which had been discussed at length at the Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee earlier in the week.

Members were advised that the senior officer team had been instructed to take measures to ensure the council lives within its means and brings in a sustainable budget for the long term. A collaborative budget with the opposition has been proposed to work together for the benefit of Shropshire residents, staff, and the council's future.

It was acknowledged that the council has an expenditure of over £700 million a year and is facing a projected overspend against reserves.

Concerns were raised regarding the overspend in various departments, with all 10 portfolio holders exceeding their budgets, some by millions of pounds. In response, it was emphasised that by the difference between overspending and not achieving savings, and the need for strict financial control.

In response to a question regarding what could trigger the 'adverse' financial situation and any unknown pressures which could impact the budget, it was hoped that there would be a mild winter with no rain to avoid additional pressures. The impacts of winter fuel payments, the possibility of taking away bus passes, the single person discount on council tax, and the rising energy cap on the people in Shropshire were highlighted.

Members were advised that the council will bring forward contingency plans to ensure it stays within budget. The importance of unity and working together was emphasized to ensure the council's sustainability.

Members of the opposition were invited to work together with the administration for the benefit of residents, staff and the council. In response, group leaders expressed concerns about transparency and access to information, however would consult with their members.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet Members:

- A. Direct the Chief Executive to lead all Officers in urgently taking the necessary actions to improve the Quarter 1 forecast of a projected spend over budget of £38.5m (30th June 2024), by year end, predominantly focussing on remaining savings or mitigating actions to be delivered in 2024/25.
- B. Discussed the impact of the projected expenditure forecast on the General Fund Balance and noted the risk of further service pressures (savings required) in next year if financial performance in the current year is not improved.

194 Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2024/25

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital introduced the report which was the first report for 2024/25 and sets out the key issue to manage this year; delivering acceptable performance while remaining within our available financial envelope. Members were advised that the new Performance Management Framework (PMF) has been reviewed and strengthened to align with all our strategic objectives to enable the council to become an evidence-led performance managed council.

Members noted that the Q1 report is not fully complete with all the agreed performance indicators due to the time taken to implement the new approach, obtain data and the focus on getting it right. Those outstanding were noted in the report. It was also noted that some of the performance indicators are baseline figures from which targets will be established and then performance monitored against this.

In response to a query regarding the rate of EHCPs being issued, Members were advised that there had been a 154% increase in demand for EHCPs in 2023 and 2024, with 250 requests for EHCPs and 212 plans issued in quarter one. The plan which had been put in place was working, and communication with families was being improved.

The Executive Director for Health, Well-being, and Prevention explained that excess mortality and serious mental illness were system-wide targets that were monitored closely. Actions included improving health checks for people with serious medical illness and mental health outcomes. A detailed piece of work was being done through scrutiny on this area.

In response to a query regarding the progress in developing KPIs for climate change, the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital responded that the lead officer is currently working on this and progress should be made soon.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Reviewed and considered performance dashboard information alongside this exception report.
2. Noted progress to date in achieving the outcomes of The Shropshire Plan (TSP) and comment as appropriate.
3. Considered that the KPIs currently agreed remain the same for 2024/2025.
4. Agreed to individual Portfolio Holders reviewing the targets for the agreed KPIs with the relevant Executive Director.

195 Treasury Management Update Quarter 1 2024/25

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities presented the report which outlined the treasury management activities of the Council in the first quarter of 2024/25. It highlighted the economic environment in which treasury management

decisions have been made and the interest rate forecasts of the Council's Treasury Advisor, Link Asset Services. It also updates Members on the internal treasury team's performance.

Concern was expressed regarding the council's level of borrowing, short-term liquidity and the level of investments which had fallen by £48.3 million in the last 12 months, indicating a misalignment between spending and income. The Portfolio Holder advised that the Council had historically held large cash balances compared to neighbouring councils, such as Telford and Wrekin, which had significantly higher borrowing levels. The Council had been fortunate not to borrow extensively in the past, but increasing demand had necessitated the use of cash balances. It was emphasised that it was better to use available funds rather than borrow if not necessary.

Members referred to a report stating that short-term funds were secured for a week over the end of the month to manage cash flow, resulting in a payment. Members sought assurance that this was a one-off occurrence, and that the Council's cash flow and liquidity were stable. The Executive Director for Resources explained that the short-term loan was taken to ensure financial security at the end of the financial year due to market uncertainties. He assured members that it was not a regular occurrence and had minimal impact on overall investment delivery.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Noted the summary of the wider economic environment and the Council's borrowings and investments set out in Appendix A
2. Noted the performance within prudential indicators for quarter 1, 2024/25 (Appendix B)

196 Annual Customer Feedback (complaints) Report

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital introduced the report which summarised the customer feedback (compliments, comments and complaints) received by Shropshire Council in 2023/24 as well as the potential impact of the LGSCO Complaint Handling Code from 2026. Overall numbers remain similar for complaints but average time to respond and the proportion of upheld cases have increased.

Members noted that the new complaint handling code from April 26th 2026 will further reduce response times, requiring careful planning and adjustments.

RESOLVED:

1. Members considered the Annual Customer Feedback Report and approved the 15 recommendations within it, and actions to support and improve robust customer feedback performance.

2. Members noted that from April 2026 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman will start to use the complaint handling code within its decisions and reporting (any non-compliance will be highlighted publicly from this time).

197 Draft Independent Living & Specialist Accommodation Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Assets introduced the report and advised members that the strategy aimed to improve the life experience of vulnerable people in Shropshire by enabling them to remain independent in their own homes. The report included the outcome and results of the public consultation period, summarised in the main body and Appendix 3. The strategy includes an exhaustive action plan in Appendix 1.

Concern was expressed about how the Council would communicate with residents who do not use the Internet, given that 34% of residents aged over 75 had not used the Internet in the last three months. The Portfolio Holder explained the Council's approach is "digital by default" but not "digital by exclusion." The Council continues to invest in and support the customer care team and customer care centre to ensure that all residents are reached.

Members noted that the Council was working hard to reach hard-to-reach members of the community through public libraries, Community Hubs, and the Shropshire Local initiative. The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital added that the Council is co-chairing the digital inclusion network with Age UK and other organisations to address these challenges.

RESOLVED:

To approve and adopt the Independent Living and Specialist Accommodation Strategy, attached as Appendix I.

198 Shrewsbury Movement & Public Space Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport presented the Movement and Public Space Strategy (MPSS) aimed at improving Shrewsbury's town centre by promoting sustainable transport, reducing reliance on private motor vehicles, and enhancing public spaces. The strategy is a 10-year vision with 21 interventions to make Shrewsbury inclusive, accessible, and economically vibrant. The strategy was developed by the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan partnership, which includes Shropshire Council, Shrewsbury Town Council, and the Shrewsbury BID.

Members noted that a nine-week public consultation was conducted to gather feedback from key stakeholders, residents, businesses, and visitors. The results were deemed representative of Shrewsbury's overall characteristics.

Members welcomed the strategy and emphasised the importance of social inclusion aspects, such as providing electric bicycles for low-paid social care workers.

Members highlighted the positive impact on congestion, emissions, and health by offering safe and viable transport alternatives.

The importance of including rural areas in the strategy and providing efficient public transport networks was expressed. The Portfolio Holder assured members that the

strategy takes into account the needs of the entire county and mentioned plans for park and ride, park and stride, and a bus interchange.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet agreed to:

1. Recommend to Council that the Shrewsbury Movement and Public Space Strategy (MPSS) be adopted as a material consideration in the planning decision-making process.
2. Delegate responsibility to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, and the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport, to progress implementation of the MPSS, to include, but not limited to, finalising the 10-year delivery plan, subject to securing funding.

199 Home Adaptations Policy 2024

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Assets presented the policy which set parameters for dispensing major adaptations and disability facilities grants to enable people to maintain their independence in their homes.

Reservations were expressed regarding limited resources and finances for delivering disabled facilities grants and it was noted that there had been past issues with long waiting times for adaptations. The Portfolio Holder Acknowledged the importance of prioritising projects based on need and waiting times and advised that the major adaptations grant is funded through central government, with £675 million allocated in the previous financial year.

Following a query as to whether the grant from central government was fully spent and if additional funds were needed, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that details would be circulated following the meeting.

RESOLVED:

To approve the Home Adaptations Policy 2024 as set out in Appendix I.

200 Sports Village Transformation: Results of Public Consultation and Authority to Proceed with Proposal

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital introduced the report which presented the results of the recent public consultation on proposals to transform the Shrewsbury Sports Village with new swimming and fitness facilities. Approval was sought to proceed to Full Council to request the project is accepted into the Capital Programme and grant authority to proceed with the design and build. Members noted that the public consultation received over 1300 responses, showing strong community support for the vision to create a state-of-the-art, all-electric facility.

Concerns were raised regarding transport access and the need for improved transport plans, and the financial aspects and funding for the project. The Portfolio Holder

responded that the report recognised the need for improved transport and a transport plan would be written. The project aimed to provide better bus services, safe cycling, and walking facilities to improve accessibility. He also advised that the project included substantial new borrowing and aimed to secure external funding. The initial budget for the design and planning stages would be presented to the full council.

Members noted the new development on the site was committed to being zero carbon. There was an opportunity to convert the whole sports facility to zero carbon, including the installation of PV canopies across the car park to produce clean energy.

Members recognised that the Quarry pool was an essential part of the offer for Shrewsbury. However, the new Sports Village at Sundorne was chosen for its accessibility and potential to attract users from outside the county.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Agreed the results of the public consultation and the business case for the project, as set out in this paper and in Appendix 6, be presented to Council with a recommendation that the design and development of the Shrewsbury Sports Village Transformation be included in the Capital Programme with an initial budget for the design and planning stages of £2.248 million. The project to be funded from Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and any available grants and capital receipts which may be available during the project.
2. Recommended that Council delegates authority to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism, to procure, negotiate and agree the terms of any agreements/contracts necessary for the delivery of the design and planning stages of the project including, but not limited to:
 - Commissioning the UK Leisure Framework to support the procurement strategy.
 - Selection of a prime design and build contractor and other suppliers.
 - Site surveys and investigations and relevant reports.
 - Detailed designs and planning application.
 - Contract preparation for the build stages.
3. Agreed that a report is brought to Cabinet and Full Council after the design stages; following the determination of the planning application and once the project has established the full build costs. This subsequent report will seek a decision on whether to approve the full project budget and to proceed with the build stage.

201 Future Options for Shropshire Schools Library Service

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Education introduced the report which considered the future of the Schools Library Service, responding to the outcome of the schools and public consultations.

Members noted that the School Library Service operated as a traded service which schools can buy into. 65% of schools in Shropshire had bought into the service which allows them to borrow books and artefacts and receive training for staff and pupil librarians. It was acknowledged that the service had been operating at a loss for the last two financial years.

Members were asked to consider the following four options:

1. Close the service.
2. Reset, relaunch, and relocate the service.
3. Resize and reduce the service.
4. Outsource the service.

The Portfolio Holder made a recommendation to approve the second option: reset, relaunch, and relocate the service.

In response to a query regarding the possibility of bringing some of the 35% into the service that are currently using other providers, it was confirmed that the team are optimistic about bringing more schools into the service through tailored changes and ongoing communication. Through individual conversations with Headteachers and staff, they have identified what schools need and want.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the implementation of option 2 (restructure/relaunch and relocation of the Service).
2. Delegated the detailed implementation of the agreed actions to the Assistant Director for Education and Achievement, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education. This should include the exploration of appropriate grant funding opportunities that would allow for additional development of the artefact offer with a view to further enhancing the cultural experiences of children and young people in Shropshire. This may include establishing a charitable arm of the Service.
3. Noted that school buy-in will be closely monitored by the Assistant Director for Education and Achievement to inform whether school buy-in is sufficient to enable the Service to be cost-neutral from 25/26 onwards. If it is determined that further action is required to enable the Service to be cost-neutral from 25/26, this may include exploring implementation of option 3, or if necessary, option 1. Should option 1 need to be considered, a report to Cabinet will be drafted setting out the position before any decision is made.

202 Government Consultation on Draft National Planning Policy Framework – Shropshire Council Response

In the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services, the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital introduced the report which regarding the government's consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and

associated changes to the planning system. The report set out Shropshire Council's proposed response, seeking approval to submit it.

Members noted that the proposed reforms suggest a new standard methodology for calculating housing needs, significantly increasing Shropshire's housing requirement from just over 1000 to over 2000 dwellings per year. Concerns were raised about the capacity to deliver this increase sustainably without undue pressure on infrastructure and the environment.

Concerns were also highlighted about the proposed new Grey Belt designation within Greenbelt areas and the potential impact on planning services, including increased speculative applications and appeals. Members noted that the response stresses the importance of aligning national reforms with local priorities to mitigate these impacts.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the local plan would continue to be developed and adopted, but the proposed reforms may require revisions to housing targets. The response advocated for a planning system that supports sustainable growth while addressing local needs and priorities.

RESOLVED:

That:

1. Cabinet considered and approved submission of the response to the Government's consultation on reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated reforms to the planning system, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.
2. Authority be given to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services to agree any additional changes to the Council's response to the consultation ahead of its submission to the Government before 24 September 2024.

203 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 16 October 2024.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:



Cabinet
16 October 2024

Item

Public



Report of the Developer Contributions Task and Finish Group

Responsible Overview and Scrutiny Officer:		Claire Braddock	
email:	claire.braddock@shropshire.gov.uk	Tel:	01743 258913
Overview and Scrutiny Chair:		Councillor Joyce Barrow	
Task and Finish Group Chair:		Councillor Joyce Barrow	
Portfolio Holder:		Councillor Chris Schofield	

1. Synopsis

Cabinet are being asked to consider the report and recommendations of the Developer Contributions Task and Finish Group established by the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The Developer Contributions Task and Finish group was commissioned by the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee to consider and understand the application and impact of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 (S106) payments in relation to new developments. This report sets out the key findings, conclusions, and headline recommendation areas from the Task and Finish group investigation which took place across a number of meetings with both officers from the Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB).

- 2.2. In carrying out their investigation the Task and Finish group heard about the social impacts of new developments, in particular health and education need, and how CIL and S106 funding can be applied to address related changes to demand.
- 2.3. Task and Finish group members recognised that Section 106 is covered by national legislation and guidance and therefore is not able to be amended at a local level.
- 2.4. The Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee will follow up on the progress and impact of the delivery of agreed recommendations at appropriate points, based on timescales set out in an action plan.

3. Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to:

- 3.1. Accept the recommendations set out in the report of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Developer Contributions Task and Finish group attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2. Provide a response to the recommendations in 6 months time, identifying the reasons why for any that were not accepted, and an action plan setting out how and when those agreed will be implemented.

Report

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications related to this report. The Developer Contributions Task and Finish group work involved a review of the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Agreements in the Shropshire Council area, consideration of the relationship and distinction between the two, and how application of these can meet projected need and demand arising from new housing developments.

5. Climate Change Appraisal

- 5.1. The development of new housing can create demand for different services such as health and education. Ensuring that these are available in close proximity to where people live will reduce the need to travel via car and enable an increase in take up of active travel for their appointments and schooling.

6. Background

- 6.1. The Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee identified Developer Contributions as a work programme topic with particular focus on the social impact (mainly health and education) of new housing developments. The

committee commissioned a Task and Finish Group to explore this in greater detail and report their findings back to the parent committee.

- 6.2. Within this wider scope the Task and Finish Group confirmed that their focus would be to understand how the need for, and value of, Developer Contributions are established, how demand and need is forecast, and how these figures determine the level of contribution required from developers.
- 6.3. Members heard from relevant officers from within the Council including Strategic Planning Policy, Development Management, One Public Estate, and Learning and Skills, and externally from the Integrated Care Board (ICB).
- 6.4. The Task and Finish group made seven recommendations which were agreed by the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee on the 11th July. These are grouped under the following six headings –
 - Reviewing developer contributions required by the Council
 - Raising understanding and awareness
 - Specifying the use of allocated funding
 - Maximising the impact and benefit of the Strategic Infrastructure Network
 - Ensuring developer contributions match development related need
 - Rurality

The key findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group are detailed within the enclosed report (Appendix 1). The committee will follow up on the progress and impact of the delivery of agreed recommendations.

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

Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023 – Cabinet 13.12.2023

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/s36366/Annual%20Infrastructure%20Funding%20Statement%202023-30102023%201134%20draft%20002%20final.pdf>

Local Member: All

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Report of the Developer Contributions Task and Finish Group

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**Economy and Environment Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

**Report of the Developer Contributions Task and
Finish Group**

July 2024

Acknowledgments

The Members of the cross-party Developer Contributions Task and Finish Group have taken a focused approach to their work, ensuring that they have considered the impact of housing developments on social aspects such as education provision, local health provision and the related use of assets. They have listened to multiple expert witnesses, evaluated different viewpoints, and sought well-supported conclusions and recommendations. The group would like to express thanks to those who have assisted in this investigation - Shropshire Council's Planning Policy & Strategy Manager, Legal Team Leader, the Planning and Development Services Manager, the Education Place Planning and Sufficiency Manager and the One Public Estates & Partnerships Manager. As well as the following colleagues from partner organisations - the Director of Delivery & Transformation at NHS Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, and the Integrated Care Board's Primary Care Lead for Estates.

Members of the Task and Finish Group

Councillor Joyce Barrow (Chair)

Councillor Roger Evans

Councillor Claire Wild

Councillor Ted Clarke

Councillor Rob Wilson

Councillor Pam Moseley

Councillor Tony Parsons

Councillor Peter Broomhall

Councillor Steve Davenport

Councillor Vivienne Parry

Councillor Bernie Bentick

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1. Context

New housing developments can increase demand on different services in local communities. Members of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee specifically mentioned the social impacts of developments when they were scoping this topic, such as demand on GP Practices and schools.

Contributions from developers towards the costs of introducing or expanding services are a key part of ensuring that communities can be and do remain sustainable. Section 106 (S106) contributions are specific to the development that they relate to. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) relates to the cumulative impact of developments.

Overview and Scrutiny members recognise the importance of system partners setting out the forecast demand arising from new housing development on the different services that they provide, during the planning stages of developments. They are aware of examples of demand being placed on already heavily utilised services, where the arising need of additional developments might have been better identified to inform the required value and focus of developer contributions.

2. Scope of the work

The Developer Contribution Task and Finish Group focused on the social aspects and impacts of new housing developments that need to be covered by S106 and CIL to ensure that they can be mitigated or addressed. This work therefore looked at health and education, and the delivery of any additional capacity required.

3. Objectives

- To consider and understand the upcoming changes to developer contributions and how these should be confirmed and communicated.
- To consider how the council identifies expected future requirements and how it uses these insights with partners to plan to meet these situations.
- To understand how the social impacts of significant housing developments are being identified by stakeholders and whether this is being done consistently and robustly enough to inform the contribution requirements and allocations that are needed to meet future need as a result of the development.
- To review and evaluate learning from more recent developments e.g. Shrewsbury South and West Urban Extensions.
- To identify options and opportunities to raise the focus on and visibility of developer contributions by the Council e.g.
 - Greater working between Planning Policy and Development Management in setting the plans and guidance following the sign-off of the Local Plan
 - Publication of contributions e.g. on the Website, and encourage greater awareness, monitoring, and enforcement.
 - Identify opportunities for measures that can be used to demonstrate the collection and use of developer contributions (S106 and CIL as separate pots) e.g. total value, allocation and expenditure of those contributions, and the timescales for work to be carried out.
- Identify links to HOSC and their work by looking at the Primary Care Estates Strategy and the identification of changes to demand and need by GP Practices as a result of the development of new homes.

4. What the Task and Finish group have done?

The Developer Contributions Task and Finish Group met four times to explore and research this topic in detail. The group identified key areas of focus for each meeting to better understand how Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 (S106) money was allocated and spent, these were Health, Education and One Public Estate, and relevant expert witnesses were invited to attend these sessions as detailed in the acknowledgements on page 2 of this report.

The Task and Finish Group were interested to understand how the need for, and value of, developer contributions are identified. They sought insight into how various stakeholders determine projected demand and need, and how this data and the estimated figures are employed in establishing developer contributions, as well as any negotiation that takes place to confirm the levels.

5. Key Findings

As with all Task and Finish groups meetings were made available to all Members to join and hear the discussions taking place. This was particularly popular when the group met with the Integrated Care Board (ICB). The level of interest and valuable input at this meeting from a wide range of Council Members was very much welcomed. In turn those Members fed back their appreciation at having the opportunity to engage in the work of the Task and Finish Group first hand.

At the first meeting of the Task and Finish Group, Members were interested to hear that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a defined amount of money, set through a Charging Schedule, paid to the Council on new open market developments in the area, and understood how this can be an important mechanism for local authorities to help them deliver the infrastructure needed to support local development. Members understood that CIL funding applies to the cumulative impact of groups of developments whilst Section 106 (S106) agreements cover site specific issues that have a more direct impact. This is capital spend and not revenue and must be used to fund the impact of development only, and not wider issues.

Members agreed that greater clarity around the roles of CIL and of S106 and where they could be applied would help aid public and partner awareness and expectations. All felt that a 'rebrand' of CIL would be helpful to address any gaps in understanding around its remit. It was also felt that the phrase 'CIL Local' might be seen as misleading, in this case it applies to spend within Place Plan areas, whereas residents may be more likely to think of 'local' as applicable to their street or immediate vicinity.

Members learned that since 2012 when the CIL was introduced in Shropshire, around £68M of CIL funding have been collected. Members were reminded that from this 15% has been allocated and sent to Parish and Town Councils where the development occurred as the Neighbourhood Fund. The Neighbourhood Fund is the responsibility of Parish and Town Councils to spend.

Of the CIL which remains with Shropshire Council to use on infrastructure (the CIL Local and CIL Strategic) from a total of around £54m around £24.6m has either been spend or committed to infrastructure. Therefore around £30m of CIL Local and CIL Strategic has yet to be allocated to specific infrastructure.

The Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement report, agreed by Cabinet in December 2023 set out proposals for the unallocated CIL funds, and future CIL funding could be used. This report was circulated to the Task and Finish Group together with a list of what money has been spent previously or has already been allocated.

Members were therefore made aware that the Council has identified a number of areas where available CIL funds can be used where development is likely to have an impact, including new health related infrastructure, new and expanded school place provision and transport and highway improvements, including the North-West Relief Road. Members were also advised the Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement and the recently updated Place Plans are key evidence in determining where available and future CIL funding would be directed.

The Task and Finish group were keen to understand why Shropshire, as an early adopter of CIL, chose to apply it to housing developments but not commercial developments, and asked if this could be a future consideration and be included in any future review of developer contributions by the Council. Officers advised this was principally due to concerns over the viability of development, and reassured Members that S106 contributions could be used on commercial developments if needed to ensure appropriate infrastructure mitigation.

Members learned how the timeframe of the emerging Local Plan and engagement with infrastructure delivery partners such as the Integrated Care Board (ICB), are already considering what Shropshire might look like in the future. As well as recognising the links between this emerging picture and the impact of local transport networks and increased developments upon climate change and the environment. The Planning Policy & Strategy Manager explained that the Council are now starting to look beyond the 2038 Plan period as part of the 'Shropshire 2050' work which has started with looking at future projections, extrapolating how future population increases are likely to impact on several social infrastructure needs such as schools, doctor's surgeries, and highways infrastructure.

Members were informed of the work of the Strategic Infrastructure Network who are looking at where intervention is necessary to meet future need, based along a number of themes, including transport, social infrastructure (health and education) environment, and highways. This group is made up of partner organisations including the ICB and National Highways, all of whom are very engaged, and discussions are taking place around where development is likely to have short, medium and long term impacts, and thus influencing decisions on where developer contributions should be focussed to ensure the best outcome and most benefit.

This proactive approach allows the Council a chance to present a combined 'partnership' approach to long-term infrastructure funding, including supporting the effective use of wider capital funding opportunities as well as focussing developer contributions, including CIL, most appropriately.

Integrated Care Board (ICB) – Health Focus

The Task and Finish Group invited the Director of Delivery & Transformation at NHS Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, and the Integrated Care Board's Primary Care Lead for Estates with a view to exploring the impact of new housing developments on local NHS services such as GP surgeries and health in general. The discussion also covered the opportunities that developer contributions could have and identified potential barriers to utilising funding opportunities.

Members were interested to hear that there was a productive relationship between the ICB and Shropshire Council, and they learned that the progress of identifying need and demand arising from new housing developments and the opportunities afforded by CIL and Section 106 funding had improved over the last 18 months to two years. Historically, capital funding in the NHS has been sourced in different ways, through the Estates and Technology Transformation Fund (ETTF), University Deanery funding, and NHS England capital. However, all sources of historical funding

have come to an end and the only sources of capital funding now available for development of GP surgeries is via CIL or S106 contributions.

Members learned that further to the national spending review, which is underway across the NHS, and the current cost of living crisis (which has impacted on developers in terms of increases to the cost of materials), some primary care estates schemes have been put on hold, and this was the case for the previously proposed Shrewsbury Health and Well-being Hub. Therefore, there are no other current routes to access capital for primary care service developments other than through S106 and CIL funding. In light of this, self-investment is key but not an easy model for GP surgery settings, which are often run as a private business. As a result of this, Section 106 and CIL funding are increasingly being recognised as key opportunities for capital investment in primary care for the NHS.

Members were keen to discover what the effects of new housing developments are on local healthcare provision, considering the biggest impacts of increasing population numbers and more people directly accessing emergency care rather than primary care. It is expected that between 2016 and 2038 around 31,300 additional dwellings will be developed within Shropshire in accordance with the emerging Local Plan (between 2016-2023 11,760 dwellings have been delivered, with around 21,720 dwellings remaining to be delivered).

Members were informed that the ICB is sighted upon all expected housing developments up to 2038, as identified within the Local Plan, and when a S106 application is put in the ICB is consulted. In cases where these comprise of more than 50 houses a S106 request is made.

Over the last 2 years, around £2.5 million of S106 applications have been submitted by the ICB. This amount is held with developers to be drawn down only with regards to the specific impact of those particular developments identified in the applications and within a time limited, typically 5 year, window. CIL funding has also been applied for in some cases where there has been a cumulative impact of a number of developments. Shropshire Council gives high priority to primary health care facilities for CIL, and requests for CIL funding to support additional or expanded health provision have been approved by Shropshire for around £1.13m in total.

Members gained information on how the ICB calculate the impact and need based upon the numbers of houses being developed, the expected additional population, deprivation, levels of need within the area, and demographics of residents e.g. older people, or younger families. This utilisation calculation informs the numbers of GP rooms required, type of requirement, and amount of additional space needed within a GP practice.

Members asked whether a GP catchment area review was likely and learned that GPs negotiate their own area when they take on their contract. However, if they choose to change their boundary, they have to put a case for approval to the ICB. GPs are also able to take on patients outside of their catchment area if they wish to do so. It was recognised that GP boundaries do overlap county borders, and therefore a Shropshire based GP might include some patients living in Wales, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, or Cheshire, and vice versa. Another

factor is that some people might move within county but prefer to stay with their previous GP practice rather than relocate to one that is more local to their new home. The ICB confirmed that it is working with neighbouring counties as well as cross border with the two Welsh Health Boards to identify any significant housing developments that may have an impact on Shropshire-based GP practices.

The Task and Finish Group also considered rural proofing and the cumulative effects of several villages having smaller numbers of developments of perhaps less than 50 houses, but each with potential to have a greater impact when combined. Members heard how work is undertaken to provide services to these areas in a different way, perhaps through working with the Community Trusts, or use of digital technology. Members added that using the rurality toolkit would be valuable moving forwards.

Keyworker housing was another consideration of the Task and Finish Group discussion. Members were keen to see that it was both affordable and located within proximity to need and drew the links to the report of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Social Housing and the Housing Strategy. Whilst housing for key workers is not picked up under CIL/S106 it is a valid consideration in terms of the impact of housing developments, in conjunction with the NHS recruitment and retention programme. Attracting new staff could relieve pressure upon GP practices. There are over 50 GP practices across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin combined, each dealing with an increasing number of patients with differing needs. The utilisation study helps identify best use of space and need within these surgeries. Members learned that, as a rule, the ratio of patients per GP room is approximately 1:1100, and whilst the move towards patients seeking advice from pharmacists instead of GP's may help lessen demand, the impact of this is not yet known.

Members asked how the ICB prioritise where to spend the money to achieve best value and heard about the use of project matrix scores which are set against various criteria in order to create a priority list, which can be flexible if additional intelligence comes to light.

Members understood that the ICB has worked for the last few years with the Council's lead on the One Public Estate work programme to support the use of Council buildings for ICB office space. As well as working with the Council's Assistant Director for Commercial Services around co-location of practices, agreed at Paul's Moss in Whitchurch and completed at the Riverside in Shrewsbury.

It was acknowledged that strong partnership working between the Council, the ICB and other partners through the Strategic Infrastructure Network meetings are key to future success. There is a keen mutual awareness of the need for exchange of information between partner organisations, and the Strategic Infrastructure Network can identify need at the most appropriate point and feed this into the process.

Members heard how there was a risk of Section 106 and CIL funding getting absorbed in the wider healthcare acutes and not being specifically allocated to GP practices. The Task and Finish Group agreed that it was essential that this money go to the places where it is needed most, it was identified that descriptions in funding reports are often generalised and could in future be more specific to aid this clarity of purpose. All agreed that this would be a very important outcome moving forwards.

Education Focus

Members heard from the Council's Education Place Planning and Sufficiency Manager about how the two main issues relating to education place planning are a lack of school spaces and consideration of active travel, through building this into CIL bids at their outset this issue might be alleviated. Currently secondary schools in Shrewsbury run at 99% plus capacity, which is above the Department for Education advice of 93% - 96%. Resulting from this Members discussed the matter of catchment areas within Shrewsbury town centre, as well as issues arising from schools on the proximity of the County border whose intake may be cross County but will be funded by Shropshire Council, and heard how admissions in these cases are given priority to those students within the County the school is located in.

Members recognised that although specific development land could be allocated and set aside for education need, CIL would not be payable until houses are built, and therefore there is a balance to be struck between addressing immediate school capacity required from the development of new housing and creating more school places to meet the forecasted need. In the interim existing schools could be expanded but this may create issues later on where they have unused capacity as their pupil numbers reduce once the new school is fully open.

The Education Place Planning and Sufficiency Manager explained that Shropshire Council currently requests developer contributions for primary and secondary school places but not for Early Years, Post-16 and SEND, active travel, school transport (schools age, SEND or Post-16), however these are all specified by neighbouring local authorities such as Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, and Staffordshire. They confirmed that a new policy is being written which will seek to address this and also consider the amount of CIL that the Council could ask of developers to bring it more in line with that of other local authorities.

The Task and Finish Group agreed that a piece of work is required to review the relationship between CIL and Section 106, including consideration of when money is needed to be made available by developers. They also confirmed that the two key issues for consideration are the amount we charge developers, and how we prioritise need.

One Public Estate

Members heard about the work of the One Public Estate network of partners, including all local health trusts; the health trusts form part of the Integrated Care Board (ICB); each Trust has an estate's strategy, which is being drawn together to create an overarching strategic estates approach. This enables the ICB partners to apply for gap funding from developer contributions.

Members were updated about the Strategic Infrastructure Network which encompasses various sub-groups. Amongst these, the Social Infrastructure group offers the health sector direct access to strategic infrastructure planning information, including future housing development. The sub-groups of the Strategic Infrastructure Network encourage partners to bring their evidence-based estate plans forward to

enable a holistic plan of future housing delivery supported by the prioritisation of key service infrastructure i.e. health, education, and transport facilities.

Members heard about some of the work with partners completed and taking place at Riverside Medical Practice at Tannery Shrewsbury and Pauls Moss in Whitchurch, both of which are joint health and housing infrastructure projects with a commercial approach. In Whitchurch the Council is acting as investor in the health centre, which enables the GP services to be delivered with a rental paid to the Council, who act as landlord. This new practice is on schedule to open late Summer 2024.

In light of the witness evidence and discussions held Members agreed that there needed to be a mechanism in place that offered greater clarity for more critical project identification for CIL funding, which is generally prioritised between education, health, highways and leisure. A review of the phasing policy as to how and when payments are received would also be important.

It was felt that greater visibility of developer contributions would lead to more monitoring and enforcement and to more informed stakeholders who make developer contribution requirements that are more in line with future needs and demand. At the same time as having a clear view of the timescales, expectations, impact and benefits of decisions through to the completion of work being funded by developer contributions.

Members recognised that funds derived from developer contributions (CIL and S106) need to achieve best results for the Council, its stakeholders, and the people of Shropshire. It was acknowledged that there were several areas for examination that could achieve a very positive impact. Whilst the Local Plan review is taking place officer time would be stretched but after this has been completed, officers would be likely to have better opportunity to undertake a full review of the CIL, taking into account any changes to national regulations and guidance, encompassing the recommendations that have come to light as a result of this work.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Task and Finish Group for Developer Contributions worked with a clear focus to better understand the relationship between the Council and its stakeholders in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 (S106). They learned over the course of the investigation how strong partnership working is already taking place through the work of the Strategic Infrastructure Network.

All Members agreed that given Shropshire was an early adopter of CIL in 2012, that a comprehensive review of CIL would be necessary moving forwards but recognised that this is something that would not be viable until after the Local Plan is completed due to current demands upon officer time. This review would also need to take account of any changes to CIL regulations which the Government has consulted on but not yet implemented.

As a result of the work undertaken and discussions with expert witnesses the Task and Finish Group has identified a number of recommendations as detailed below.

Reviewing developer contributions required by the Council:

Recommendation 1: In recognition that the current CIL Charging Schedule was adopted in 2012, the Council should undertake an urgent comprehensive review of the CIL following the adoption of the Local Plan in 2025.

This urgent review should address both the charging schedule (what kinds of development are subject to CIL, and how much will be charged) and further clarify the types of infrastructure where CIL funds are best utilised within the locality in which they were derived, to ensure the highest priority infrastructure is funded.

Recommendation 2: That the review of developer contributions should include looking at the relationship between CIL and Section 106 to help identify the best approach to address the needs and challenges arising from a development.

This should include a review of the phasing arrangements to shape how and when money is needed to be made available by developers to implement different interventions e.g. developing classroom capacity or a new school to meet forecasted increases in pupil numbers.

Raising understanding and awareness:

Recommendation 3: That the difference between CIL and S106, including their application, should be more clearly defined, and communicated to increase awareness and understanding, and help to manage expectations whilst improving public understanding.

That opportunities are identified through closer working between Planning Policy and Development Management as we progress towards the adoption of the Local Plan to raise the focus on and visibility of developer contributions.

Increased coverage on the Shropshire Council website should include publication of contributions, promotion of the work that has been undertaken as a result of the use of CIL and raise awareness of any work that is underway, including the planned benefits that have been realised or are expected, highlighting the value of developer contributions.

Specifying the use of allocated funding:

Recommendation 4: That the allocation of CIL or S106 funding for local health provision should clearly specify that funds should be focussed on primary care provision as this has the most direct impact from new development.

Maximising the impact and benefit of the Strategic Infrastructure Network:

Recommendation 5: That there should be greater awareness of the role and purpose of the Strategic Infrastructure Network and the constituent groups by Council officers and Members, as well as externally with partners.

Ensuring developer contributions match development related need:

Recommendation 6: That Members are encouraged to give positive consideration to proposed new guidance which will be taken to Cabinet in 2024 regarding using developer contributions for school-based infrastructure (including new school places). This will contain detail around what Shropshire Council requests in terms of developer contributions for primary and secondary school places to include SEND, active travel, and school transport.

Rurality:

Recommendation 7: That the Rurality Toolkit should be used to guide the design, planning, and delivery of services in rural areas to explore various alternatives such as collaborating with Community Trusts using digital technology, or making use of and sharing physical assets, and identifying opportunities to leverage developer contributions to facilitate this process.



Committee and Date

Cabinet
16th October 2024

Item

Public



Responsible Officer:	James Walton		
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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Cllr Gwilym Butler, Finance & Corporate Support		

1. Synopsis

The Council continues to remain in a solvent position. The overall outlook continues to be significantly challenged. Further work is necessary to ensure sufficient 'headroom' in budgets to allow the Council to sustain any unexpected shocks.

2. Executive Summary

2.1. The key issues highlighted by this report are:

- a) A forecast outturn position as at 31 March 2025 of £37.262m. This headline position is largely unchanged since the report for the period to the end of May (period 2). The robustness of projections improves each month and Period 5 provides a firm baseline for the improvements required in this, and the last, monitor produced.
- b) An initial General Fund Balance of £38.821m indicates that while the projected variance can be accommodated, significant action must be taken to ensure the financial survival of the Council in the current year including to provide 'headroom' against unanticipated shocks.
- c) A reduction in planned spending to the end of the year of 10% would see an improvement in the overall forecast of around £20m. This would reduce pressure on the General Fund Balance and ensure that the Council had sufficient funds to withstand unanticipated financial shocks, in the normal manner and in line with good practice in financial management.

- 2.2. The financial position of the council remains highly challenging. The key overall indicator of financial health for the Council is the General Fund Balance. However, a wide range of factors impact on that value. As such, the overall financial position has been analysed into seven separate areas that underpin the strategic risk "Inability to Contain overall committed Expenditure within the Current Available Resources within this Financial Year".
- 2.3. This table highlights the uncertainty of the situation and resents a range of possible outcomes summarised in table 1. A description of the 7 risks and the current perspective on these is set out in the table below, supporting the data in table 1.

Table 1- Forecast as at 30 August showing the central forecast in a range of favourable to adverse outcomes

Scenario	Potential variation to budget
Favourable	£22.3m
Central	£37.2m
Adverse	73.75m

Table 2 - 7 key financial factors and estimates values in a favourable to adverse range

factor	MTFS assumption	P5		
		Fav	Central	Adv
1. Savings delivery	Budget and MTFS assume 100% delivery of all savings each year on a recurrent basis. Target for 2024/25 is £62.5m, plus £6.7m demand mgt, plus £20.7m found in 23/24 but only on a one-off basis - these are different amounts arising separately, but aggregate to £90m. This indicator considers performance against delivery of the £90m.	27	37.9	42
2. Social care demand pressure beyond budget estimates	Demand reduction measures assumed to support delivery within budget. Excess demand beyond that will impact overall financial performance.	10	12	14
3. Other unbudgeted pressures	The budget assumes all material considerations are included in the estimates. Other pressures outside those estimates are not included, hence the provision of a general fund balance (although other Councils include a revenue contingency budget).	-14.7	-12.7	-10.7
4. Capital receipts sufficiency	Capital receipts are generated at a level that, when added to 'in-hand' and 'de-committed' amounts, will cover VR costs plus transformation costs (capitalised). Gap at year start identified as £33m.	0		18.50

tracker reds @ 31 Aug are £37.9m. This excludes the impact of EMT moderation of service reviews with an estimated (revised) PYE of £0.9m. Assumed further delivery on third party spend of £10m.

tracker reds @ 31 Aug are £37.9m. This excludes the impact of EMT moderation of service reviews with an estimated (revised) PYE of £0.9m.

tracker reds @ 31 Aug are £37.9m. This excludes the impact of EMT moderation of service reviews with an estimated (revised) PYE of £0.9m. Assumed further slippage of £4m (ambers).

Current pressure in social care codes, assumed to improve. Measures are required to bring this pressure in line with budgets. The measures to achieve this are not yet defined.

Current pressure in social care codes (£4.5m ASC, £7.5m CSC). Measures are required to bring this pressure in line with budgets. The measures to achieve this are not yet defined.

Net pressures expected to reduce further by year end.

pressure in home to school transport (£4m) offset by other underspending (£4.5m)

Net pressures increase by year end

Assumes £34m income strip and £15m other cap receipts

Assumes £34m income strip and £15m other cap receipts

assume optimism bias at 50%

5. External factors	A number of factors are known to be able to impact the financial position indirectly, but the timing or likelihood of these is unknown at the time of setting the budget. These include regulator reviews (e.g. Ofsted and CQC), geo-political shocks (e.g. conflict or dispute which has impact on food and fuel prices globally, pandemic, etc.) Again, the GFB level is set on the basis of being a fund of last resort in the face of such pressures.	Assume no in-year costs arising from CQC or Ofsted.	Assume no in-year costs arising from CQC or Ofsted. Neither report is yet finalised.	6.00 Assume £2m in-year costs arising from CQC or Ofsted. Neither report is yet finalised.
6. Project risks	No direct or indirect implications are assumed in the budget. Possible risks include the withdrawal of funding for major capital projects which may lead to revenue pressure as 'sunk' costs are written off.	Assume no in-year costs arising from NWRR funding withdrawal or reduction.	Assume no in-year costs arising from NWRR funding withdrawal or reduction.	Assume some in-year costs arising from NWRR funding withdrawal or reduction.
7. Cash position (Liquidity)	The MTFS assumes that day-to-day liquidity is planned for an maintained. Failure to do this, or a rapid deterioration in the council's financial position may lead to unbudgeted finance costs, and reputational damage as staff and supplier payments are placed in jeopardy.	detailed day-to-day cash forecast in place. Link engaged and advising on externalisation of previous internal borrowing. Clear management with £20--£30m cash buffer.	detailed day-to-day cash forecast in place. Link engaged and advising on externalisation of previous internal borrowing. Clear management with £20--£30m cash buffer.	detailed day-to-day cash forecast in place. Link engaged and advising on externalisation of previous internal borrowing. Clear management with £20--£30m cash buffer.
		22.30	37.20	69.80

2.4. The leadership actions taken since Period 4 are as follows:

Theme	Action
Resizing the workforce	Ongoing work to progress reductions in pay budgets including funded vacant posts, approved voluntary redundancy applications, local service review outputs, and exploration of wider opportunities identified through organisation-wide review of staffing in all areas. Estimates should be available from Period 6/Quarter 2 but not expected to significantly alter the estimated outturn from Period 5 without additional management action.
Savings delivery	Savings Delivery Group (SDG) running from 5 September 2024 led by s151/CFO, to drive forward delivery of savings on an ongoing basis. The group is focusing on areas of non-delivery in targeted savings.
Third party spend controls	Spend Control Boards chaired by Executive Directors in each Directorate are reviewing and challenging spending, with a view to rejecting spending where possible. A 'Spending control gate' in the finance system 'procure to pay' process has been in operation from 9 September 2024. This has created a filter to ensure that purchasing is only allowed after challenge from the Spend Control Boards. (The two controls are complementary.)
Third party spend controls	Detailed review of all planned non-pay expenditure between September and March. Initial projections of spending reductions have been included within this report. Further review will be undertaken in the coming weeks.

2.5 The leadership actions recommended before Period 6 are as follows:

Theme	Action	Lead
Resizing the workforce	Prioritisation of workload progress within highest priority areas. Review of options for additional management action.	Head of Workforce EMT
Savings delivery	Improved savings delivery achieved across all council-agreed savings lines.	EMT/SDG
Third party spend controls	Detailed review of all non-pay expenditure planned between September and March. Reductions in spending of 10% overall to be targeted. To be completed for the Period 6/Quarter 2 reporting cycle. A focus to be given to ensuring sustainable, ongoing spending reductions which will reduce pressure on budgets in next year.	AD Finance and AD Commissioning with all Assistant Directors and budget managers.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. To note that the Period 5 position (as at the end of August) forecasts indicative savings delivery of £52.042m (58%) and a projected spend above budget of £37.262m for 2024/25.
- 3.2. To note the projected General Fund Balance of £1.559m arising if no further action were taken.
- 3.3. To note and endorse the actions achieved and planned (para 2.4 and 2.5)
- 3.4. To require that the Chief Executive and Chief Officers urgently take all possible action to reduce spending between October and March, targeting a significant reduction in forecast spending to bring the outturn in line with the budget agreed by Council in February.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. A more regular review of the emerging financial position for the year is an essential part of the risk management approach of the council during the coming year.
- 4.2. The level of savings delivery and financial pressures in the current year are a recognised risk for the 2024/25 budget, and continued focus and action are being put in place to address this.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. Shropshire Council is currently managing an unprecedented financial position as budgeted for within the Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council on 29 February 2024 and detailed in our monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. This demonstrates that significant management action is required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all Cabinet Reports provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. Where non-essential spend is identified within the Council, this will be reduced. This may involve
 - scaling down initiatives,
 - changing the scope,
 - delaying implementation, or
 - extending delivery timescales.

5.2. This report sets out the financial projections for the Council in the 2024/25 Financial Year as at Period 5. A summary of the key elements for managing the Council's budget are detailed elsewhere in this report.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

6.1 The Council's Financial Strategy supports its strategies for Climate Change and Carbon Reduction in several ways. A specific climate change revenue budget is held. The climate change schemes involving the Council's assets or infrastructure are included within the capital programme. These two areas of expenditure are anticipated to have a positive contribution towards climate change outcomes.

6.2 Securing a robust and sustainable financial base will help the Council meet the challenges of climate change – this is not separate to our budget management, but integral to it, as set out in the objectives of The Shropshire Plan and our aim to secure a Healthy Environment.

7. Directorate Performance

7.1. Table 1 below summarises the position by directorate (see also Appendix 1), including latest projections on funding.

Table 1: Projected Outturn by Directorate

	Revised Budget (£'000)	Projected Outturn (£'000)	(Under)/Overspend (£'000)	RAGY Classification
Directorate				
People	215,593	232,888	17,295	R
Place	51,479	63,378	11,898	R
Resources	4,111	8,482	4,372	R
Health & Wellbeing	6,170	5,851	-319	Y
Strategic Management Board	427	1,076	649	R
Service Delivery Budgets	277,780	311,675	33,895	
Corporate	(16,083)	(11,747)	4,336	R
Net Expenditure	261,697	299,928	38,231	
Estimated benefit from resizing		(969)	(969)	
Net Expenditure including anticipated further benefits	261,697	298,959	37,262	
Funding				
Council Tax	(205,104)	(205,104)	0	G
Business Rates	(41,306)	(41,306)	0	G
Top Up Grant	(10,925)	(10,925)	0	G
Revenue Support Grant	(7,974)	(7,974)	0	G
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	3,612	3,612	0	G
Total Funding	(261,697)	(261,697)	0	G
Total	0	37,262	37,262	

8. General Fund Balance

8.1. The 2024/25 budget includes a £30.584m contribution to the General Fund Balance. Table 2 details the projected General Fund Balance following this budgeted contribution, but also includes the impact on the Balance should the forecast spend over budget materialise.

Table 2: General Fund Projection

General Fund Balance	£'000
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2024	8,237
Budgeted Contribution 2024/25	30,584
2024/25 estimated spending above budget (as projected at P5)	(37,262)
Balance as at 31 March 2025	1,559

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

Financial Strategy 2024/25 – 2028/29, Council 21st March 2024

Financial Monitoring Period 1, Cabinet 5 June 2024

Financial Monitoring Period 2, Cabinet 17th July 2024

Financial Monitoring Quarter 1, Cabinet 11th September 2024

Financial Monitoring Period 4

Financial Rules

Local Member: All

Appendices

Appendix 1 - 2024/25 Projected Revenue Outturn by Service

Appendix 2 – 2024/25 Savings Delivery

APPENDIX 1

2024/25 PROJECTED REVENUE OUTTURN BY SERVICE

Directorate	Service Area	Forecast Variance @ P5	Forecast Variance @ P4	Analysis of Variance	Movement P4-P5	Explanation of Movement from P4 to P5
Corporate Budgets						
	Corporate Budgets	4,336	5,414	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5.290m savings targets yet to be secured • £0.081m projected spend above budget in relation to Audit Commission fees • Reduction in LOBO interest payable due in year 	(1,077)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in LOBO interest payable due in year (£0.057m). • Full LOBO savings (unsmoothed) (£1.020m)
Corporate Budgets Total		4,336	5,414		(1,077)	Improved.
Health and Wellbeing						
	Integration & Healthy People - Non-Ringfenced	(319)	(1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •£0.178m adverse variance in Business improvement due to adjustment in the classification of some transformational activity. •(£0.056m) favourable variance in Libraries due to reductions in recurrent expenditure •(£0.179m) favourable variance in Business and consumer Protection due to restructuring of the service •(£0.247m) favourable variance in planning services due to additional income. 	(317)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Planning services with a favourable variance of £0.247m has been added to the Health and Wellbeing area increasing the favourable position •Libraries have improved by £0.116m through reduction of third-party expenditure. •Business and Consumer protection are recruiting in light of their restructure reducing their underspend by £0.087m so that the position now shows an underspend of £0.178m
	Integration & Healthy People - Ringfenced	0	0	No variance to budget at Period 5	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No variance between Period 4 and Period 5
Health and Wellbeing Total		(319)	(1)		(317)	Improved.
People						
	Adult Social Care	4,950	6,710	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £4.477m savings targets yet to be secured. • £0.140m reduction in income forecast Enable 	(1,760)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •- £0.135m OT Equipment purchase through TOM funding. • -£0.320m additional income forecast for DPAs • -£1.324m reduction in purchasing achieved by increased client contributions and continued review of placements

	Children's & Families	6,617	7,105	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £3.434m forecast pressure on External Residential Placements. There have been a number of new external residential spot placements in recent months. £2.410m forecast pressure on Fostering. The majority relates to External Fostering (£1.947m). £0.868m forecast pressure on staffing across the Social Work Teams, largely relating to Agency Social Workers. £1.350m savings not yet planned. £1.283m other net over- and underspending, including £1.5m staff capitalisation relating to stepping stones. 	(488)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £0.103m increase in forecast spend over budget on Fostering Placements due to an increase in numbers -£0.113m - increase in use of Supporting Families Grant funding within Early Help -£0.164m - decrease in forecast spend on Public Law Outline Support Packages -£0.346m - decrease in forecast in spend over budget relating to Staffing across social work teams
	Education & Achievement	1,958	3,027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £3.163m forecast spend over budget against Home to School Transport. £1.474m of this relates to SEND Transport where there has been a significant increase in the number of children with EHC Plans requiring transport. The remaining £1.689m relates to mainstream transport and the Children's transport Fleet. There is a credit of £0.058m relating to the capitalisation of 1 post as a one-off working on transformational projects within Learning & Skills Business Support. There are £0.148m of one-off efficiencies across both staffing and non-staffing budgets within Learning & Skills Business Support. -£0.252m Concessionary Fares change in reimbursement model -£0.750m relates to the Release of Department for Transport (DfT) Grant not budgeted for. 	(1,069)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1.000m use of Dedicated Schools Grant (High Needs Block) funding where these costs also fall within home to school transport budgets. (The majority relates to SEND Personal Transport budgets.) £0.065m removal of Invest to Save repayment in relation to the Education Management System
	Shire Services	(4)	78	• Minor Variance to budget as at Period 5	(82)	• Minor variance between Period 4 and Period 5
	People Directorate Management	3,774	3,773	• £3.836m relates to organisation-wide savings not yet secured.	1	• Minor variance between Period 4 and Period 5
People Total		17,295	20,693		(3,399)	Improved.

Place						
Growth and Infrastructure	7,941	10,925	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £7.106m savings yet to be realised. • £1.397m Winter Maintenance transfer from reserve • £0.740m Corporate Landlord income underachieved (including Mardol House student accommodation) • £0.736m Parking income target not fully achieved • £0.284m Shrewsbury Town Council SLA • £0.100m shortfall on staff car parking income target • -£1.060m additional capitalisation of Highways Staff • -£0.685m Streetworks additional net income • -£0.500m Additional application of Pension Reserve • -£0.371m Streetlighting Energy saving from LED rollout • -£0.300m Additional draw from Pension Reserve • -£0.240m additional net income forecast to be received from Planning Applications 	(2,984)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor (works) expenditure delayed (Kier & WSP) • -£1.060m additional capitalisation of Highways Staff 	
Homes and Communities	3,773	4,175	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £2.272m savings yet to be realised • £2.250m shortfall on Green waste charges compared to budget target (Sept implementation date; 55% initial take up) • £1.500m shortfall on Waste PFI contract re-negotiation based on delayed implementation. • £0.433m delayed implementation of Pyrolysis Plant & Maesbury Solar Farm • £0.330m Activity higher than budgeted for Temporary Accommodation. • £0.210m shortfall on savings from Household Recycling centres based on delayed implementation dates. • -£2.317m variance on Waste PFI contract • -£0.408m additional one-off income projected. • -£0.355m savings in salaries due to Voluntary Redundancy (VR) & vacancies. • -£0.260m Theatre Services projecting an overall surplus in the year. 	(402)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theatre Services Income increase by £0.160m 	
Place Directorate Management	184	184	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £0.184m savings yet to be realised 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No variance between Period 4 and Period 5 	
Place Total	11,898	15,284		(3,385)	Improved.	

Resources					
Workforce and Improvement	960	921	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1.032m savings not yet achieved. £0.120m income generation shortfall across Service Level Agreement contracts (£0.338m) savings achieved from VR programme and vacancy management 	39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor variance between Period 4 and Period 5
Finance and Technology	1,784	2,141	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £2.225m savings yet to be realised £0.108m shortfall across income generation and recovery of costs (£0.040m) ICT Contracts confirmed as cancelled in year (£0.163m) delayed Invest to Save repayment for ICT schemes (£0.192m) additional savings achieved across vacancy management on a one-off basis 	(356)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalisation of Pay360 (£0.088m) Additional vacancy management savings confirmed at P5 £0.082m Delayed Invest to save repayment for ICT Projects of (£0.163m) ICT Contracts confirmed as cancelled in year (£0.040m)
Legal and Governance	518	651	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £0.687m savings yet to be realised £0.327m projected spend above budget in relation to legal childcare costs, this spend is demand driven and may increase before the year end. £0.154m reduced income from the Matrix rebate due to transfer of service to OPUS which should deliver wider organisational savings at P5 (£0.025m) reduction in postage costs for Electoral Canvass (£0.118m) Staffing and medical fee savings within Coroners Services (£0.318m) savings achieved from VR programme and vacancy management 	(134)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional staffing and medical fee savings confirmed within Coroners Services at P5 of (£0.118m) Increase in vacancy management savings (£0.050m) Increased expected Locum costs in relation to legal childcare costs £0.067m Reduced projected postage costs linked to Electoral Canvass (£0.025m)
Pensions	(0)	(0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No variance to budget at Period 5 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No variance between Period 4 and Period 5
Resources Directorate Management	1,110	1,110	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1.112m savings yet to be realised (relating to the whole organisation Customer Experience Programme) 	(0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No variance between Period 4 and Period 5
Resources Total	4,372	4,823		(451)	Improved.
Strategic Management Board					
Chief Executive and PAs	133	141	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £0.166m MTFs savings yet to be realised (£0.025m) savings achieved from VR programme 	(9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor variance between Period 4 and Period 5

	Programme Management	148	123	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £0.062m MTFS savings yet to be realised • £0.61m spend relating to Transformation that is not able to be capitalised 	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor variance between Period 4 and Period 5
	Communications and Customer Services	368	103	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £0.293m MTFS savings yet to realised • £0.136m Reduced recharge income from services areas confirmed to support additional capacity and reduced capitalisation of staff. • (£0.168m) additional savings achieved across vacancy management on a one-off basis 	265	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of staffing recharge income and staff capitalisation of £0.136m as confirmed funding no longer due from other service areas. • Changes made to the interim structure not undertaken as P4 has created a movement at P5 by transferring services from Resources to SMB of £0.129m
Strategic Management Board Total		649	367		282	
Council Net Spending		38,231	46,579		(8,348)	Improved.
	Estimated benefit from resizing	(969)	(5,500)	Estimated part-year benefit of resizing work.		Benefits previously estimated as £5.5m at period 4 have been worked through in more detail through the last month and are included above, excepting the £969,000 still shown on this row.
Net Expenditure including benefit from resizing		37,262	41,079			

APPENDIX 2 2024/25 SAVINGS DELIVERY

2.1 SUMMARY

The savings projections for 2024/25 are being tracked monthly with savings delivery being mapped against projected delivery during the course of the year.

The table below summarises the position as at 31st August 2024.

£90,006,406 Savings Target	£37,105,305 Delivered	£47,987,073 Projected Delivery	£4,054,905 Indicative Plans	£37,964,428 Not Yet Planned	£46,264,338 25/26 Full Year Savings	£43,742,068 25/26 Savings Outstanding
	41.23% % Delivered	53.32% % Projected Delivery	4.51% % Indicative Plans	42.18% % Not Yet Planned	51.40% % 25/26 Full Year Savings	48.60% % 25/26 Savings Outstanding

Projected delivery and indicative plans are in place for 57.8% of the savings identified. Some of these plans may be being achieved through one off means rather than an ongoing basis, hence the 25/26 full year deliver currently showing 51.4%. Work continues to progress to ensure that savings proposals delivered can be delivered on an ongoing basis in order to reduce any further savings pressures into 2025/26.

Table below shows the projected delivery of each saving proposal.

Savings Name	Savings Target	Delivered to Date (One-off)	Delivered to Date (Ongoing)	Delivered to Date Total	Projected Delivery (One-off)	Projected Delivery (Ongoing)	Projected Delivery Total	Indicative Plans in Place	Not Yet Planned	2025/26 Full Year Savings Delivery (Ongoing)
CM003 - Increase fly tipping charges	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£20,000
CM007 - Increase wider Fees and charges above those mentioned specifically elsewhere	£2,000,000	£0	£30,459	£30,459	£0	£43,270	£43,270	£100,000	£1,856,730	£43,270
EFF03 - Removal of budgets for vacant posts (avg. 3%)	£61,420	£61,420	£0	£61,420	£61,420	£0	£61,420	£0	£0	£61,420
EFF09 - Removal of budgets for vacant posts (avg. 3%)	£1,247,980	£69,033	£0	£69,033	£747,610	£0	£747,610	£0	£500,370	£0
EFF101 - Target Operating Model - staffing budget turnover and wastage increase by 5% (year-end review).	£3,514,980	£867,980	£10,850	£878,830	£867,980	£10,850	£878,830	£0	£2,636,150	£10,850
EFF103(a) - Target Operating Model - Transformation partner delivers 4 x end-to-end process reviews yielding £0.5m per project.	£770,523	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£770,523	£0
EFF103(b) - Target Operating Model - Transformation partner delivers 4 x end-to-end process reviews yielding £0.5m per project.	£1,229,477	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£600,000	£629,477	£0
EFF105 - Target Operating Model/Workforce Strategy - Getting Leadership Right - cashable benefit of improved organisation-wide performance management	£1,403,190	£0	£150,810	£150,810	£87,310	£285,550	£372,860	£3,150	£1,027,180	£1,266,547
EFF107 - Contract Spend Analysis and Contract Management Review	£250,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£250,000	£0
EFF108 - Application of corporate grants	£2,000,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,000,000	£0
EFF18 - Decreased use of B&B accommodation as temporary accommodation for 2022/23 (including associated costs) in view of current action to reduce or divert demand.	£162,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£162,000	£0	£162,000
EFF44(a) - As per the PFI contract - Increased share from the sale of energy and recycles	£2,000,000	£0	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£0	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£0	£-500,000	£2,000,000
EFF44(b) - Review and negotiate key supplier contracts including the Waste PFI contract to secure cost reductions	£2,000,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£500,000	£1,500,000	£0
EFF44(c) - Reduce from five to three Household Recycling Centres - Anticipated to deliver £0.300m therefore £0.014m included within 2024/25 savings Proposals	£286,000	£0	£286,000	£286,000	£0	£286,000	£286,000	£0	£0	£286,000

EFF45 - Charge staffing costs to capital budgets where possible and appropriate (capital project support or transformation of revenue services).	£2,019,310	£1,044,774	£519,310	£1,564,084	£1,469,374	£94,710	£1,564,084	£0	£455,226	£1,564,084
EFF49 - Removal of budgets for vacant posts (avg. 3%)	£895,870	£0	£81,587	£81,587	£0	£81,587	£81,587	£0	£814,283	£176,780
EFF78 - Review of customer contact teams across the Council - Channel shifting to promote more streamlined and cost-efficient responses.	£1,112,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,112,000	£0
EFF80 - Removal of budgets for vacant posts (avg. 3%)	£717,730	£698,168	£4,990	£703,158	£698,168	£4,990	£703,158	£0	£14,572	£424,538
EFF81 - New Operating Model - Charge staffing costs delivering transformation to capital budgets where possible and appropriate (Workforce and Improvement).	£645,222	£401,737	£0	£401,737	£401,737	£0	£401,737	£0	£243,485	£0
EFF82 - Legal and Governance restructure to include deletion of some vacant posts and the movement of others into transformation	£67,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£67,000	£0
EFF83 - New Operating Model - Charge staffing costs to capital budgets where possible and appropriate (Legal and Democratic).	£57,330	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£57,330	£0
EFF84 - New Operating Model - Charge staffing costs to capital budgets where possible and appropriate (Finance and IT).	£20,740	£0	£12,898	£12,898	£0	£12,898	£12,898	£16,589	£-8,747	£0
EFF86 - Contract rebates and spending reductions	£28,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£28,000	£28,000	£0	£0	£28,000
EFF87 - Operating Model - Digital County - Reduce/remove uneconomical Service Delivery	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	£0
EFF88 - Review of single person discount and housing benefit applications against data warehouse to reduce error and fraud.	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	£0
EFF89 - CCTV provision and management - Seek partner funding contributions	£75,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£75,000	£0
MD001 - Further increase funding of public health reserves to support preventative initiatives at the children's, adults and customer front-door.	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£200,000	£0	£0	£0
MD004 - Transfer of a leisure asset to an appropriate provider.	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£100,000	£0	£0	£100,000
MD006 - Introduce a booking system for household recycling centres	£200,000	£0	£70,000	£70,000	£0	£70,000	£70,000	£130,000	£0	£200,000
MD007 - By increasing the use of technology, community and voluntary support reduce the need for formal care by maximising independence	£2,215,811	£0	£1,041,813	£1,041,813	£0	£2,215,811	£2,215,811	£0	£0	£2,215,811
MD008 - Increase the number of people supported by START inhouse reablement service to maximise independence, preventing readmission and the need for long term social care	£1,596,510	£0	£1,314,040	£1,314,040	£0	£1,596,510	£1,596,510	£0	£0	£1,596,510
MD009 - Reduce the need for long term residential care - Shropshire Council is committed to supporting peoples independence by ensuring they return home from hospital	£1,512,664	£0	£1,282,703	£1,282,703	£0	£1,512,664	£1,512,664	£0	£0	£1,512,664
MD010 - Provider market sustainability - Shropshire Council is continuing to work with the market to commission sustainable services that meet need whilst delivering value	£1,600,000	£0	£632,982	£632,982	£0	£1,600,000	£1,600,000	£0	£0	£1,600,000
MD011 - Reducing the need to long term residential care - Ensuring that Shropshire Council commission the right care for people in line with their needs	£129,314	£0	£28,736	£28,736	£0	£129,314	£129,314	£0	£0	£129,314
MD012 - Supported living - Reduce the need for 24 hour provision and increase independence through alternative resources such as technology	£1,200,000	£0	£326,816	£326,816	£0	£1,200,000	£1,200,000	£0	£0	£1,200,000
MD013 - Working with partners to identify health needs to ensure the right support is given at the right time	£650,000	£595,793	£0	£595,793	£650,000	£0	£650,000	£0	£0	£0
MD014 - Enabling the use of wider travel options to increase independence and reduce isolation	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£200,000	£0	£0	£0
MD015 - Deliver efficiencies though review of service delivery	£300,000	£0	£300,000	£300,000	£0	£300,000	£300,000	£0	£0	£300,000
MD016 - Night time care and support service enabling people to stay at home	£522,000	£0	£480,049	£480,049	£0	£522,000	£522,000	£0	£0	£522,000
MD017 - Supporting people to have Direct payment rather than agency care	£110,000	£0	£173,126	£173,126	£0	£173,126	£173,126	£0	£-63,126	£173,126
MD018 - Stepping stones - Reduce numbers of childcare placements in long-term residential placements, where appropriate	£3,000,000	£0	£2,277,012	£2,277,012	£0	£3,000,000	£3,000,000	£0	£0	£3,467,661

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NI001 - Increase in income through the Minimum income guarantee national announcement.	£1,500,000	£0	£564,388	£564,388	£0	£1,500,000	£1,500,000	£0	£0	£1,500,000
NI002 - Reconciliation of any variance to care hours provided.	£2,300,000	£0	£511,112	£511,112	£0	£2,300,000	£2,300,000	£0	£0	£2,300,000
NI003 - Set up a charging structure for recipients of telecare	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	£100,000
NI004 - Expand the Handy Person service to a wider range of customers, including fee payers, supporting independent living	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£10,000
NI005 - Increased income from countryside maintenance contracting activity. Review green asset maintenance arrangements	£39,720	£0	£39,720	£39,720	£0	£39,720	£39,720	£0	£0	£39,720
NI006 - Increase income from Museums and Archives services	£150,000	£0	£150,000	£150,000	£0	£150,000	£150,000	£0	£0	£150,000
NI007 - Increase income from an enhanced memorial and ceremony offer at Council sites	£60,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£60,000	£0	£60,000
NI008 - Increase income from an improved range of wedding and partnership ceremony packages	£68,000	£0	£68,000	£68,000	£0	£68,000	£68,000	£0	£0	£68,000
NI009 - Development of commercial model for theatre and cinema income to achieve net zero budget	£295,000	£0	£295,000	£295,000	£0	£295,000	£295,000	£0	£0	£295,000
NI010 - Introduce charging for fortnightly green waste collection	£4,000,000	£0	£1,750,000	£1,750,000	£0	£1,750,000	£1,750,000	£0	£2,250,000	£4,400,000
NI012 - Charge housing developers for new bins	£70,000	£0	£70,000	£70,000	£0	£70,000	£70,000	£0	£0	£70,000
NI013 - Review options for car parking charges at Council offices	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	£0	£100,000
RC001 - Redesign the delivery of the statutory service including managing demand.	£105,000	£0	£105,000	£105,000	£0	£105,000	£105,000	£0	£0	£105,000
RC002 - Redesign the delivery of the statutory regulatory (ecology) services including managing demand.	£58,600	£0	£58,600	£58,600	£0	£58,600	£58,600	£0	£0	£58,600
RC003 - Further increase allocation of the public health grant to support preventative initiatives at the children's, adults and customer front-door.	£90,000	£0	£90,000	£90,000	£0	£90,000	£90,000	£0	£0	£90,000
RC004 - Capitalisation of reserves as one off for staff and projects relating to transformation work to further increase funding of public health reserves to support preventative initiatives. This is for 2024/25, in addition to 1,000,000 in 23/24.	£1,000,000	£1,000,000	£0	£1,000,000	£1,000,000	£0	£1,000,000	£0	£0	£0
RC006 - Increase income through charging for training.	£180,000	£0	£60,000	£60,000	£0	£60,000	£60,000	£120,000	£0	£60,000
RC007 - Review of our in house day service provision.	£105,000	£0	£45,093	£45,093	£0	£105,000	£105,000	£0	£0	£105,000
RC008 - Review and reduce 3rd party spend	£2,600,000	£0	£2,608,000	£2,608,000	£0	£2,608,000	£2,608,000	£0	£8,000	£2,608,000
RC009 - Review and reduce the need for 24 hour provision through the use of technology to increase independence	£300,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£300,000	£300,000	£0	£0	£300,000
RC011 - Review and resize business support functions	£375,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£375,000	£375,000	£0	£0	£375,000
RC012 - Review of external day service provision	£180,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£180,000	£180,000	£0	£0	£180,000
RC013 - Improve efficiencies of commissioned services across children's services contracts and secure overall reduction in demand.	£1,600,000	£0	£1,360,017	£1,360,017	£0	£1,600,000	£1,600,000	£0	£0	£1,360,017
RC014 - Review & resize senior staffing structure in Children's Services against projected activity levels	£87,000	£87,000	£0	£87,000	£87,000	£0	£87,000	£0	£0	£87,000
RC016 - Agency Staff - reducing use of agency staff; promote permanent staffing.	£85,000	£0	£47,173	£47,173	£0	£85,000	£85,000	£0	£0	£47,173
RC017 - Review & resize Supported Board and Lodgings (17 & 18 year olds) to ensure full capacity	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£0	£30,000
RC020 - Ensure that funding for the most complex of children is equitably shared with Health as an equal partner responsible for the safe care of children.	£156,000	£0	£156,000	£156,000	£0	£156,000	£156,000	£0	£0	£106,493
RC023 - Focus new residential property acquisitions on priority housing needs	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000
RC024 - Optimise the use of existing Council residential properties	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£20,000
RC025 - Review and resize the Housing Services team	£60,000	£0	£60,000	£60,000	£0	£60,000	£60,000	£0	£0	£60,000
RC029 - Review staffing and resize the Rights of Way team	£19,395	£0	£19,395	£19,395	£0	£19,395	£19,395	£0	£0	£19,395
RC030 - Review staffing and resize the Outdoor Partnerships team	£41,250	£0	£41,250	£41,250	£0	£41,250	£41,250	£0	£0	£41,250

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RC031 - Removal of Arts Development funding	£17,120	£0	£17,120	£17,120	£0	£17,120	£17,120	£0	£0	£17,120
RC035 - Review staffing and resize the Culture Leisure and Tourism management team	£350,000	£0	£350,000	£350,000	£0	£350,000	£350,000	£0	£0	£350,000
RC036 - Service efficiencies from Registrars service digitisation	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000
RC038 - Review staffing and resize the Business and Consumer Protection Team	£35,000	£0	£34,232	£34,232	£0	£34,232	£34,232	£0	£768	£35,000
RC040 - Dispose of Shirehall quicker and relocate services	£325,000	£0	£27,073	£27,073	£0	£27,073	£27,073	£0	£297,927	£450,000
RC043 - Review and resize staffing in Property and Development Services	£550,000	£0	£550,000	£550,000	£0	£550,000	£550,000	£0	£0	£614,190
RC044 - Review and resize the Climate Change team	£200,000	£0	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£0	£200,000
RC045 - Review and re-size staffing in Strategic Transport	£70,000	£0	£70,000	£70,000	£0	£70,000	£70,000	£0	£0	£75,680
RC046 - Review staffing and secure workforce reductions in tree work, conservation, and historic environment teams.	£175,000	£0	£175,000	£175,000	£0	£175,000	£175,000	£0	£0	£175,000
RC047 - Review and re-size staffing in Planning Policy team	£160,000	£0	£160,000	£160,000	£0	£160,000	£160,000	£0	£0	£160,000
RC048 - Review and re-size staffing in Planning team.	£230,000	£0	£230,000	£230,000	£0	£230,000	£230,000	£0	£0	£230,000
RC049 - Review and re-size staffing in Highways Development team	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£100,000	£0	£0	£100,000
RC050 - Review and re-sizing staffing in Planning Enforcement	£35,000	£0	£35,000	£35,000	£0	£35,000	£35,000	£0	£0	£35,000
RC051 - Review and re-sizing staffing in Broadband team.	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£0	£30,000
RC052 - Capitalise post in Strategic Infrastructure.	£37,000	£0	£37,000	£37,000	£0	£37,000	£37,000	£0	£0	£37,000
RC053 - Capitalise part of posts in Economic Growth.	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000
RC054 - Review and re-size staffing in the economic development team, including options to capitalise posts.	£77,000	£0	£77,000	£77,000	£0	£77,000	£77,000	£0	£0	£77,000
RC055 - Change in percentage split of chargeable/non-chargeable receipts in Building Control	£70,000	£0	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£0	£70,000	£0	£0	£70,000
RC057 - Cessation of LEP contribution further to government guidance.	£36,000	£0	£36,000	£36,000	£0	£36,000	£36,000	£0	£0	£36,000
RC058 - Stop payment of subscription to "Midlands Engine" partnership.	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£20,000
RC059 - Review contractor provisions relating to pensions costs (one off).	£300,000	£300,000	£0	£300,000	£300,000	£0	£300,000	£0	£0	£0
RC060 - Review contracts and secure cost reductions in current 'Green Asset' contracts.	£250,000	£0	£250,000	£250,000	£0	£250,000	£250,000	£0	£0	£250,000
RC061 - Review contract and secure cost reductions in reactive drainage operational team.	£200,000	£0	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£0	£200,000
RC062 - Review and resize through highways restructure	£600,000	£0	£600,000	£600,000	£0	£600,000	£600,000	£0	£0	£600,000
RC063 - Cross Directorate structural efficiencies & synergies alongside framework utilisation reductions.	£2,000,000	£0	£2,000,000	£2,000,000	£0	£2,000,000	£2,000,000	£0	£0	£2,000,000
RC064 - Review and re-size staffing HR/OD Team (1)	£100,000	£0	£80,302	£80,302	£0	£80,320	£80,320	£0	£19,680	£100,000
RC065 - Review and re-size staffing HR/OD Team (2)	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	£37,660
RC066 - Review and re-size staffing in the Improvement Team	£75,000	£0	£25,693	£25,693	£0	£25,693	£25,693	£0	£49,307	£34,250
RC068 - Review and re-size staffing in the Overview and Scrutiny Function	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	£0
RC071 - Review contract, fleet, and secure cost reductions in use of mobile phones.	£114,000	£0	£114,000	£114,000	£0	£114,000	£114,000	£0	£0	£114,000
RC072 - Review and resize staffing in ICT (includes systems maintenance and development (hardware and software), user support and helpdesk, and corporate network security).	£1,000,000	£810,681	£111,038	£921,719	£810,681	£111,038	£921,719	£0	£78,281	£368,688
RC073 - Review and resize staffing in Revenues and Benefits (council tax and business rates collection and council tax support and housing benefits payments)	£500,000	£201,811	£103,379	£305,190	£201,811	£103,379	£305,190	£0	£194,810	£162,258
RC074 - Anticipated cost reductions in Revenues & Benefits arising from improvement of in-house Temporary Accommodation provision	£1,000,000	£0	£622,000	£622,000	£0	£622,000	£622,000	£0	£378,000	£1,476,672
RC077 - Centralisation and efficiencies of external legal spending.	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£100,000
RC078 - New model for future delivery of the Council's Out of Hours calls triage and Shrewsbury Town Centre CCTV monitoring	£334,000	£95,420	£0	£95,420	£95,420	£0	£95,420	£79,000	£159,580	£228,420
RC080 - Review and re-size overall council staffing beyond those listed elsewhere.	£8,500,000	£173,937	£527,664	£701,601	£173,937	£527,664	£701,601	£1,290,196	£6,508,203	£1,192,783
RC081 - Senior Management review	£710,000	£0	£298,100	£298,100	£0	£318,800	£318,800	£16,970	£374,230	£438,720
RC082 - Review and re-size staffing in executive support across the council.	£50,000	£0	£25,242	£25,242	£0	£25,242	£25,242	£0	£24,758	£33,890

RC083 - Review and secure cost reductions in the pooled training budget	£50,000	£0	£32,580	£32,580	£0	£32,580	£32,580	£0	£17,420	£23,030
RC085 - Reduce Third Party Spend. The proposal is to identify opportunities to reduce third party spend in a sustainable, recurrent way.	£1,267,600	£145,750	£1,353,705	£1,499,455	£145,750	£1,353,705	£1,499,455	£0	£-231,855	£2,970
RC086 - Efficiency Savings across all areas of the Council, including paying attention to securing reduced carbon emissions within the supply chain.	£12,400,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,035,000	£1,035,000	£0	£11,365,000	£1,035,000
SC002 - Review education transport arrangements - changes to policy (mainstream and SEND)	£350,000	£0	£323,000	£323,000	£0	£323,000	£323,000	£27,000	£0	£273,000
SC003 - Review education transport arrangements - changes to efficiency and delivery models (mainstream and SEND)	£650,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£650,000	£0	£0
SC004 - Decommission block contract and move to SPOT provision.	£200,000	£0	£200,634	£200,634	£0	£200,634	£200,634	£0	£-634	£200,634
SC005 - Review the development of a solo children's home to enable discussions about a joint funded model with Health. 24/25 and 25/26 only	£400,000	£0	£400,000	£400,000	£0	£400,000	£400,000	£0	£0	£0
SC008 - Review staffing and resize the Empty Homes service	£44,650	£26,046	£18,064	£44,110	£26,046	£18,604	£44,650	£0	£0	£44,650
SC010 - Service efficiencies and increased income from Registrars delivery focus on enhanced venues	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£50,000	£0	£50,000
SC012 - Reduce from five to three Household Recycling Centres	£14,000	£0	£14,000	£14,000	£0	£14,000	£14,000	£0	£0	£14,000
SC013 - Rationalise property and buildings to secure revenue savings (e.g. utilities, security, repairs and maintenance etc). Use reductions to secure additional capital receipts.	£3,000,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£500,500	£500,500	£0	£2,499,500	£500,500
SC014 - Review the provision of school crossing patrol service (Schools may opt to pay for the service).	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£20,000
SC018 - Review subscription and secure cost reductions in membership of West Midlands Employers	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£0	£30,000
TO001 - Explore shared emergency planning resource and resilience with partners.	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£15,000	£0	£0	£15,000
TO002 - Review the use of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to maximise grant funding	£60,000	£0	£60,000	£60,000	£0	£60,000	£60,000	£0	£0	£0
TO003 - Review the use of external grant funding for preventative SEND services across the People Directorate.	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000
TO004 - Review funding arrangements and contributions from external sources to higher cost placements	£500,000	£500,000	£0	£500,000	£500,000	£0	£500,000	£0	£0	£0
TO006 - Limit access to the Housing Register for a fixed period to focus upon priority need cases.	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	£0	£0
Total	£90,006,406	£7,479,550	£29,625,754	£37,105,305	£8,844,244	£39,142,829	£47,987,073	£4,054,905	£37,964,428	£46,264,338



Committee and Date
Cabinet 16th October 2024

Item

Public



Shrewsbury Town Centre CCTV service following public consultation.

Responsible Officer:	Nigel Newman, Head of Communications and Engagement		
email:	Nigel.newman@shropshire.gov.uk	Tel:	01743 253976
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Robert Macey, Culture and Digital		

1. Synopsis

This report seeks approval from Cabinet for a revised Shrewsbury Town Centre CCTV service following public consultation and detailed discussions with partners.

2. Executive Summary

Shropshire Council's Customer Service Centre (CSC) currently oversees management of a team who provide both the 24/7 CCTV monitoring for Shrewsbury town centre and the Council's out of hours call support and triage for highways, homelessness, parking emergencies, some social care calls and other services.

- 2.1 Given the Council's financial challenges and need to make £62.5m in savings in 2024/25 to remain within budget, the Council must review all non-mandatory services it provides, which includes its CCTV service for Shrewsbury. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy agreed by the Council in February 2024, identifies a £334,000 saving against a new model for the delivery of Shrewsbury Town Centre CCTV monitoring and out of hours call triage.
- 2.2 In July 2024 Cabinet approved a six-week public and stakeholder consultation on the options which set out how Shropshire Council and partners (Shrewsbury BID, Shrewsbury Town Council and West Mercia Police) could run and fund CCTV for Shrewsbury Town Centre in the future, while separately ensuring the Council's statutory out of hours emergency call handling is covered.

- 2.3 The consultation included four options to offer different models of CCTV operation. Option 1, the preferred Option, was for a passive monitored CCTV system with a “best endeavours” approach to a monitored service. Option 2 was the same as Option 1 but enhanced with some volunteer led active monitoring. Option 3 was the cessation of CCTV monitoring and recording altogether and option 4 was the same as option 1 with additional resource of two staff, to provide active monitoring as rotas allow; however, this additional resource would have required partner funding for the extra active monitoring resource.
- 2.4 A total of 315 consultation replies were received, while around 20 individuals and businesses attended a consultation event. A full analysis of the consultation feedback is at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.5 The outcome of the public consultation was 64% of respondents indicated that they prefer Option 4, which asks partners to contribute to staffing for active CCTV monitoring for approximately 75% of the time.
- 2.6 Following the consultation closure and the feedback from consultees, the outcome of the consultation and the views of partners have again been sought with regards to any contributions that could be provided for funding active CCTV monitoring.
- 2.7 For CCTV to continue operating in Shrewsbury, this requires ongoing investment in maintenance of the camera network and system. These costs for the last three years have been met by Shropshire Council. The whole system has been recently updated with new additional cameras continuing to be added however, to prevent the CCTV system degrading ongoing maintenance is required. During the consultation period, Shrewsbury Town Council confirmed its commitment to contribute towards maintenance costs of the system. This offer is very welcome, and Shropshire Council would like to thank the Town Council for this support. Shropshire Council understand that the Town Council is having to balance the financial ask to support CCTV with other requests for financial support for local non-statutory services currently provided by Shropshire Council and must consider how it prioritises such requests. Until this picture and any associated financial requirement is fully known, the Town Council have stated, that it cannot at this stage make any further funding commitment to support CCTV, and this should be seen against its existing commitments to fund other town centre community safety initiatives.
- 2.8 West Mercia Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner have reiterated that financial support for CCTV is limited to capital costs only and not day to day running costs that funds staff monitoring. Police have installed a new town centre policing team, and discussions are ongoing with West Mercia Police about technology required to provide remote access to CCTV which has been achieved in other Local Policing Area’s within West Mercia Police. Police state that CCTV has been a key tool in responding and resolving to crime and public safety matters in Shrewsbury for several years. CCTV’s overall benefit is influenced by cameras being in the right places, standards of ongoing maintenance, the direct line of communication with Police (or partners) to respond, and the ease of the evidential recovery process. In the absence of a live monitoring service, Police say they will work with Shropshire Council and partners to consider all possible options to ensure the remaining service continues to maximise impact and keep the town centre a safe place to be.

- 2.9 Shrewsbury BID's scope for financial support is limited by its five-year business plan, which was approved by a democratic ballot of businesses in 2023. This plan makes no financial provision for CCTV but helps fund other safety initiatives in Shrewsbury Town Centre. Any significant changes to the BID's business plan and spending priorities during its five-year term would require an alteration ballot under The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004. Business Improvement Districts exist to fund and operate projects and services in addition to those baseline services provided by the local authority at the time of ballot. There is no precedent for a Business Improvement District to call an alteration ballot to help fund a service previously operated by the local authority. Additionally, any changes to the BID's business plan and spending priorities could have a negative impact on its wider projects to support businesses in the town.
- 2.10 Partners have said they would actively support any initiatives to provide any volunteer-led support to monitor CCTV. Shrewsbury Town Centre Residents Association have also indicated that members would support such an initiative and during the consultation further steps have been undertaken to develop a council wide volunteering offer that could encompass CCTV, mirroring the example as run in Oswestry. The Council is also working with partners to establish a clear volunteering recruitment pool and if this can support CCTV monitoring, subject to volunteers meeting legal and training requirements.
- 2.11 Following the consultation period and partner engagement, and for the reasons outlined above in terms of the feasibility of the options, this report recommends that Option one which was the Council's original option prior to consultation remains the preferred option.

3. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 3.1 In absence of any further partner funding commitment to support the most popular option from consultation (Option 4), and to help meet the Council's savings target, approve Option 1 with monitoring of CCTV moving to a "best endeavours" approach where staff's priority will be responding to out of hours service calls, rather than CCTV monitoring.
- 3.2 Agree to explore with partners the feasibility of a volunteer programme to provide additional monitoring capacity. This could provide additional active monitoring capacity during specific identified peaks and higher risk times.
- 3.3 The Council and other partners continue to seek other funding options to help support additional CCTV monitoring.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1 In reaching the recommendations for cabinet, we have identified and addressed the associated risks as follows:
- 4.2 An Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) has been conducted to screen the proposed options for consultation for anticipated equality impacts, whether neutral, negative, or positive. Adoption of the preferred option (Option 2) would bring an anticipated neutral impact for people across Protected Characteristic groupings in the community, as defined in the Equality Act 2010, with a likely neutral to low negative impact for those that may be vulnerable. This is because, alongside the active monitoring of CCTV to promote community safety, the CCTV team also answers calls to the council made outside office hours and would continue to do so. These are emergency calls that cannot reasonably or safely wait until offices are next open, mainly calls for urgent highways issues that may involve risk to health or safety, calls from people who face immediate homelessness that evening and the overflow of calls to social care where vulnerable adults or children may be at risk. The emergency out of hours provision is a vital service that needs to continue. Withdrawing the service would have a negative impact on vulnerable individuals and members of the public who could be at risk. Therefore, it is imperative that we continue this service to support those in crisis. The preferred option for consultation maintains the out of hours service and CCTV recording provision, and overall impact may therefore be anticipated to be neutral. However, as it is at a different level to the current “gold standard” service there may be perceptions amongst communities and groupings in communities that they will become more vulnerable because of any changes to the service. Assessment of any such perceptions would be a useful element of the consultation, as it would enable the council to gauge depth of views and utilise the findings to aid decision-making processes.

Risk	Mitigation
<p>The move to a passively monitored CCTV system would impact negatively on levels of crime and may be viewed negatively by the public and businesses.</p>	<p>CCTV would remain in operation 24/7 which will continue to be deployed with other interventions; this is proven to be an effective deterrent to crime.</p> <p>CCTV would not stop monitoring altogether – a best endeavours service would remain.</p> <p>Police have installed a new town centre policing unit, and discussions are ongoing with West Mercia Police about technology required to give Shrewsbury Police’s control access to CCTV as is done in other command areas in West Mercia Police.</p> <p>Partners have been offered the opportunity to fund other approaches, which would allow some active monitoring to remain.</p> <p>Working with partners, a system to recruit volunteers will be explored, who with the necessary training and clearance, can provide a level of active monitoring at key times.</p> <p>Funding will be sought to provide active monitoring for specific higher risk events as identified by police, such as Category 1 derby football matches.</p>

	An appropriate communication plan will be developed to stress that CCTV remains in operation and that changes are part of the Council's measures to review non statutory expenditure considering its budget challenge.
There is a perception of a reduction in public safety and increase in crime in Shrewsbury town centre	The recommendation would retain a 24/7 CCTV system to remain in operation in Shrewsbury town centre for use in criminal detection and deterrence, with footage made available on request to police or other law enforcement. This is in line with other towns in and outside the county.
Additional costs of maintenance and upkeep of the CCTV equipment are not met, and system degrades.	<p>The Council has made a considerable investment in repairing and refurbishing the hardware and infrastructure of the CCTV system.</p> <p>Partners have been approached to meet the costs of maintenance and replacements and their ability to support this to ensure the system does not degrade. Shrewsbury Town Council has offered to fund maintenance costs to ensure the system remains in good working order.</p> <p>Further cameras are due to be added to the system during 2024 following a successful funding bid.</p>
Several council services, who could benefit from CCTV coverage will no longer do so.	This is not borne out in the requests received by the CCTV team in 2023 data, nor during the consultation.
Changes to the Pubwatch and Shopwatch scheme offered by Shrewsbury BID affects the service provided to BID members	<p>The CCTV team's active monitoring is just one element of the Safer Streets support scheme offered to businesses.</p> <p>Many aspects of the Watch schemes run by Shrewsbury BID are not dependent on the CCTV team. For example, radio contact between members would continue as it does now. These schemes can continue with a passively monitored CCTV.</p>

5 Financial Implications

5.1 Shropshire Council is currently managing an unprecedented financial position as budgeted for within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy approved by Council on 29 February 2024 and detailed in our monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. This demonstrates that significant management action is required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all Cabinet Reports provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. Where non-essential spend is identified within the Council, this will be reduced. This may involve

- scaling down initiatives,
- changing the scope,

- delaying implementation, or
- extending delivery timescales.

5.2 The current service provision costs the council c£600k per year. This covers both CCTV support and out of hours calls to the council, and the out of hours social work support team.

5.3 Implementation of the Option 1 and the removal of the need for the Council to cover the regular maintenance and accommodation costs would reduce the overall running costs of the service to the Council to £250k, making a reduction in cost of approximately £350k.

6 Climate Change Appraisal

6.1 There are no direct implications for climate change because of this report and full implications and considerations of climate change as a result of any changes to the approved approach will be reviewed at that time.

7 Background

7.1 Shropshire Council CCTV team currently provides 24/7 CCTV monitoring for Shrewsbury town centre, as well as the Council's out of hours emergency call handling and triage that operates when offices are closed, across 365 days of the year. These out of hours calls are mainly contacts for highways, homelessness, stair lifts repairs and locked in car parks, as well as some social care and lone worker calls. These are calls that cannot reasonably or safely wait for normal office opening times.

7.2 Since April 2022, to make best use of their shift-working status, in addition to real time CCTV monitoring, the CCTV team has provided the out of hours call triage service for most council services. In 2023, the team received 4,691 out of hours calls.

7.3 The CCTV network has 39 fixed cameras located in and around Shrewsbury town centre. 31 are located within the river loop with the remaining cameras in the Abbey Foregate, Coleham, Frankwell and station areas. During 2024 additional cameras are being installed within the river loop, following a successful funding bid. The team also monitors cameras at Monkmoor on behalf of Shrewsbury Town Council and in Craven Arms on behalf of Craven Arms Town Council.

7.4 During 2023, there were 3,144 occasions where the CCTV team took control of a camera to actively monitor a situation or were asked to retrieve footage. This includes both real time and reactive incidents, where evidence has been requested after an incident by police. A total of 36% of these were police review and footage requests, 33% relate to safer streets and 31% are other incidents recorded by CCTV monitoring.

7.5 The council does not hold information as to the outcome of any CCTV intervention as to whether it has contributed to successful prosecutions or prevented criminal activity or anti-social behaviour. Anecdotal examples presented during the consultation CCTV intervention by some respondents highlighted the added value of live CCTV monitoring.

- 7.6 The council's Medium Term Financial Strategy seeks to review all non-statutory functions the council provides and identify areas where savings towards the council's £62.5m savings target can be identified. CCTV provision is a non-statutory function with the current service operating at a "gold standard".
- 7.7 The Council provides no similar service in other parts of Shropshire. The nearest comparable system is in Oswestry operated by Oswestry Town Council. This uses volunteers and is run on a predominantly reactive basis. Shropshire Council has separated out the respective costs of the CCTV team's work to put costs against their key tasks of answering out of hours calls and supporting these statutory functions and CCTV monitoring and provision, a non-statutory function.
- 7.8 This has allowed the Council to develop a costed financial ask to the partners in Shrewsbury. This has been put to partners so they can consider the costs to maintain a functioning system for the town centre and whether they would wish to fund active monitoring or a reactive service and any contribution towards the system's maintenance. During the consultation, the Council also spoke with other CCTV providers to help establish a benchmarked cost of CCTV monitoring.
- 7.9 The total staffing costs for CCTV monitoring and handling Shropshire Council's and social care out of hours calls is £602,700. Whilst this does provide three functions, those costs are not sustainable going forward.
- 7.10 CCTV or public space surveillance camera systems have an essential role to play in keeping people safe. To ensure good surveillance they must conform to a set of standards including deploying appropriate equipment and, while CCTV schemes incorporating active monitoring generate the highest impact on crime, schemes deploying multiple interventions such as those in operation in Shrewsbury town centre including Pubwatch, Rangers and policing presence alongside CCTV generated larger effect than schemes deploying single or no other interventions alongside CCTV. This is the case in many similar towns to Shrewsbury and is the case in the other towns in Shropshire.
- 7.11 The impact on health and wellbeing is expected to be neutral. We do not envisage any change to the ability to answer and appropriately triage public and professional contacts received for our out of hours service which will still be handled by experienced and appropriately skilled staff. The preferred option would still provide a CCTV system recording 24/7 for Shrewsbury town centre and this is comparable with the level of CCTV monitoring in many other similar towns and other major towns in Shropshire.

8 Additional Information

- 8.1 The analysis of the consultation on the Options for CCTV is attached at Appendix 1

9 Conclusions

- 9.1 An actively monitored CCTV service provides many benefits in towns such as Shrewsbury. However, the cost of providing a non-statutory service at the current level is not sustainable given the council's budget position and the need to prioritise statutory services in the face of the £62.5m savings the council must make and continued rising demand particularly for social care.
- 9.2 The council has had several discussions with partners prior to this report to explore the options and opportunities for partners to fund the costs of operating and maintaining a CCTV service to achieve the best possible outcome for Shrewsbury's businesses, residents and visitors alike.
- 9.3 Following public consultation, Cabinet is recommended to support Option 1 in the absence of any clear offers of further funding. In the meantime, the Council will work with partners to harness any volunteer support with a default option that would allow the service to continue in a different format to how it is delivered now as this is not financially sustainable.

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

Local Member: *Cllr Nat Green*
Cllr Alan Moseley
Cllr Julian Dean
Cllr Dean Carroll
Cllr Mary Davies
Cllr Kate Halliday
Cllr David Vasmer

Appendices

Appendix 1- Analysis of the consultation

CCTV and Out of Hours Proposed Service Changes

Consultation Report

September 2024



1 Background and Methods

Background

Shropshire Council currently provides 24 hour, 7 days a week CCTV monitoring for Shrewsbury. Operating costs are fully met by Shropshire Council. Shropshire Council also works closely with key partners including Shrewsbury Town Council, Shrewsbury Business Improvement District (BID) and West Mercia Police.

Despite the strong local partnership working in place, Shropshire Council's financial situation means it is difficult to continue to offer this service, particularly when other towns in the county are not supported in this same way. Shropshire Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy identifies a savings target of £334,000 for the CCTV and Out of Hours service. This is a significant reduction in service budget, and it will mean a new model of operation for CCTV and out of hours call triage will need to be designed. For CCTV to continue operating effectively in Shrewsbury there is a requirement for ongoing investment in maintenance of the camera network and system. These costs for the last three years have been met by Shropshire Council, but the financial position now means that the council has no budget to continue this non-statutory function.

A consultation was launched in July of 2024, and ran for just over six weeks. It aimed to explore options for the new model of service and to gather feedback from members of the public and stakeholders to inform future decision making.

The current service offer includes:

- A CCTV network of cameras within Shrewsbury Town centre and a CCTV monitoring service 365 days a year, 24 hour, 7 days a week.
- CCTV searches.
- Radio support for the Safer Shrewsbury Scheme (including Pub and Shop Watch, Town Rangers and town centre policing).

During 2023, there were 3,144 occasions where the CCTV team took control of a camera to actively monitor a situation or were asked to retrieve footage. This includes both real time and reactive incidents, where evidence has been requested after an incident.

The CCTV service links to the out of hours calls service. There are no plans to reduce this element of service provision, it is a separate, statutory function, as a result it will remain protected.

Proposed service reduction includes changes to CCTV provision in Shrewsbury. This includes the options set out below. As part of this Shropshire Council is keen to understand if partner organisations or other providers have suggestions for working differently in future, either taking over the service or working in partnership with Shropshire Council. The options being consulted on are as follows:

Option 1

Cameras record 24 hours a day, 365 days a year but with no active monitoring. The Police will still be able to request footage to be reviewed and downloaded. A "best endeavours" approach, where there are substantial grounds to believe that

an individual or the public is in danger, the team could do its best to provide live monitoring, dependent on available resource. Partner agencies will be asked to contribute towards the cost of maintenance, replacement of cameras and hardware, and room hire.

Option 2

As Option 1 but enhanced with some volunteer led active monitoring.

The Police will still be able to request footage to be reviewed and downloaded.

A “best endeavours” approach, where there are substantial grounds to believe that an individual or the public is in danger, the team could do its best to provide live monitoring, dependent on available resource. Partner agencies will be asked to contribute towards the cost of maintenance, replacement of cameras and hardware, and room hire.

Option 3

Cease CCTV monitoring and recording altogether.

Option 4

As Option 1 with additional resource of 2 FTE staff, to provide some active monitoring (approximately 75% of the time as rotas allow.) This additional resource would require partner funding for the extra active monitoring resource. Partner agencies will be asked to contribute towards the cost of maintenance, replacement of cameras and hardware, and room hire, and towards the cost of staffing to allow the additional monitoring.

The consultation made clear that Shropshire Council's current preferred option is **Option 1**. However, the views expressed in the consultation and captured in this report will be fully considered before any final decisions can be taken.

Methods

The consultation collected responses via online survey. Additionally, four detailed letters were sent to the TellUs inbox, and some feedback was collected and summarised following an engagement event with BID. Responses resulting in quantitative data are displayed in Figures, below. Qualitative data, including responses to open-ended survey questions and letters, were analysed for common themes. Officer summary of event feedback is integrated where it corresponds with survey themes. Where possible, themes are presented in Tables, with anonymised examples provided illustrating the themes.

This report proceeds in the following sections:

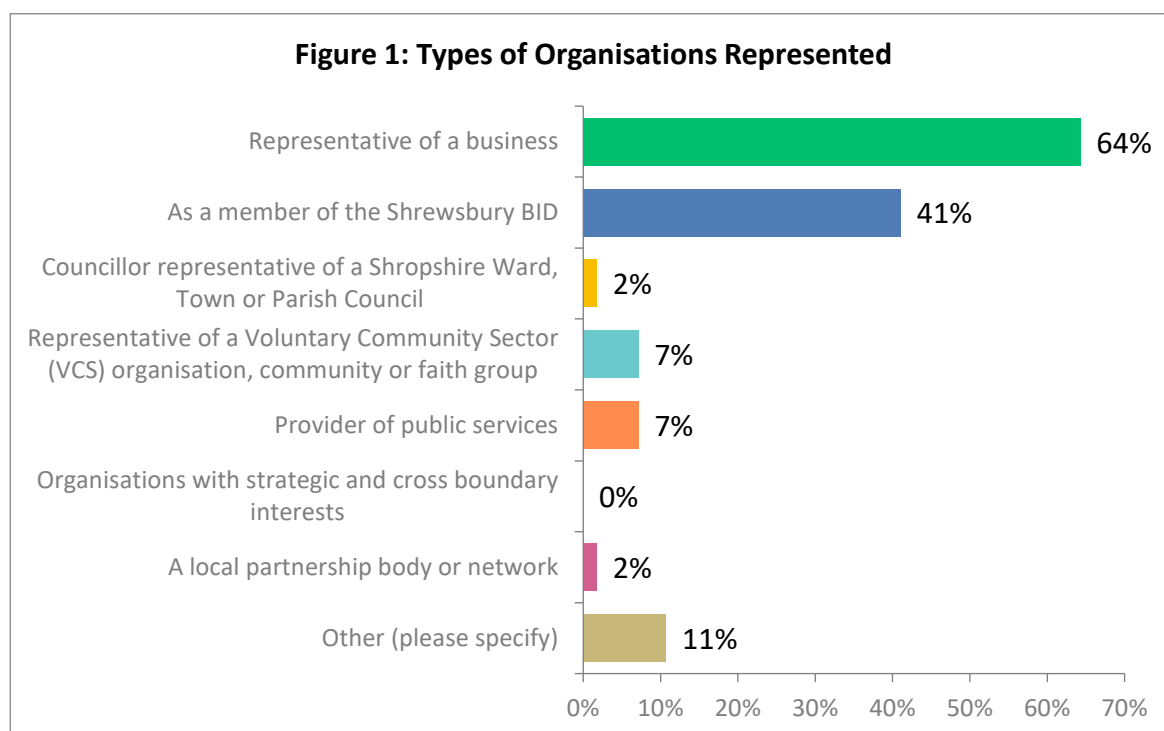
- **Section 1: Background and Methods** (this section) provides an overview of Shropshire Council's current involvement in CCTV provision, the need to achieve savings in this area, engagement with key stakeholders prior to the public consultation, and a brief description of the methods employed in analysing the results of the consultation.
- **Section 2: Respondents** presents the number and types of responses to the consultation received from the online survey, as well as identifying demographic characteristics of respondents.

- **Section 3: Current Feelings of Safety and Benefits of CCTV** presents the results of questions about how respondents currently feel about their safety and the benefits of the CCTV service.
- **Section 4: Preferred Options** analyses the results of questions aimed at assessing how respondents feel about the proposed options.
- **Section 5: Impacts of Options** looks at how respondents predict they and others will be impacted by the various proposed options.
- **Section 6: Summary and Conclusion** provides a summary of the key findings from the overall analysis of the three surveys and offers some conclusions based on the evidence.

2 Respondents

Introduction

In total, 315 respondents answered the survey, and four respondents sent emails with longer comments to the TellUs inbox. Of the survey respondents, 80% said they



were answering the questions as an individual member of the public, while 20% (62 respondents) said that they were answering on behalf of an organisation or group.

Representation of Organisations

Most of those respondents answering on behalf of an organisation were from the business community (64%), and many of those indicated that they were also members of BID (see Figure 1).

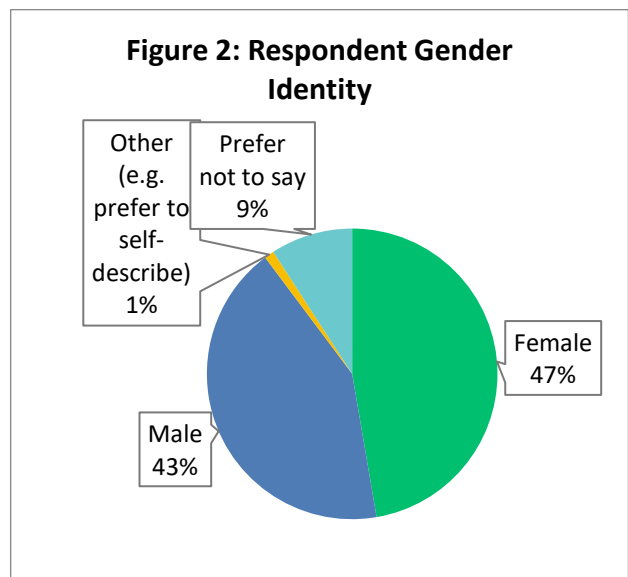
The following organisations and businesses identified themselves as taking part in the survey, though more did not identify themselves:

- JA Woodroffe

- Millard & Lancaster
- Shrewsbury Library
- Opo (Shrewsbury) Ltd
- The Alb
- Shrewsbury Street Pastors
- Palmer's of Shrewsbury
- JD Wetherspoons
- Vinegarhill
- Greggs
- Sia
- The Salopian Bar
- Halon Menswear
- Painted Life, Highly Flammable Studios
- VH
- Exchange
- Tanners Wines Ltd
- Inocencia
- BID
- Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Ludlow Residents Group (LRG)
- Clearview Security Ltd
- Wellmeadow Limited

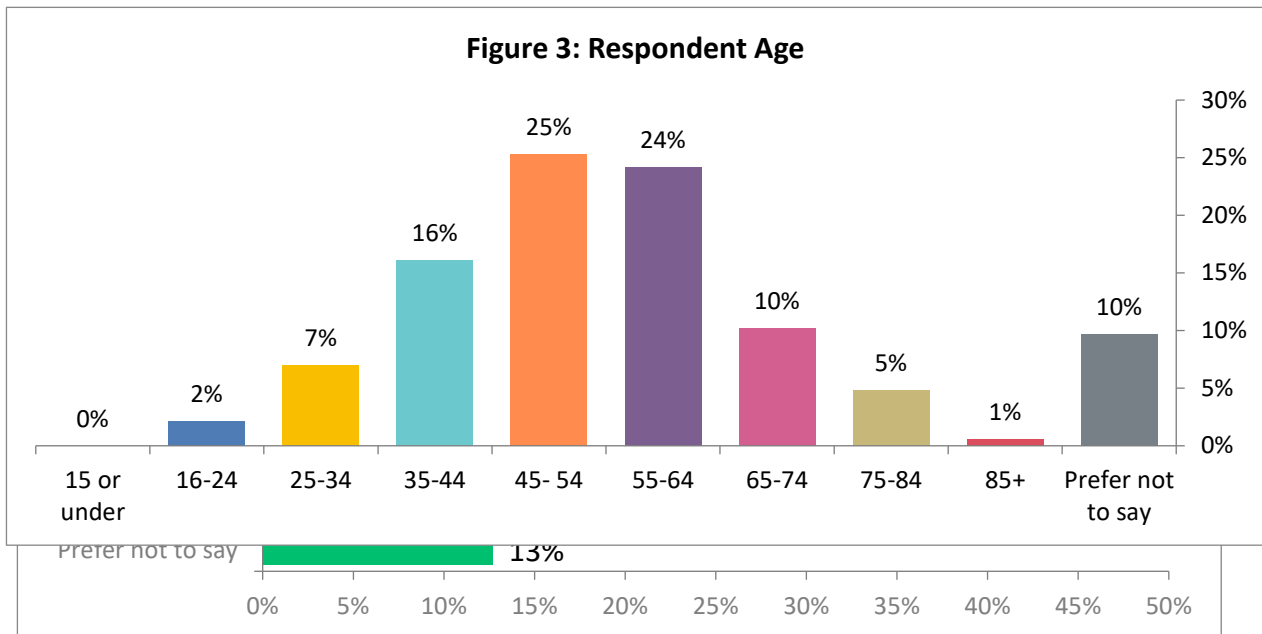
Demographics

It should be noted that respondents are not required to answer demographic questions if they don't want to, so only 177 respondents or fewer answered each of the demographic questions. These questions are asked to gauge whether the survey has reached a representative sample of the population being impacted by the proposals.



A fairly even spread of men and women answered the survey. However, children and **young adults were very underrepresented** among respondents, with only 9% of respondents identifying as under age 35 (see **Figures 2 & 3**).

Most respondents (65%) were employed, either full-time, part-time, or self-employed (see **Figure 4, below**).



14% of respondents (26) identified themselves as having a disability that limits their daily activity. Mobility (8) and mental health (5) were the most common disabilities identified in this group.

White (British; Irish; Welsh) respondents were in the majority, as were those who identified as having no religion or preferring not to say (see **Tables 1 & 2**).

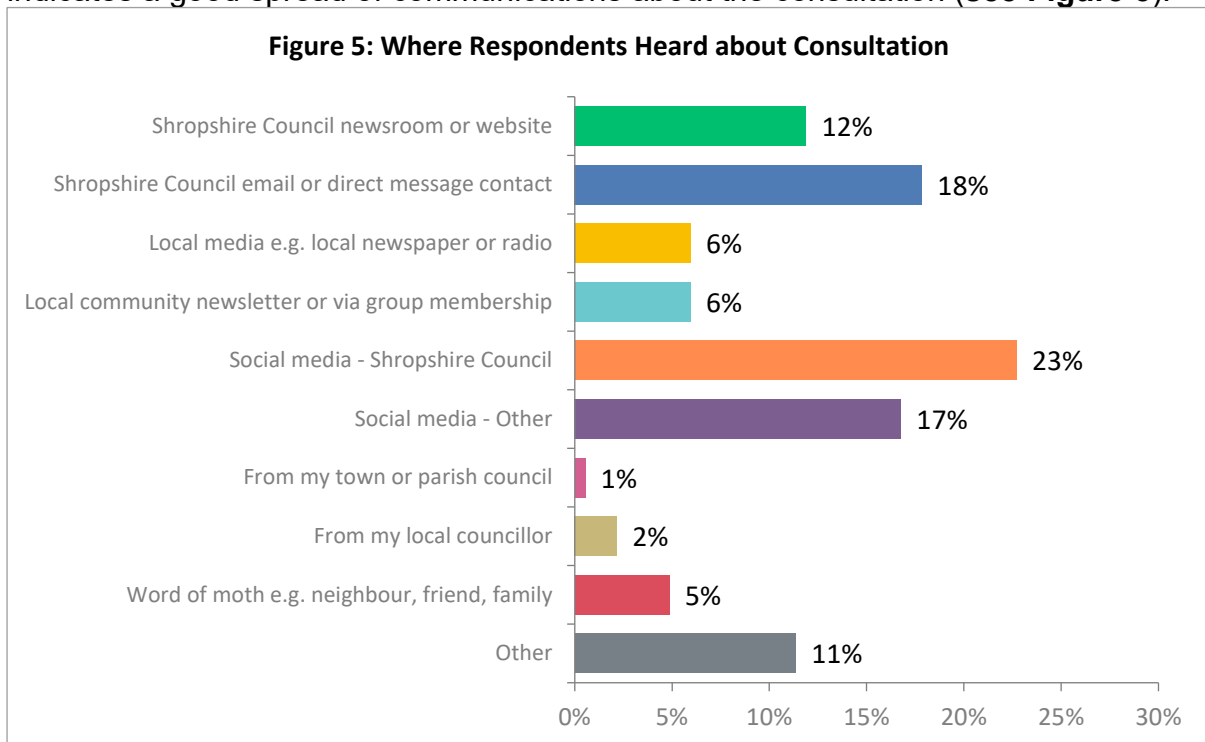
Table 1. Respondent Ethnic Background	Count	%
Arab	1	1%
Asian (Asian British; Bangladeshi Chinese; Indian; Japanese; Pakistani; any other Asian background).	1	1%
Black (Black African; Black British; Black Caribbean; any other Black background).	2	1%
Mixed (White and Asian; White and Black African; White and Black Caribbean; any other mixed background)	2	1%
White (British; Irish; Welsh)	144	81%
White (Gypsy, Roma or Irish traveller)	0	0%
Other white background e.g. Bulgarian, French, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, White South African, etc.	4	2%
Other Ethnic Group	1	1%
Prefer not to say or don't know	22	12%

Table 2. Respondent Religion	Count	%
Buddhist	0	0%
Christian	59	34%

Hindu	1	1%
Judaism	1	1%
Muslim	0	0%
Sikh	0	0%
Veganism (as a belief)	1	1%
No Religion	75	43%
Prefer not to say	36	21%

Heard about Survey

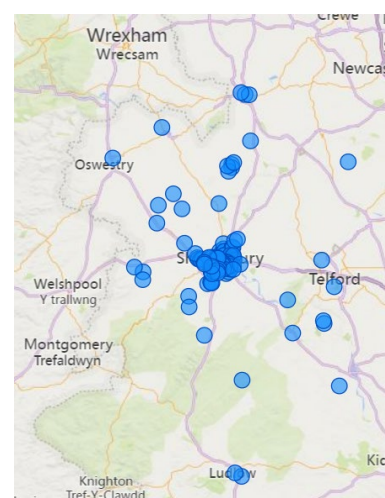
Respondents reported hearing about the survey from a wide variety of places, which indicates a good spread of communications about the consultation (see Figure 5).



Location

Unsurprisingly, most respondents providing their postcode were located in Shrewsbury or the nearby area (see Image 1). However, some respondents hailed from further out, including Ludlow, Oswestry, and the areas around Telford.

Image 1: Respondent Location



3 Current Feelings of Safety and Benefits of CCTV

Respondents were asked about their current feelings of safety under the CCTV provision now in place, as well as whether they are aware of and/or have benefitted from the service. When asked about how safe they feel in Shrewsbury Town Centre after 10:30pm, more

Figure 6: Feelings of Safety in Shrewsbury Town Centre after 10:30pm

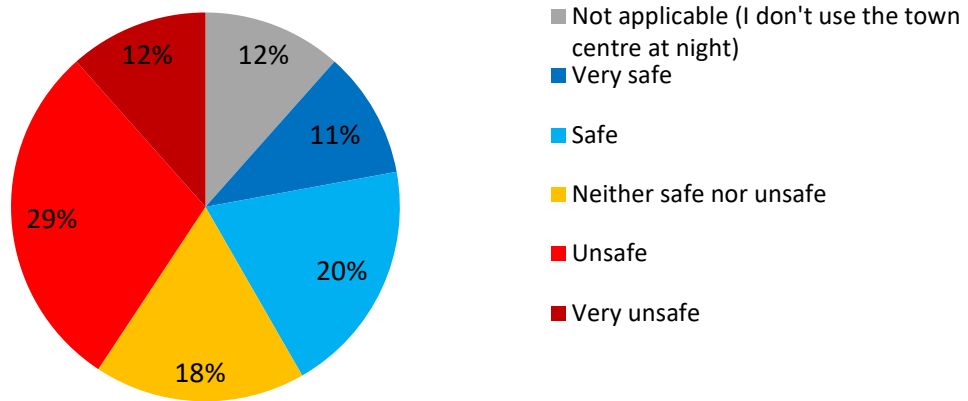
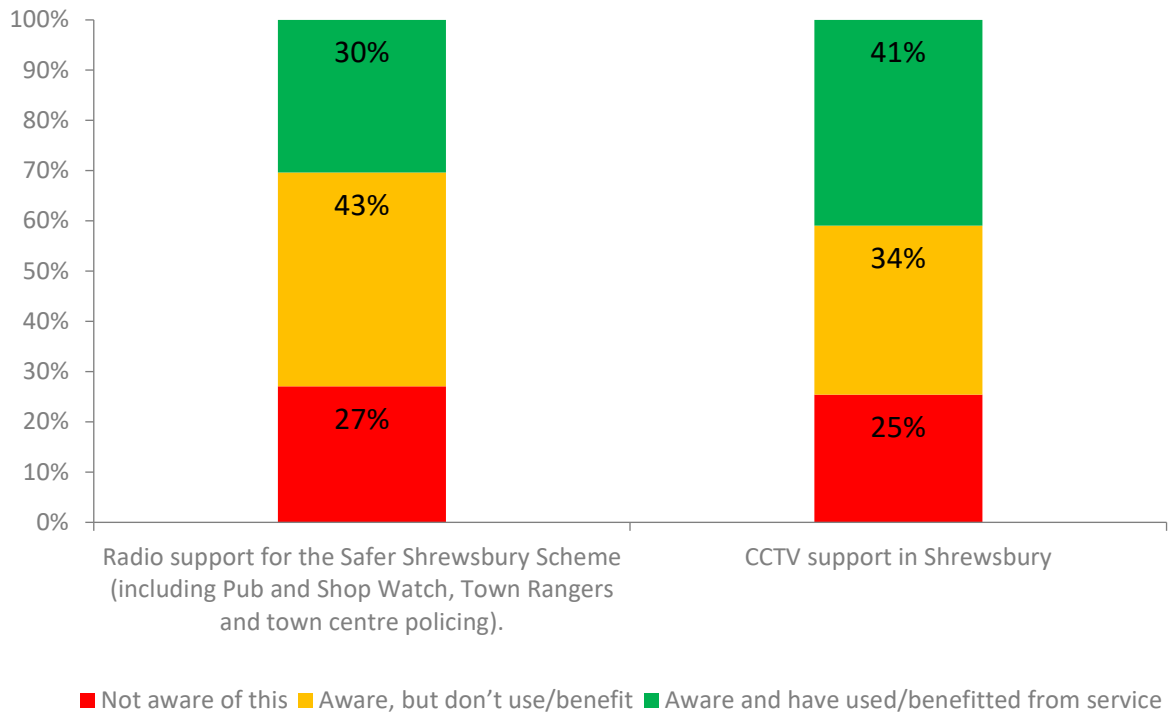


Figure 7: Benefit from Current CCTV Service



respondents said they felt unsafe (41%) than said they felt safe (31%) (see **Figure 6, below**).

Respondents were also asked about their awareness and use of two specific services currently in place around CCTV: radio support for the Safer Shrewsbury Scheme, and CCTV support in Shrewsbury. As shown in **Figure 7**, while a majority of respondents were aware of both services, a minority of respondents are aware of and have used or benefitted from these services. 30% of respondents said that they are aware of and have used or benefitted from the radio support, and 41% said they are aware of and have used or benefitted from CCTV support.

Finally, respondents were asked whether there was anything they wanted to say about the current CCTV provision (e.g. anything working particularly well, or not very well), and were provided with a space for open-ended responses. 103 respondents

took the opportunity to provide feedback on this question, and these comments were analysed for common themes, which are presented in **Table 3**. Anonymised examples illustrating the most pertinent themes are provided below.

Table 3. Themes - Current Service Provision	Count	%
Currently working well	41	24%
CCTV enhances public safety	33	19%
Don't reduce/withdraw the service	30	17%
CCTV acts as deterrent for criminals/shoplifters	14	8%
Currently not working very well/could be used better	13	8%
Specific example(s) given of when CCTV support has been important	13	8%
Suggestions for alternative ways to run the service	10	6%
Other safety elements needed (e.g. better lighting, more police/Ranger presence)	7	4%
Crime/ASB on the rise	7	4%
Other	4	2%

There was a wide variety of themes mentioned in responses to this question. The largest theme, mentioned by 41 respondents (24%) was that the **current CCTV service is working well**. Examples of comments include:

- “The current service has been seen to support the night-time economy significantly by providing monitoring to respond proactively to incidents that occur in the evenings. The PubWatch and ShopWatch schemes are an invaluable source of support for our town centre businesses and have a direct impact on economic wellbeing and economic growth.”
- “As a member of the fire service I have been to incidents where CCTV have provided valuable information which have helped resolve incidents and save lives.”
- “The rangers are a most welcome addition to the town centre and work well with the CCTV.”

13% of respondents, however, left comments suggesting that they believed the **current CCTV service is not working well**. These respondents thought that the service wasn't working well in general or said that there were ways that the service could be working better. For example:

- “Many CCTV cameras not working. General lack of training of radio procedures, making communication easily misunderstood sometimes.”
- “The shop's window has been broken twice and the cameras were not focused on the premises and could not provide assistance to police.”
- “Not working, the town is becoming a no go area.”
- “Rangers need to be present more and at different times during the week.”

A theme related to how well CCTV works, mentioned by 19% of respondents, was that **CCTV enhances public safety**. Examples of comments illustrating this theme include:

- “CCTV monitoring makes for a safer feeling environment and lessens anti-social behaviour.”

- “Don’t feel safe in town but knowing it’s monitored by CCTV makes me feel better.”
- “I believe it helps save lives and would have a detrimental impact if CCTV was reduced in the towns. Especially in regards to river safety and people falling in or vulnerable people not being noticed.”

Relatedly, 13 respondents (8%) gave **specific examples of CCTV active monitoring working**, either in their own personal experience or in the experiences of people they know or work with. Most of these examples risk compromising the anonymity of respondents, so are not provided here.

14% of respondents also said that they think **CCTV is an important deterrent** for crime and antisocial behaviour. For example:

- “The CCTV is beneficial! As an employee of a business that utilises the services offered by Shrewsbury BID, I’ve found the CCTV to be necessary to hinder anti-social behaviour.”
- “We have benefitted from reporting ASB within town during unsociable hours and this has led to immediate action to stop individuals. It also gives us peace of mind to know criminal behaviour is deterred and stopped as early on as possible.”
- “24/7 monitoring of the town centre CCTV system. IS A DETERRENT.”

Often in connection with the above theme or other themes, 4% of respondents also mentioned that they believe **crime and/or anti-social behaviour in Shrewsbury is on the rise**. For example:

- “Even with 100% live monitoring, shoplifting is still on the rise. So to maintain 100% CCTV but not live will be the best option, so footage can be requested at a later date, when required.”
- “Town is getting worse with anti-social behaviour even in the day, so a cut to CCTV is going to make matters worse.”

The second largest theme, mentioned by 30 respondents (17%) can be summarised as requests **not to reduce or withdraw CCTV service**. This theme was always mentioned alongside other themes, such as those referenced above. For example:

- “Please do not reduce CCTV. Our town centre like others has issues with homeless people (and associated behaviours), drugs alcohol abuse, theft (particularly cycles and shoplifting). I would not feel safe in the town centre without responsive CCTV and active monitoring
- “Feel we as a town need at least the current provision, certainly no reduction.”

10 respondents (6%) provided some **specific suggestions for alternative ways to run the service** in response to this question. Some of these suggestions included more facetious suggestions such as cutting employee salaries rather than CCTV or suggesting that Shropshire Council should fund CCTV elsewhere. However, three suggestions offer more nuanced ideas about how the proposals might be tweaked:

- “I have seen volunteer street pastors/welfare people who provide an excellent service of help & reassurance for local people enjoying the nighttime economy. Telford I know benefits a lot from street pastors, so if Shrewsbury’s

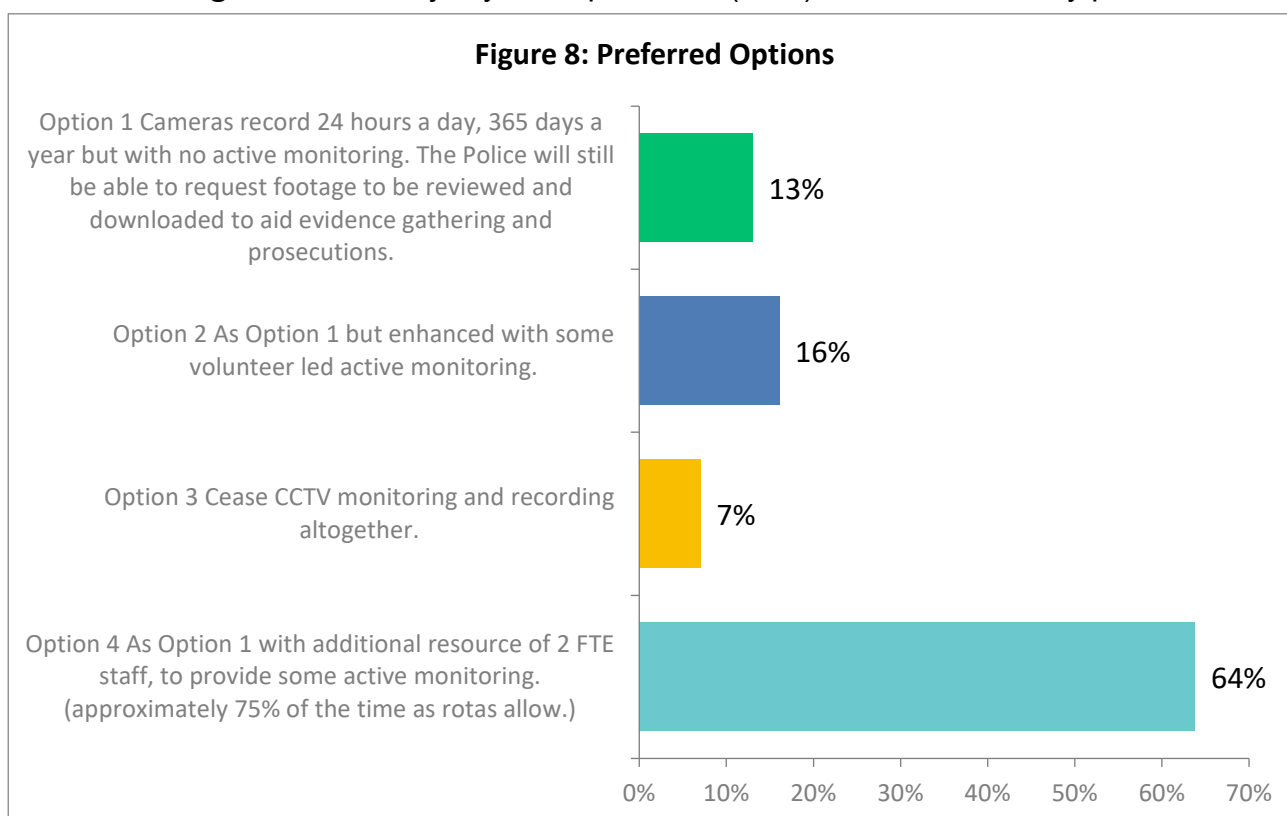
team are not a similar set-up, perhaps you could talk to Telford’s community safety partnership.”

- “I think CCTV should be actively monitored over the weekends especially throughout the night when most busy with nightlife. Probably not necessary to man it during the day, but still have cameras in action.”
- “More PCSOs in the Town Centre is another option. CCTV records crime and acts as deterrent and intervention as crime is happening/happened. PCSOs prevent crime.”

These responses indicate that the current provision overall is valuable to many of the respondents in Shrewsbury, and that there are concerns over a total elimination of active monitoring of CCTV. These concerns are illustrated further in the next section, which analyses respondents’ preferences regarding the proposed options laid out in the consultation.

4 Preferred Options

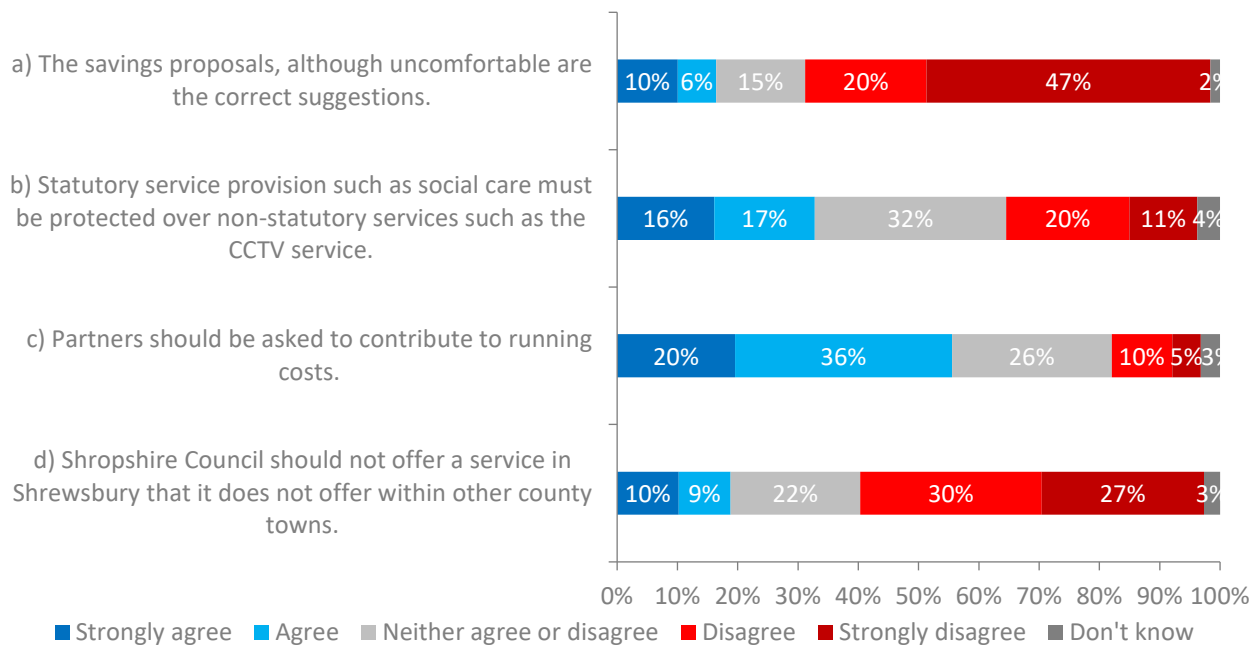
Respondents were asked to choose their preferred options from the list of four shown in **Figure 8**. The majority of respondents (64%) indicated that they prefer



Option 4, which asks partners to contribute to staffing for active CCTV monitoring for approximately 75% of the time.

Respondents were next asked to say whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of questions about CCTV provision, in order to help gauge opinion on some of the factors that will go into making the final decision about proposals (**see Figure 9, below**). For instance, it is possible to see that a majority of respondents (67%) either

Figure 9: Opinions on CCTV Provision



disagree or strongly disagree that the savings proposals are the correct suggestions. At the same time, it is clear that a majority of respondents agree or strongly agree (56%) that partners should be asked to contribute to CCTV running costs.

It is also noteworthy that, despite some comments to the contrary in open-ended responses, a majority of survey respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that Shropshire Council should not offer a service in Shrewsbury that it does not offer in other towns. There is some evidence from open-ended comments that these opinions might be driven by a sense of Shrewsbury being an important centre of commerce and other activity that impacts the whole of the county. However, the more important context to keep in mind with this result is that the majority of respondents are located in Shrewsbury (**see Image 1**), so the sample is biased toward the views of Shrewsbury-based residents and businesses.

Less clear are opinions over the protection of statutory services such as social care over the provision of other services such as CCTV. Opinion was divided on this question, with 33% of respondents agreeing that social care should be protected over non-statutory services, while 31% disagreed with this, and 32% were ambivalent. As will be mentioned later in this report, some respondents singled out this question as particularly problematic.

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide more detailed comments on what they liked about the proposals (or any particular options) as a way of reducing costs. 170 respondents replied to this open-ended question. Their responses have been grouped thematically and the themes are presented in **Table 4**. Anonymised comments are provided below to illustrate the most relevant themes.

Table 4. Themes – Feedback on Proposals/Options	Count	%
Specific suggestions for reducing costs in other ways	58	30%

Don't like anything/"no"	37	19%
Like the idea of volunteers staffing cameras	25	13%
Don't reduce the CCTV	19	10%
Like the idea of partners contributing to cost	19	10%
SC shouldn't be paying for CCTV in Shrewsbury	12	6%
Find the savings elsewhere (general)	10	5%
Like that it encourages reporting to the police	4	2%
Like more strategic use of resources (e.g. camera placement, use)	3	2%
Other	6	3%

Most of the themes identified in response to this question can be grouped into comments that are favourable about one aspect or more of the proposed options, and comments that are generally unfavourable toward the proposals or certain aspects of the proposals. Nearly a third of the respondents (30%), however, provided **specific suggestions for reducing costs in alternative ways**. Some of these suggestions are more realistic than others. For instance, some respondents suggested cuts to capital projects in order to better fund the CCTV service (a financial exchange that is not possible for the council to make), and some suggested cuts to CEO salaries or councillors' allowances. Some suggestions for reducing costs or finding alternative ways to fund CCTV service in Shrewsbury, though, were more realistic. For example:

- "We are all facing the same issues, things are costing more and more. Perhaps having a data sharing agreement with the authorities and key stakeholders, means that access to any requests are dealt with in a timely fashion, and maybe the police have direct access and don't have to put in individual requests."
- "As a night worker, having street lights off at night concerned me at first, but now I am used to knowing where I walk in the dark. Could save even more money by having lights off on the highways, main roads. Cars already have lights."
- "Do a recruitment drive with West Mercia Police for more Special Constables to help with local policing."
- "Encourage all businesses to have their own CCTV."

Many of the respondents had positive things to say about certain aspects of the proposals. For example, 13% of respondents said they **like the idea of using volunteers to staff cameras**, and 10% said they **like the idea of partners contributing to the cost of CCTV**. 4% of respondents (7 in total) said that they thought that there would be other benefits to the proposals. For example, 4 respondents said that the proposals would **encourage more reporting directly to the police**, and 3 said that it would encourage more **strategic use of the CCTV resource**.

6% of respondents said that they agreed in principle that **Shropshire Council should not fund CCTV in Shrewsbury**. Some respondents said that this should be the job of the Shrewsbury Town Council, or that the funding should come from other sources (such as businesses).

One individual who sent their feedback via email, said:

- “While I am a huge fan on the town, there is probably as big a need (if not greater need) for investment in CCTV in other parts of the county. I’d be particularly keen to contribute to a consultation regarding Bridgnorth and any other crime prevention initiatives that make up for the town’s woeful lack of policing. Like other towns, Bridgnorth generates a good deal of income from visitors, but one has to question how much of that helps contribute to investments of this nature that deal with the minority that are involved in disorder etc. Having said that, it’s remarkable how much the local authority is left with the burden of these costs and one has to question why the Office of The Police and Crime Commissioner’s doesn’t recognise the value CCTV plays in supporting the inadequate policing provided in our area.”

The second largest theme identified in these responses, however, was that respondents **didn’t like anything about the proposals** (19%, or 37 respondents, said this). 10% of respondents used this space to make the plea **not to reduce CCTV service**. Finally, 5% of respondents made comments reflecting a related theme around **finding the savings needed by Shropshire Council elsewhere**, rather than reducing the CCTV service in Shrewsbury.

According to summarised notes on the feedback provided from engagement events with stakeholders, there is willingness among key partners to work on alternatives to Option 1. The following summaries of feedback have been provided by officers at the events:

- “Shrewsbury Town Council confirmed its commitment to contribute towards maintenance costs of the system.”
- “West Mercia Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner have reiterated that financial support for CCTV would be for capital costs only and day to day running costs to cover staff monitoring costs.”
- “Shrewsbury BID have indicated that as this would fall outside of their remit and funding agreement which was balloted on in 2023, Any additional funding requirement would need to re-ballot members and cover the costs associated with this.”
- “Shrewsbury Town Council (STC) and Shrewsbury BID have both said they would actively support any initiatives to provide any volunteer-led support to monitor CCTV.”
- “Shrewsbury Town Centre Residents Association have also indicated that members would support such an initiative and during the consultation further steps have been undertaken to develop a council wide volunteering offer that could encompass CCTV, mirroring the example as run in Oswestry.”

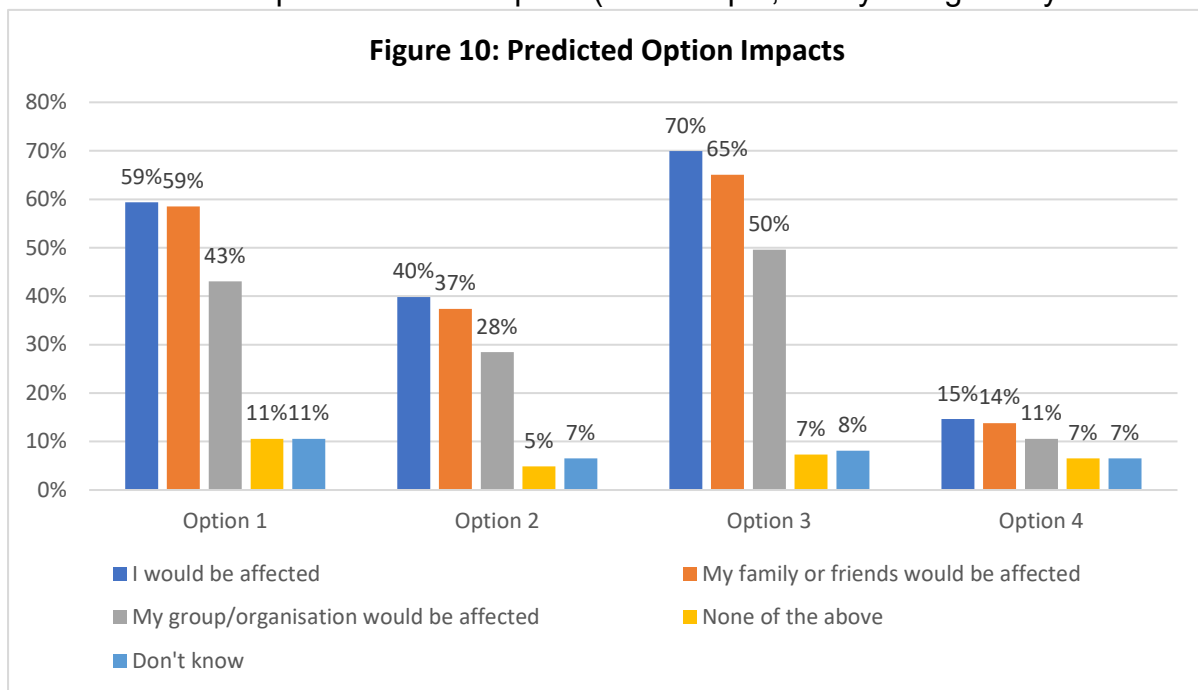
In summary, respondents were most keen on Option 4, which would see some retention of monitored CCTV coverage in Shrewsbury. Open-ended comments reinforced this view, reflecting that many aspects of the proposals that respondents singled out for praise (suggested use of volunteers, or having partners contribute to costs) were elements of the description of Option 4. Feedback from key stakeholders at engagement events indicate that partners are willing to explore options that would

allow the council to come closer to delivering Option 4 should it be determined that this is the best course of action.

5 Impacts of Options

While it is clear that respondents prefer Option 4 overall, it is also important to gauge how the public thinks that each of the proposed options will impact them and their communities. The survey asked a series of questions aimed at providing insight into this.

The first question asked to what extent respondents (whether answering for themselves as individuals or on behalf of a group or organisation) would be affected by each proposed option (see Figure 10)¹. Respondents were allowed to choose more than one response for each option (for example, if they thought they would



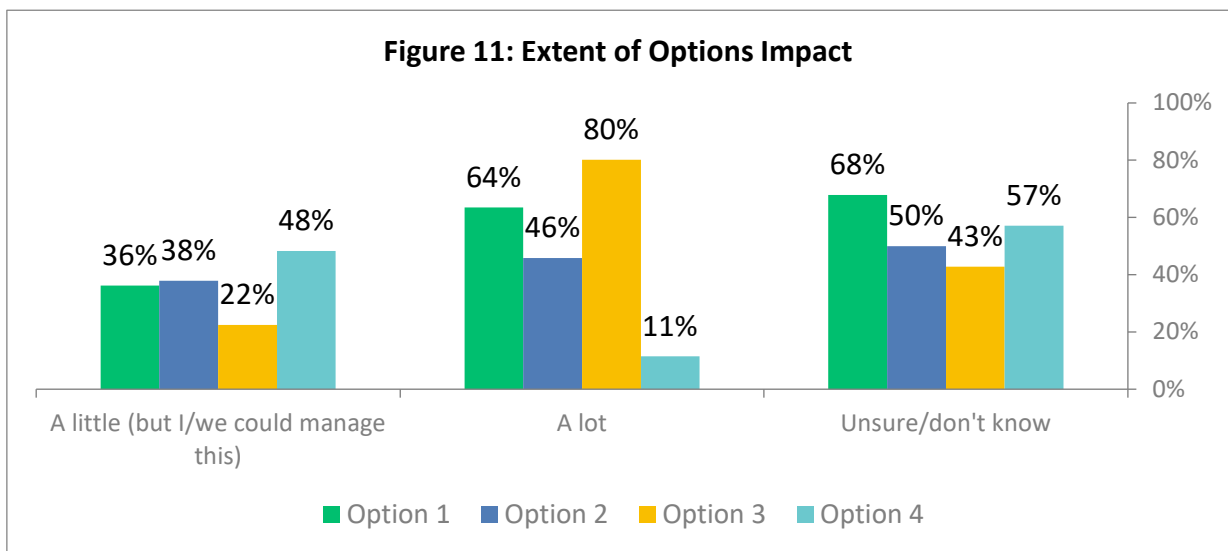
personally be affected, and that their friends and family would be affected, they could tick both boxes).

Respondents predict that Option 3 would have the greatest impact on themselves, their family or friends, and any group/organisation they are responding on behalf of. Respondents show similar levels of concern that Option 1 will affect them and others as well.

Respondents were then asked to gauge to what extent they thought they would be impacted by the proposed options (see Figure 11, below).

Respondents think that Option 3 will have the greatest impact on them. Respondents

¹ It should be noted for transparency that this question unfortunately had a technical issue, so that when the survey opened the question only allowed respondents to choose one option, rather than multiple options. The first 114 responses were collected with this problem in place. This issue was fixed once it was flagged, so an additional 201 respondents were able to answer the revised question. Figure 10 reflects the responses received after the technical issue was fixed.



reflected high levels of uncertainty about the impacts of all options, but Option 1 and Option 4 had the highest levels of uncertainty about the extent of their impacts.

Following this, respondents were asked two open-ended questions that invited them to provide more detailed information about how the proposed options might impact them or their communities. The first of these questions asked: “If you will be impacted as an individual or group/organisation/service please explain any concerns you have about the options outlined.” There were 116 responses to this question and these responses were analysed for common themes, and the most common themes detected are presented in **Table 5**.

Table 5. Themes – Any Concerns about Options	Count	%
Will result in increase in crime/ASB/decrease safety in town centre generally	80	55%
Feelings of personal safety impacted	22	15%
Potential for delays/lack of evidence in missing persons or criminal investigations	14	10%
Economic impacts (e.g. shoplifting, loss of sales, fewer people coming to town, etc.)	12	8%
Concerns for staff/volunteer/customer safety of businesses and VCS orgs	10	7%
Other	7	5%

As the question did not really ask respondents to indicate *which* options they were concerned about, many of the respondents do not refer to one option specifically when voicing their concerns. However, given that all of the options indicate some reduction in service, most of the comments relate to concerns about how any reduction in service might impact them or others within the community.

A majority of respondents (55%) voiced concern that a reduction in service **will result in increase in crime and anti-social behaviour**, or generally decrease safety in the town centre. For example:

- “Massive impact with safety if no one was monitoring them. With knife crime massively on the rise, I think it’s obscene that the council would jeopardise people’s safety over money.”

- “I own an independent retail business in town. Theft is already at a serious high. People are coming by train from other town and cities specifically because of the number of independent shops in town. We don't need less CCTV and monitoring. We need boots on the ground communicating with the people monitoring from a static location to help put an end to this vicious cycle of theft we are plagued with at the moment.”
- “I look after several commercial properties in the town centre and I feel strongly that CCTV is an important part of security in the town especially with very low police presence.”

Relatedly, 15% of respondents voiced **concerns over their own personal safety** as a result of service reductions, and 7% of respondents voiced **concerns over the safety of volunteers or employees for their organisations** in the town centre should the service be reduced.

- “Don't take CCTV away - I would feel unsafe when in Town especially in the evening.”
- “We already are in a blind spot on Roushill Bank so dread to think how much worse this would get during the night if there is no monitoring surrounding this area as well. In the past we have had a large amount of drug use, defecation and vandalism on our street. Thankfully this has been less in the most recent months with the addition of more rangers and police presence. I would hate to see this return.”
- “Have been victims of ASB many many times some protection has been offered but fear for the future. Especially when a family member only just survived attempted murder who was working in the same job as I do.”
- “Monitored CCTV is vital to the safety of our volunteers out on the streets. We are keen that we keep Purple Flag status for our town.”

10% of respondents specifically worried that a reduction in CCTV service will result in **delays or lack of evidence in criminal or missing persons investigations**. For example:

- A lack of active CCTV monitoring would drastically restrict the ability to get back stolen goods and identify persons of interest who may be threat to businesses and the general public.”
- “We have had a few incidents of shop lifting in the past and the monitoring has allowed us to gain evidence and even catch the thief in real time.”
- “Situations where time is critical e.g. personal safety, crime, individuals with impairment such as dementia.”
- “CCTV is now critical to any prosecution of criminal activity of which there is increasing amounts of in Shrewsbury.”
- “The presence of CCTV cameras significantly supports emergency services by providing real-time surveillance, aiding in the swift identification and response to incidents, including crimes, accidents, and other emergencies. This rapid response capability is vital in potentially life-threatening situations where every second counts.”

8% of respondents worried specifically that a reduction in CCTV service would have **economic impacts** on their own business or the town/area generally. For example:

- “Safety of my customers, protection of the business, loss of sales.”
- “Cutting CCTV coverage at a time of increased anti-social and violent behaviour is irresponsible and will cost lives, make the town a no go zone and affect all business.”

The second question that looked at the potential impacts of the proposed options asked respondents to comment on the potential impacts on different protected characteristic groups, in order to inform the council’s Equalities, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) for the eventual outcome of the proposals following the consultation. 54 individuals offered responses to this question, and their comments were analysed for themes, which are presented in **Table 6**.

Table 6. Themes - ESHIA	Count	%
Most vulnerable will be impacted (general)	17	24%
People with disabilities or mental health issues (including alcohol/drug problems) will be impacted	8	11%
Women will be impacted	7	10%
Ethnic minorities will be impacted	6	8%
Older people will be impacted	6	8%
Homeless people will be impacted	4	6%
Staff/volunteers will be less safe	3	4%
Children will be impacted	2	3%
LGBT+ people will be impacted	1	1%
Other	18	25%

In the comments on this question, respondents often named specific groups that they believed would be especially impacted by the proposals, though 17 respondents simply said that more vulnerable people generally would be impacted by them.

Specific categories of people that respondents singled out as being particularly vulnerable to the proposals included people with disabilities or mental health issues, women, ethnic minorities, older people, homeless people, children, and LGBT+ people. 3 respondents also said that employees or volunteers working in the centre of town would specifically be less safe. Examples of comments include:

- “People with disabilities are often targets for abuse. This would make them less likely to visit the town in the evening. We have seen unrest and violence towards migrants recently. I wouldn’t like to think that the lack of CVTV might encourage this. We have a fair-sized Ukrainian community within the town who may be starting to feel unsafe.”
- “The elderly will be likely to be more impacted as they may fear attending evening events due to lack active CCTV monitoring.”
- “Do some targeted consultation in formats that can reach a more diverse representation and ask them directly.”

- “More vulnerable people who perhaps are afraid of reporting crime or dangerous situations may be affected by these changes.”
- “Particular concerns are reduced safety for individuals, especially more vulnerable e.g. dementia.”
- “I believe women would be put at more risk and also ethnic minorities.”

Finally, as is always the practice with public consultations regarding significant changes in services, the survey concluded with an open-ended question asking respondents to say anything else they wished to regarding the proposals. 51 respondents provided detailed responses here, with themes spanning the range of many of the comments already provided in the survey. However, as **Table 7** shows, a few new themes emerged in responses to this question that are also worth noting.

Table 7. Themes – Any Other Comments	Count	%
This is an important service to keep/protect	19	28%
Negative comments about Shropshire Council/councillors/the consultation	19	28%
Proposals are a bad idea/will make the town unsafe/lose money	13	19%
Specific suggestions/examples of what works elsewhere	5	7%
Greater transparency on SC funds needed	5	7%
Agree with need to cut this cost/town council should fund	4	6%
Support for Option 4 specifically	1	1%
Offer to speak with councillors	1	1%

The largest theme in response to this question, with 28% of respondents touching on it, was to reiterate the point made in other parts of the survey that many respondents feel that **CCTV is an important service to keep in place**. Relatedly, 19% of respondents made the point here that the **proposals are a bad idea** and will make the town unsafe and/or result in economic consequences for businesses or the town in general.

In a similar vein, Shrewsbury Town Centre Residents’ Association (SCTRA) wrote an email to the TellUs inbox, which stated that they reject Option 3 asked to work with the council to find a solution that incorporates elements of Options 1, 2 and 4. In their letter they stated:

- “SCTRA regards it as essential that:
 - The needs of the Police are fully met for both real-time and post-hoc retrieval, for having system access terminals provided and maintained in their own premises, and in respect of the quality of images and video provided; and
 - The needs of Shropshire Council for both real-time and post-hoc retrieval are fully met in respect of fulfilling the Council’s statutory duties - e.g. on ASB, and to enable officers to monitor and secure compliance with the Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order.”

Several respondents used this last survey to make comments about Shropshire Council more broadly. For instance, 28% of respondents made **negative comments here about the council, councillors, or the consultation** and how it was conducted. Five respondents specifically made the point that **Shropshire Council's financial decision-making needs to be more transparent** if the public is going to be asked to advise on service cuts in some areas in order to maintain other services. One respondent **offered to speak to councillors directly** about the proposals.

Other respondents agreed with the proposals in principle. Four respondents said that they liked the proposals because they **agree that Shropshire Council should not be funding CCTV** service to just one town – Shrewsbury. One respondent also voiced **specific support for Option 4**.

Five respondents used this space to provide specific **suggestions or examples of what might work** either in addition to the proposals or as alternatives. These were:

- “The next lot of trade events on CCTV at the NEC Birmingham will have AI as a major option, this is to be utilised to reduce costs.”
- “It would be important for the areas covered by cameras to be unknown, as it is understood currently that they are able to move to cover different areas as required. Ne'er-do-wells would take advantage of any areas that become known as 'blind spots'.”
- “SHOPWATCH should be updated more where possible...few regular faces that we don't see on there.”
- “The nighttime economy should be paying for this directly. Either through membership if pub watch or subscription. Also the police benefit most and they should operate it.”
- “Why can't you take a look at how Telford has mobilised volunteers into looking and helping their communities. I'm sure if something like their model was brought in you could save cash in other areas instead. Coming from Telford originally I've seen what can be achieved and Shropshire is way behind on a lot of things and services. No community feeling. You get people invested then they will help by volunteering. Think about it, your going to have to keep making cuts year on year. So why not build your own volunteer army to take up some of the underfunding area you have now and will have in the years to come.”

One individual who emailed their feedback to the TellUs inbox had some additional detailed advice:

- “I'm sure the council have looked into Wireless options which over time can save thousands of pounds a year by sharing fibre links from one camera to another and looking at the town centre which is not taking advantage of wireless connectivity and with line of sight which I see there is this can be done! I can see the council are using Hik or Duhua CCTV cameras dotted around the town forgive me if I'm wrong they are low brand spec which still produce high end images but for a saving options could be:

- Wireless links with line of sight from camera to camera cutting thousands in fibre costs, look at Silvernet wireless kits making one camera fibre redundant with BT or Virgin and utilising the wireless link
- Alternatively outsource the monitoring and maintenance as reactive monitoring to another control room to keep costs down.”

Finally, one of the emails received in response to the consultation was a detailed proposal from a security company to run the current service at a lower cost.

Overall, it is evident that respondents are concerned that any reduction in monitored CCTV service will lead to an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour in the town centre. Concerns for how this will impact more vulnerable groups are also salient, with many people with protected characteristics, including those with disabilities and women, being mentioned as particularly vulnerable to the impacts of the proposals.

6 Summary and Conclusion

Summary

Some of the key findings in the results presented above include:

- More respondents say they feel unsafe in Shrewsbury Town Centre after 10:30pm (41%) than said they feel safe at this time (31%).
- A majority of respondents (67%) do not agree that the proposals are the correct suggestions for saving the funds required by Shropshire Council.
- When asked what their concerns are about the proposed options, a majority (55%) of respondents said that they are concerned that the proposals will lead to an increase in crime and/or anti-social behaviour in town.
- A majority of respondents (56%) like the idea of partners being asked to contribute to running costs.
- Option 4 is by far the preferred option of survey respondents, and Option 3 was the least popular option.
- Respondents believe that Option 3 and Option 1 would have the greatest impact on themselves, their friends and family, and their organisations.

Respondents also provided thoughtful insights into the potential impacts of reduced CCTV service in Shrewsbury, including the disproportionate impact on more vulnerable groups, as well as financial implications, and the potential for decreased safety and criminal justice efficacy.

Respondents provided some pertinent suggestions as to alternative methods of finding savings or carrying out the proposed changes. Some of the more relevant suggestions included placing cameras more strategically or otherwise improving camera efficiency, working with police to increase their presence in the town, more efficient staffing schedules, encouraging businesses to have their own cameras, and more effective partnership working across public services and VCS organisations.

Conclusion

The preferred option among consultation respondents is to continue recording footage with some scaled-back staffed monitoring, with partner agencies contributing to maintenance and additional monitoring costs. This approach aims to balance the need for public safety with the council's financial limitations. Some of the respondent suggestions for making the service more efficient and effective should also be considered as proposals are reviewed.

Many thanks are extended to the individuals, businesses, and organisations that took part in the consultation – whether by responding via email, attending engagement events, or taking part in the online survey. The feedback from the consultation will be fully considered before any final decisions are made about the proposals.

September 2024

Analysis and reporting by:
Feedback and Insight Team, Communications and Engagement, Resources
Shropshire Council
Email: TellUs@shropshire.gov.uk

Shropshire Council Lead Department: Customer Services



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Committee and Date

Item

Public



Sustainable Travel Schools Annual Report

Responsible Officer:	Rhiannon Letman -Wade		
email:	Rhiannon.letman-wade@shropshire.gov.uk	Tel:	
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Cllr Kirstie Hurst-Knight		

1. Synopsis

This report provides an opportunity to highlight the work of the Sustainable Travel Team over the last academic year. The team was established in February 2024. It also provides an opportunity following a restructure to highlight the key ambitions of the department, seeking approval of KPI's, an annual report of some of the key milestones and council instruction to return annually for progress updates.

2. Executive Summary

Sustainable Travel to School, which includes walking, cycling and scooting, is a key component of Shropshire Council's broader strategy to promote sustainable and healthy lifestyles among its residents. This initiative aligns closely with the Shropshire Plan, which emphasises environmental sustainability, public health and community wellbeing.

- 2.1. Encouraging sustainable travel reduces the number of car journeys, thereby lowering greenhouse gas emissions and contributing to cleaner air.
- 2.2. Walking or cycling to school helps improve children's fitness and overall health, addressing issues such as childhood obesity
- 2.3. Active travel has been shown to enhance mental health by reducing stress and increasing social interactions amongst pupils.
- 2.4. Initiatives like School Streets and Bikeability training made it safer for children to travel actively to school.

- 2.5. The programmes proposed foster a sense of community by involving parents, schools and local organisations in promoting active travel.
- 2.6. Increasing active travel journeys means there are less cars on the road, which in turn will reduce the amount spent on maintenance.

3. Recommendations

We recommend that council endorse the annual report, and agree to incorporate the following KPI's within the Council's Performance Management Framework for annual reporting. The below will allow us to undertake baselining activities to understand our current position in Shropshire, which subsequently will give us targets to work towards in the next academic year (25-26)

- 3.1. 100% of schools to be engaged in the 'Our Journey programme' by July 2030. Our Journey is our brand new digital road safety programme that allows children to engage in road safety education with a focus on travelling sustainably to school.
- 3.2. Number of children actively engaging in the 'Our Journey' programme
- 3.3. Number of school/college pupils engaged in our 16-18 programme- Greenlight.
- 3.4. 80% of year 6 pupils trained in Bikeability Level 2
- 3.5. 50% increase in school journeys being walked, wheeled and cycled by July 2030
- 3.6. Increase in the number of School Streets annually.
- 3.7. Using Moving Traffic Offences Powers to deter parking issues outside schools. Deploy cameras to monitor issue parking on School Keep Clears.
- 3.8. Amount of carbon saved through modal shift: the reduction in car use and increase in walking and cycling.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. Risk narrative We get funded annually from The Bikeability Trust to deliver Bikeability training to school pupils. Over the last few years, we have seen an increase in funding, but at this present time, with a new government, we are unsure of the level of funding for 25-26.
- 4.2. Risk narrative: We rely on funding from Active Travel England to design and deliver infrastructure schemes, as well as funding for behaviour change projects. Again, with the new government in place, we have not yet received any indication of what we can bid for.

4.3. Risk table

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
Funding of Bikeability	Open communication with Bikeability to assess our funding levels on a yearly basis.
Funding from Active Travel England	Shropshire receives funding from Active Travel England on a yearly basis. We meet with ATE every 5 weeks to collaborate on schemes, to hear about updates. This will hopefully minimise any disruption in funding.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Shropshire Council is currently managing an unprecedented financial position as budgeted for with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy approved by Council on 29 February 2024 and detailed in our monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. This demonstrates that significant management action is required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all Cabinet Reports provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. Where non-essential spend is identified within the Council, this will be reduced. This may involve

- scaling down initiatives,
- changing the scope,
- delaying implementation, or
- extending delivery timescales.

5.2 This report is not asking for any additional financial contribution from Shropshire Council. By supporting the service, it will open our ability to apply for external grant funding and our new model has already allowed us to receive more funding.

5.3 Shropshire Council previously spent annually approximately £180,000 on a WSP contract to deliver Road Safety Training and managing the Bikeability grant.

5.4 The service was restructured for the previous academic year (23-24). 4 FTEs appointed at no additional cost to Shropshire Council.

5.5 The Road Safety Education service is now transforming to a self-serve digital programme where we are providing more information and training to schools in a more accessible way, resulting in more pupils trained and better uptake.

5.6 Bikeability is now internally managed.

5.7 Bikeability is grant funded from The Bikeability Trust via Active Travel England. This year we have received £197,549.58. This is an increase from £160,000. This is down to improved service delivery through the redesign.

5.8 Due to the increase in numbers and performance, we are in active conversations with external funders for grants and awards and are seen as a leading Local

Authority for the work we have done on School Streets, Bikeability and Road Safety.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. According to the SD-Commission, 16% of the greenhouse gas footprint of English schools comes from transport, which is estimated to be 9.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. This is roughly the same number of emissions as Birmingham and Manchester combined, and accounts for 15% of the UK's public sector emissions¹
- 6.2. A recent poll carried out by walking and cycling charity *Sustrans* of 1,305 children aged six to 15 showed that nearly half (49%) are worried about climate change. That's up 10% from a similar survey in 2018. What's more, is that just over half (53%) believe adults do not listen to children's concerns on the topic of climate change.
- 6.3. 18 billion kg's of CO2 are emitted annually in the UK due to the commute, and a quarter of all commutes are due to the school run. Therefore, 4,5 billion kg's of CO2 are emitted due to the school run.
- 6.4. Any movement from vehicle to sustainable travel could be quantified. This isn't something we are currently measuring; however, it is a recommendation of this report that this is a KPI we supply annually by measuring the modal shift from vehicles to sustainable travel options. We will work with the carbon team to see how we can quantify this. Walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport, car sharing etc are all option within Sustainable Travel.

7. Background

- 7.1. Historically, Road Safety Education has been commissioned to WSP as part of the Service Area 14 contract within Highways. The contract was reviewed to explore how we could deliver a better and more modern service at a reduced cost, whilst achieving more. In July 2023, we ended the contract with WSP and commenced the steps to bring the service back in house. In November 23 we onboarded a long-term agency staff member into the Sustainable Travel Manager Role In February 2024, 3 Sustainable Travel Officers started under the newly formed Sustainable Travel Team, with a focus on modernising our Road Safety Education programme, but crucially their role looks at how we increase the number of children walking, cycling, and wheeling to school and the subsequent wrap around activities.

We're very much at the start of our journey, working and engaging with schools through a variety of behaviour change measures. We're currently working with 45 schools on travel planning through Modeshift Stars to start to make effective change through a more sustainable school journey.

- 7.2. In appendix A you will see our progress to date.

¹ https://www.sd-commission.org.uk/data/files/publications/Publish_Schools_Carbon_Strategy.pdf

- 7.3. We will return to cabinet annually, at the end of every academic year to update on our progress.

8. Additional Information

- 8.1. Press releases.
- 8.2. Newsletter

9. Conclusions

- 9.1. We would like Cabinet to endorse the report and accept the recommendations of the annual KPI's.
- 9.2. Sustainable travel to school is a vital part of the Shropshire Plan, contributing to environmental sustainability, public health and community well-being, by investing in infrastructure, behaviour change, education and community engagement, Shropshire Council is paving the way for a healthier, more sustainable future for its residents.

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

Local Member: All

Appendices

- Appendix A: Sustainable Travel Team Annual Report
- Appendix B: Example of Newsletter
- Appendix C: Bank Farm Road Student Engagement Report

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Sustainable Travel Team

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

AUGUST 2024



Introduction

Historically, road safety education has been commissioned to WSP as part of the Service Area 14 Contract within Highways. The contract was reviewed to explore how we could deliver a better and more modern service at a reduced cost, whilst achieving more. In July 2023, we ended the contract with WSP and commenced the steps to bring the service back in house. In February 2024, three members of staff started under the newly formed Sustainable Travel Team, with a focus on increasing the number of children walking, cycling, and wheeling to school and the subsequent wrap around activities alongside modernising our road safety education programme.

We're very much at the start of our journey, working and engaging with schools through a variety of behaviour change initiatives. We're currently working with 45 schools on travel planning through Modeshift STARS to start to encourage more sustainable school journeys.

This report sets out some of the highlights of our first school year embedding sustainable travel into schools.

School Streets

In October 2022, Shropshire Council cabinet passed a paper to implement School Streets outside schools across the county. The approval of the paper also led to the council applying for Moving Traffic Offences powers from the Secretary of State to implement School Streets using ANPR cameras. The scheme was funded from Active Travel England's Active Travel Fund 4 grant where Shropshire Council applied for £230,000 to implement the scheme and were successful in obtaining the funding.

School Streets are roads outside schools with a temporary restriction to traffic for up to an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon during drop off and pickup time. The result is a safer and healthier environment for school pupils and the community.

The use of ANPR cameras will allow us to reinvest any income from fines back into the School Streets scheme to implement more and ensure compliance with the scheme.

Five School Streets were part of the pilot that launched in June: Market Drayton Junior School, Woodside Primary School in Oswestry, Gobowen Primary School, Mereside Primary Academy in Shrewsbury, and Whitchurch Junior School. These 5 schools had a history of inconsiderate and dangerous parking and congestion issues. We officially launched the scheme at Market Drayton Junior School where the before and after footage in the launch video shows the difference in implementing a scheme of this type. This launch video can be found here:

[School Streets pilot launch – Market Drayton Junior School, 6 June 2024 \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Shropshire Council's Sustainable Travel Manager was invited to present an Active Travel England Spotlight Webinar on our implementation of School Streets in a rural local authority which was attended by nearly 300 practitioners across England. We also received an invite to present at a CILT webinar on travel demand management in rural settings.



Bikeability Cycle Training

Shropshire Council receive grant funding from The Bikeability Trust on a yearly basis to deliver cycle training in schools. Since April 2022, the national target has been to work towards 80% of Year 6 pupils receiving Level 2 Bikeability training. In 2022/2023 Shropshire Council achieved 55% of Year 6 pupils being trained, which increased to 70% in the 2023/2024 school year. We are on track to hit our 80% target in the next school year, and we will be one of the few Local Authorities to hit this target so soon. Working directly with our Bikeability provider, Learn Cycling has enabled us to increase the numbers trained by 57% from 2022/2023 to 2023/2024.

Bikeability Training Level	22/23	23/24	24/25 (up to 31/7)
Level 1	236	294	297
Level 1 & 2 Combined	1199	1854	757
Level 2	29	255	30
Level 3	93	366	63
Balance	534	750	728
Learn	32	194	215
Total	2123	3713	2090

Bikeability Get Cycling Project

Shropshire Council applied to be part of a pilot project from The Bikeability Trust to train school staff on how to deliver Balance Bike training. This project allows schools the opportunity to embed cycling into the curriculum, giving our youngest learners the skills and confidence to get on a bike from a young age. We had an overwhelming response from our primary schools to take part in the pilot with 115 schools applying. We have currently trained 27 schools (54 teachers) and each school has received six balance bikes. The rollout will continue in the next school year.

Longden Safety Improvement Scheme

Students at Longden Primary School formed a 'Go Slow' campaign in March 2023 with the aim of encouraging road users to slow down when travelling through the village. Initial campaign work included designing colourful and vibrant signs which were placed on wooden posts around the village along with press coverage in local media outlets.

In December 2023 the Sustainable Travel Manager, in partnership with Kier, launched a competition for school children to design posters which would be turned into permanent signs to be added to the highway. Five winning designs were selected and were created by Teddy Frank, Alfie Metliss, Marnie Lowrie-Herz, Bethany Downes, and Lottie and Arrabella Thomas. These were put up in March 2024.

As part of the campaign for safety improvements, students, staff, parents / carers, and school governors went on to highlight concerns around the main pedestrian entrance. The path previously was a grass / dirt track with no safety features at the junction with Longden Road. The Sustainable Travel Team commissioned Kier to construct a hard standing track and add pedestrian safety fencing at the end of the path and this was constructed in May 2024. The school community expressed their gratitude for this safety work and are now planning a planting area next to the new path.



Modeshift STARS

Modeshift STARS is a national awards scheme, established to recognise schools that demonstrate excellence in sustainable travel to school. Every school in England can participate and since February this year the Sustainable Travel Officers have engaged with 45 schools (180 schools within Shropshire) who are interested in taking part in the programme.

The aim of the programme is to improve the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff, and parents / carers by supporting cycling, walking and safe and sustainable travel to school. Schools do this by using the platform to produce a travel plan which sets out aims, objectives and initiatives they have planned or delivered to meet modal shift targets (e.g. 5% more students cycling or walking). Schools will work closely with their assigned Sustainable Travel Officer to identify relevant initiatives and projects that will contribute to them achieving bronze, silver, or gold awards at the end of every term. We will be engaging with additional Shropshire schools as we move forward.

Newsletters

As a new team working with 180 schools across Shropshire, we knew we needed to be able to communicate effectively and consistently with all of them. We decided that an e-newsletter would be the most efficient way to do this and designed it with the aim of promoting not only who we are and what we do, but how we can help schools to improve sustainable travel for their pupils and make their journey to school safer. It is also the easiest and most cost-effective way to share information, initiatives and promotions that might not reach them directly.

Our aim is to get at least one newsletter out each term with additional editions if needed. As well as introducing ourselves and our Portfolio Holder, we have promoted the grants scheme, the road safety superhero character competition, the Our Journey programme, useful toolkits, and a timetable of national events for schools to join. Schools can incorporate our newsletter into their own, promoting our team and projects even further.

Active Travel Small Grants Scheme

In May 2024 the team opened a grant funding scheme for the county's schools after receiving £30000 from Active Travel England's Capability and Ambition Fund. Schools were able to bid for a grant up to £1,000 to schools to increase their Active Travel to and from school. A total of 23 applications were received from schools initially, with a range of proposals from schools including new scooter / bike racks, scooter loan schemes, Dr Bike repair sessions, Scootability training and hi-vis jackets for new walking buses.

The remainder of the funding will be targeted towards schools needing more assistance to increase the number of active travel journeys being made which have been identified by the School Nurses from the Public Health Nursing Service.

Partnership working

The work carried out by the team predominantly aims to encourage more children and young people to travel in a sustainable and safe way. Active journeys can have a positive impact on physical and mental health. After creating our programme we felt that it was important to share this work with other teams and partner agencies that all have similar priorities.

Working collaboratively with colleagues in Public Health, School Nursing, West Mercia Police, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, and Energise Shropshire Telford & Wrekin, we have quarterly meetings to share data, new initiatives, and concerns which allow us to prioritise which schools need our additional help and support.

Toolkits

We have produced three helpful toolkits which can be accessed by schools from our new Sustainable Travel webpage. These are the first point of call for schools and parents to address travel issues and concerns, and cover: encouraging active travel, school parking, and setting up a walking bus. The toolkits offer advice and initiative ideas and solutions. Schools are reminded that each problem they address and initiative they complete, is a step closer to accreditation from Modeshift STARS.

Scotability Training Campaign

Shropshire Council was awarded £174,026 from Active Travel England's Capability Fund in March 2024 to support new schemes to encourage more people to take up active travel such as walking and cycling in the county. Following on from a bid-preparing exercise, £5,500 was awarded to organise a scooter training campaign across the county which took place from 26th to 30th August 2024.

Team Rubicon, a nationwide provider of scootering, cycling and skateboarding training and who have previously delivered similar work in Shropshire, were approached in April 2024 to deliver this campaign. The company supply all equipment in sessions including scooters, helmets, and knee and arm pads.

Venues across the county were selected based on proximity to local communities, on-site accessible facilities, and appropriate space for training. Three sessions per day were organised at Shrewsbury Sports Village, Maurice Chandler Sports and Leisure Centre near Market Drayton, Teme Leisure Centre Ludlow, Idsall Sports Centre in Shifnal and Gobowen Pavilion & Playing Field.

Children had the opportunity to take their Level 1 Scotability training. The Level 1 course starts with the basic skills of balancing, turning, and braking before moving on to narrow pavements, moving obstacles and one-handed signalling. Three sessions per day were available with each lasting 90 minutes. A total of 346 children signed up to receive training during the campaign week. A remaining amount of money unspent from the bid was allocated to provide scooter training to children who attend schools undertaking a School Streets trial in September 2024.



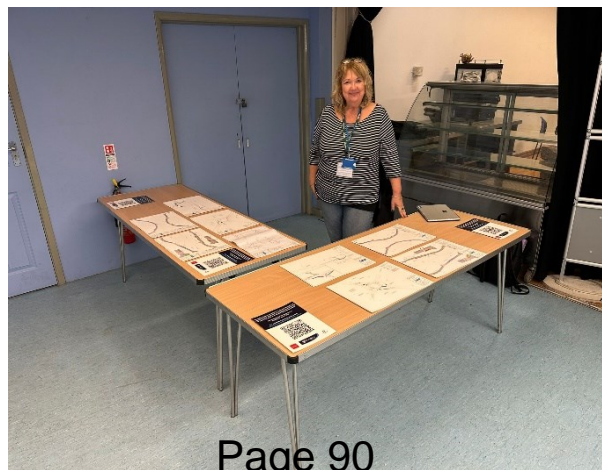
Bank Farm Road

In 2022-2023 Shropshire Council was awarded £382,800 from Active Travel England's Active Travel Fund Round 4. Part of the funding was used to commission a detailed design and feasibility exercise for active travel improvements to Bank Farm Road in Radbrook, Shrewsbury. The proposed scheme included the creation of a segregated walk and cycleway, along with crossing and bus stop safety updates.

The Sustainable Travel Team supported WSP in collecting public feedback through two exercises. The first involved a public engagement event at the Trinity Centre, Shrewsbury on 28th February 2024 and allowed residents to examine the design proposals in detail and leave feedback on this. Colleagues from the Feedback Insights Team worked with us to create a survey which allowed residents to leave more detailed feedback. 238 responses were received through this channel, with 57.92% of respondents saying they would be more likely to travel actively if the improvements were made and 63.64% saying they would feel safer if the walking and cycling paths were separated.



The second exercise involved working with the two schools nearest to Bank Farm Road – The Priory School and Meole Brace School. It was important to gain insights from the students as they were likely to use Bank Farm Road as part of their journey to school and might not have typically been represented in consultation exercises. Officers from the team along with colleagues at WSP were invited to attend both schools at lunchtime on 22nd February 2024 and showed the designs to students, explaining how the changes would impact them. Pupils were asked to complete a short survey on their phones. A total of 377 responses were received over the two schools (219 from The Priory School and 158 from Meole Brace School). 35% of students at The Priory School said they would be more likely to travel on Bank Farm Road if improvements were made and 41% said they would feel safer if the cycling and walking paths were separated. At Meole Brace School 38% said they would be more likely to travel on Bank Farm road if improvements were made and 40% said they would feel safer if the walking and cycling paths were separated.



Our Journey

Following the review into road safety education provision in Shropshire, the decision was taken to retire the Stepping Out programme which had been delivered since 2010. The programme involved an instructor visiting Year 3 or 4 students at county primary schools and carrying out pedestrian training at roads outside of school.

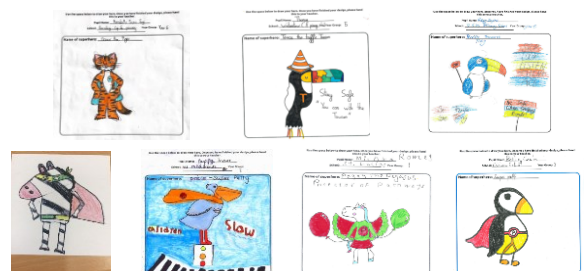
Our Journey is the brand-new active travel and road safety programme aimed at primary aged students aged 4yrs to 11yrs which aims to replace Stepping Out from September 2024. The new road safety education programme will replace the previous in-person delivery offering and instead utilise Shropshire-produced digital video lessons. This will ensure that a high-quality lesson will still be delivered but will not incur ongoing running costs for the council. It will also allow teachers a greater degree of flexibility to deliver the lessons at an appropriate time around existing curricular priorities.

The four films are offered in a graduated programme to build students' knowledge. The first film for Reception and Year One students focuses on the basic road safety code and holding hands with a grown-up message. Students in Year Two and Year Three will be taught how to scoot and pedal safely to school and introduce basic safety advice around this. Year Four and Five students will learn about controlling impulsive behaviour and managing distractions when travelling or playing near the road. Finally, our Year Six film focuses on the transition to secondary school and provides key safety advice to students on the new journeys they may make. Films will feature our road safety superheroes designed by Shropshire school children. All films will utilise behaviour change techniques to enable students to develop essential safety skills they can use every day.



Superhero Competition

In preparation for the launch of the Our Journey road safety education programme, primary school students across Shropshire were invited to design a squad of superheroes in April 2024. Students were encouraged to design a superhero based around the animal names used in crossing types – Pelicans, Toucans, Tigers or even a Pegasus. A total of 112 entries were received from 22 schools.



The seven winning designs were selected from across the county, and these were turned into animated characters by the council's graphic designers. These will be rolled out in the new road safety education films in the 2024-2025 academic year. The winning designs were created by:

'Super Zeb' - Year 6, Woodside Primary School, Oswestry

'Trevor the Tiger' – Annabelle, Year 6, Broseley C of E Primary School, Broseley

'Touca the Traffic Toucan' – Thomas, Year 5, Wistanstow C of E Primary School, Wistanstow

'Terrific Toucan Tony' – Poppy, Year 6, St Giles C of E Primary School, Shrewsbury

'Super Pelly the Pelican' – Poppy, Year 3, The Meadows Primary School, Oswestry

'Pablo the Puffin' – Bobby, Year 3, Coleham Primary School, Shrewsbury

'Peggy the Pegasus' – Mishka, Year 1, St Lucia's C of E Primary School, Upton Magna

Greenlight Shropshire Road Safety Workshop

For over 10 years West Mercia Police's (WMP) Road Safety Team has delivered the successful Greenlight young driver and passenger road safety education workshop to 16–18-year-old sixth form and college students in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The workshop is delivered in-person with a road safety practitioner and focuses on four young people's perspectives on a collision they are all involved in and the potential choices they could have been made to prevent it. Content is based around the 'fatal four' causation factors (speed, drink/drug driving, mobile phones, and seatbelts) as well as other issues such as inexperience, road/weather conditions and passenger responsibility.

Behaviour change techniques are utilised to provide students with essential safety skills to use when starting to drive or ride or when they are travelling as a passenger with friends who have passed their driving test. The programme is supported by Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council.

Efforts were made over the last ten years to make Greenlight available within the Shropshire area, however WSP offered a separate young driver and passenger safety programme which focused on similar themes and local issues at the request of schools and colleges.

Colleagues from the Sustainable Travel Team and the WMP Road Safety Team met in February 2024 to begin planning a Shropshire-version of the Greenlight workshop. It was important that what was developed would be a high-quality educational and informative workshop, but that the delivery of it would not incur ongoing running costs which ruled out an in-person delivery option. A decision was made to create a digital workshop which mirrors current sector trends and work carried out by other local authorities but allows flexibility of delivery by sixth forms and colleges. A new script was created factoring in the safe and appropriate use of new technologies in vehicles, advice on driving safely in adverse weather, and general safety advice appropriate to the rural context of Shropshire. A Roads Policing Officer from West Mercia Police was invited to present the film alongside a member of the Sustainable Travel Team; The officer discussing the legal responsibilities on drivers and riders as well as their own story of policing the roads, attending collision scenes, and acting as Family Liaison Officer.

The digital workshop will be launched in September 2024 and offered to all sixth forms and colleges across the county. In November 2024 the story of creating and bringing the workshop to Shropshire will be featured in a presentation at Road Safety GB's National Road Safety Conference.



Contact the team:

For more information or to discuss a school in your ward, please do not hesitate to email sustainabletravelplanning@shropshire.gov.uk

Issue 1 – Summer Term Primary School Newsletter 2024



Hello and welcome from Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Portfolio Holder for Children and Education.

I'm happy to introduce the new Sustainable Travel Team which has been created to encourage safe and sustainable travel to and from schools across Shropshire. The team will be delivering the new **'Our Journey' programme** which supports schools to complete initiatives like Modeshift STARS to encourage more walking, wheeling, or cycling which will create a safer and healthier environment for us all.

The team plan to produce a newsletter each term to highlight new events for the school year ahead. We hope that schools will be able to participate in national and local events and initiatives that they are most interested in.

The team are also hoping through the 'Our Journey' programme that schools will be happy to engage and participate in new activities around road safety education, carrying out poster campaigns or competitions, and accessing Bikeability cycle training. Schools will be encouraged to develop travel plans using Modeshift STARS which the team would be happy to help you create.

I hope you find these newsletters useful and please feel free to circulate any of these articles within your own newsletters and please contact the team by email at: sustainabletravelplanning@shropshire.gov.uk if you would like any further information or support. The team would love to hear from you.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and best wishes,

Kirstie Hurst-Knight



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1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Modeshift STARS
3. Road Safety Superhero Squad - Design Competition
4. School Streets coming soon...
5. Brand new road safety education digital resources
6. Calendar upcoming campaigns and events – Summer Term 2024

For more information on anything you have seen in the newsletter or if you would like to speak to us, please email: sustainabletravelplanning@shropshire.gov.uk

Modeshift STARS

Start your school on its path towards active travel accreditation!

Shropshire Council has partnered with Modeshift STARS to deliver sustainable travel plans in schools. More information can be found at: [Education - Modeshift STARS](#)



Modeshift STARS is the Centre of Excellence for the delivery of Effective Travel Plans in Education, Business and Community settings. The STARS Education scheme recognises schools and other educational establishments that have shown excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable and active travel.

Accreditation Steps: the first step is Green - Approved Travel Plan

To get green star accreditation you must:

- Complete your Modeshift STARS Application
- Set at least two targets
- Plan – 10 Sustainable Travel Initiatives, 5 Supporting Initiatives and 2 Consultation Initiatives



Much of what you may be doing already will count towards your school achieving green star accreditation, including planning to take part in some of the national campaigns (see our calendar below).

We can help sign you up and register your progress with Modeshift STARS. Please complete this Microsoft Form: <https://forms.office.com/e/ct6dsEQtmf>

Road Safety Superhero Squad – Design Competition



Primary school students across Shropshire are being invited to design a squad of superheroes to feature in a new schools' active travel and road safety programme which Shropshire Council is launching later this year.

The team will support schools to achieve Modeshift STARS accreditation and deliver a new digital road safety education programme comprised of tailored sessions aimed at each year group.

To support students with their learning throughout the programme, a squad of road safety superheroes will be created in a competition launching on Monday 15th April 2024.

The squad of superheroes will be led by the already designed 'Super Zeb', which has been created by Woodside Primary at Oswestry.

How can we enter the competition?

The competition opens on Monday 15th April 2024, with the deadline for entries being sent back to the team of Friday 24th May 2024. Each school will receive a worksheet template to be used for all designs.

Students are encouraged to design a superhero based around the animal names used in crossing types – Pelicans, Toucans, Tigers or even a Pegasus.

Although students may choose to take the worksheet home, each school are asked to select 4 - 5 entries and send these to sustainabletravelplanning@shropshire.gov.uk.

The entries will be judged by the Sustainable Travel Team along with the Council's Portfolio Holder for Children and Education, Cllr Kirstie Hurst-Knight.

The winning designs will be selected and will be turned into animated characters by Shropshire Council's designers. The animated characters will be rolled out in the new road safety education films in 2024-2025.

Look out for the winners who will be featured in the next newsletter.

School Streets coming soon...

Summer term will see the introduction of the first camera enforced School Streets across Shropshire. Vehicles travelling into the streets by non-residents or permit holders during the restriction times will be captured by cameras and enforcement will take place.

School Streets offer a proactive solution for school communities to tackle road safety concerns, air pollution and encourage a healthier lifestyle with active travel to school for families.

More information will be available on the upcoming School Street launch will be included in our next Newsletter.



Brand new road safety education digital resources





We are delighted to announce that four brand new road safety education sessions are currently in production as part of the 'Our Journey' programme. Two of these sessions will be launched in September 2024. All the sessions will replace the 'Stepping Out' pedestrian training offering previously delivered across Shropshire.

Each digital resource will contain a key road safety message aimed at each year group.

- Reception & Year One – 'Our first journey to school'
- Year Two & Year Three – 'Our first active travel journeys'
- Year Four & Year Five – 'Our independent journeys to school'
- Year Six – 'Our journey to secondary school'

For more information on anything you have seen in the newsletter or if you would like to speak to us, please email: sustainabletravelplanning@shropshire.gov.uk

Calendar of upcoming campaigns and events - Summer Term 2024

Activity Name & Description	Resources
<p>Living Streets Walk to School Week <i>Monday 20th May to Friday 24th May</i></p>  <p>School organises a 'Walk to School Week'</p>	<p>Order your school resources pack by visiting: Walk to School Week (livingstreets.org.uk)</p>
<p>Brake Kids Walk <i>Wednesday 19th June 2024</i></p>  <p>Every year, thousands of schoolchildren aged 4–11 take part in Brake’s Kids Walk – a short, supervised walk to share important road safety messages.</p>	<p>Information and resources available at: https://www.brake.org.uk/get-involved/professionals/teachers-and-youth-workers/brake-s-kids-walk</p>
<p>Participate in Clean Air Day 2024 <i>Thursday 20th June 2024</i></p> 	<p>Clean Air Day lesson resources available at: www.cleanairday.org.uk/about-clean-air-day</p>
<p>Modeshift STARS Deadline <i>Wednesday 31st July 2024</i></p>  <p>To gain Modeshift STARS accreditation by July 2024, submit all information on your school portal.</p>	<p>Contact your dedicated Sustainable Travel Officer by email: sustainabletravelplanning@shropshire.gov.uk for more information.</p>

How can we sign up to 'Our Journey'?

If you are interested in signing up to the new 'Our Journey' programme you can do so by completing this Microsoft form: <https://forms.office.com/e/ct6dsEQtmf>



For more information on anything you have seen in the newsletter or if you would like to speak to us, please email: sustainabletravelplanning@shropshire.gov.uk

Meole Active Travel Quarter

Report on Student Engagement at The Priory and Meole Brace Schools

March 2024



1 Background and Methods

Shropshire Council has recently announced plans to create an 'Meole Active Travel Quarter' in support of its ambitions to unlock the potential of Shrewsbury within the next ten years. The Meole Active Travel Quarter aims to address long-standing needs from the local community, who have emphasized the desire for real change and improved road safety throughout Meole.

The Meole Active Travel Quarter proposes a redesign of the public highway at identified locations across the Meole ward, to empower individuals to choose walking, wheeling and cycling by improving accessibility and connectivity across the local highway network. It is comprised of the following improvement schemes:

- Bank Farm Road: active travel quarter – upgrade the existing cycling amenities to create an active travel corridor.
- Roman Road Roundabout: enhancement works – revise the roundabout's layout to increase movements and capacity with further measures, including two new toucan crossings (with artificial intelligence) and an enhanced footway.
- Longden Road / Mousecroft Lane: improvement scheme – improve pedestrian and cyclist connectivity with the construction of a new road hump and reallocation of footway to segregated route.

Shropshire Council has undertaken several facets of an engagement programme with local residents to garner public feedback on these plans. As part of this engagement, students at two local secondary schools, The Priory School, and Meole Brace School, were surveyed about their current experiences with active travel in these areas, and their thoughts about planned improvements.

This report summarises the findings of these two surveys. Quantitative results were analysed and are presented below in figures using MS Excel. Qualitative (open-ended) responses were analysed and grouped thematically, and examples of comments representing these themes are also presented in the report.

This report proceeds in the following sections:

- **Section 1: Background and Methods** (this current section), which provides a brief overview of the engagement project as a whole and the student surveys specific to this report.
- **Section 2: Respondents** provides an overview of the age, gender identity and preferred method of travel of those responding to the surveys.
- **Section 3: Bank Farm Road** presents findings from both schools about their thoughts on active travel along this route and what improvements might be made.
- **Section 4: Longden Road/Roman Road** presents findings from both schools about their thoughts on active travel along this route and what improvements might be made.
- **Section 5: Additional Feedback** summarises responses to the final open-ended question to the survey, where students were invited to provide

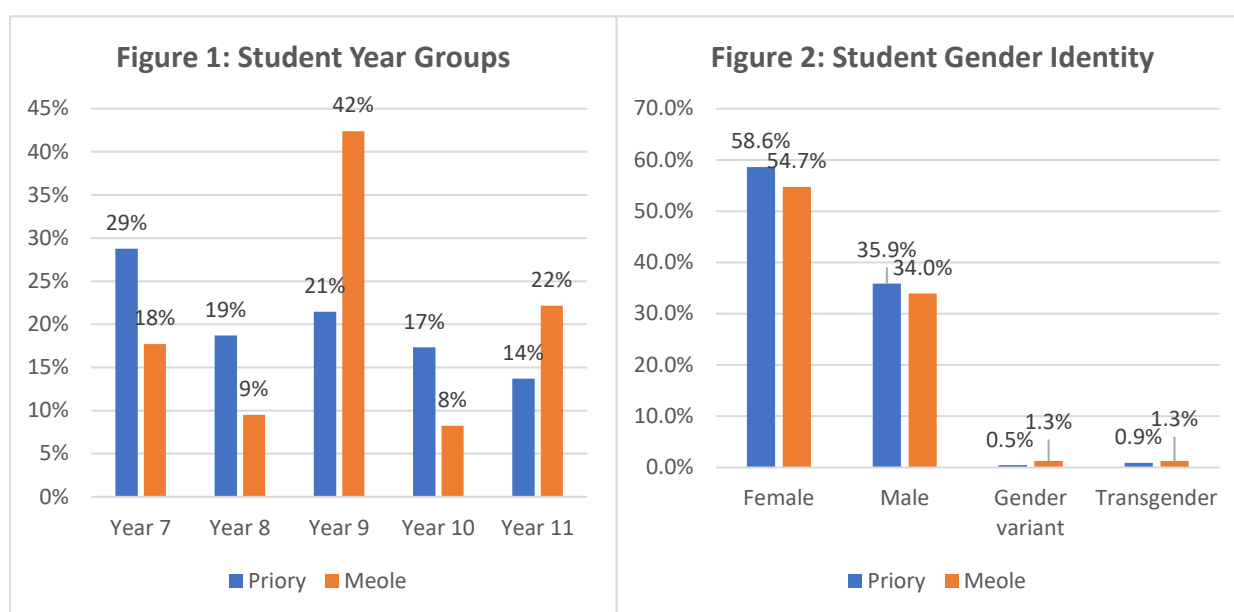
feedback overall on active travel along these routes.

- **Section 6: Summary and Conclusion** provides a brief summary of the survey findings and some basic conclusions that may be useful for the project going forward.

2 Respondents

Overall, 377 students responded to the surveys, which is approximately a 21% response rate.¹ Slightly more students responded from The Priory School (219) than Meole Brace School (158).

The age range of students responding was well distributed overall. However, there was a slightly higher uptake among year 7s at The Priory and a slightly higher uptake among year 9s at Meole Brace (**see Figure 1**).



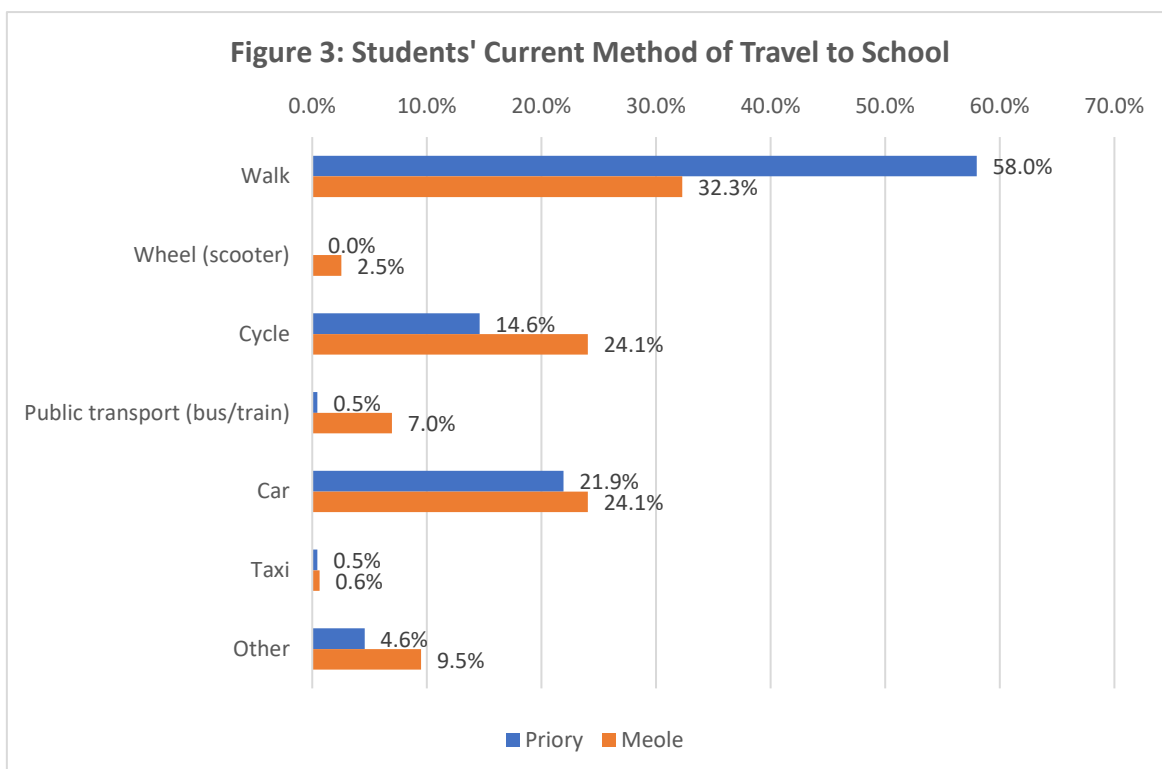
A majority of students responding to the surveys in both schools identified as female, with 59% of respondents from The Priory identifying as female and 55% of respondents from Meole Brace identifying as female (**see Figure 2**).

Students at both schools were asked how they currently travel to school, and these results are summarised in **Figure 3**.

Active travel is currently the most common method of school transport for a majority of students at both schools. Approximately 60% of Meole Brace students and 73% of students at The Priory engage in active travel to school (walking, cycling or wheeling).

Walking was the most commonly cited as students' current method of travel, though walking was much more common among students from The Priory (58%) than those at Meole Brace (32%). Cycling was also popular, though students from Meole Brace were much more likely to say that they cycle to school (24%) than students from The Priory (15%).

¹ Based on an approximate 1,800 combined student population of the schools.



Travel by car was also a common method of transport for one quarter to one fifth of students at both schools, with 24% of Meole Brace students and 22% of students from The Priory saying they currently travel to school by car. Public transport is less common at both schools, but a significant portion of Meole Brace students reported using public transport (7%) while very few students from The Priory reported doing so.

“Wheeling” (or using a scooter as a form of active travel) was not a common form of transport for students at either school, and neither were taxis.

3 Bank Farm Road

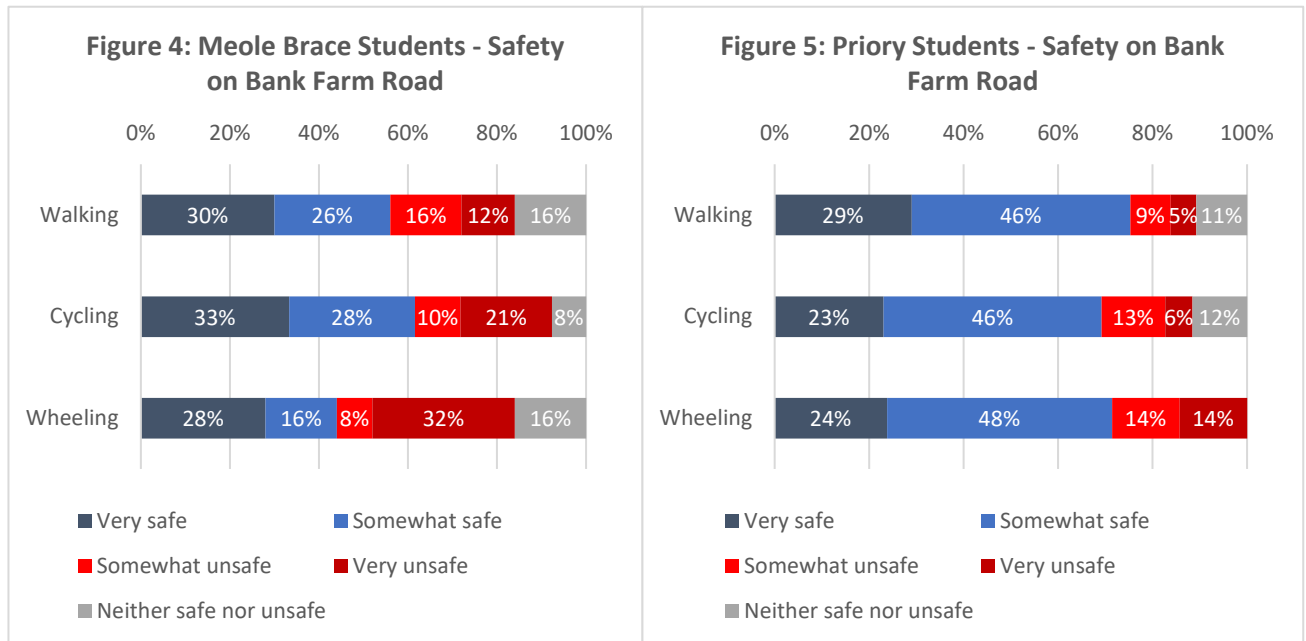
Students at both schools were asked a series of questions about their experiences generally (as opposed to school travel only) when taking part in active travel on Bank Farm Road. Some students said that they do not travel along this route at all. However, as **Table 1** shows, large number of students at both schools said that they walk, cycle or wheel along this route.

Table 1: Number of Students Saying They Use Active Travel Methods on Bank Farm Road

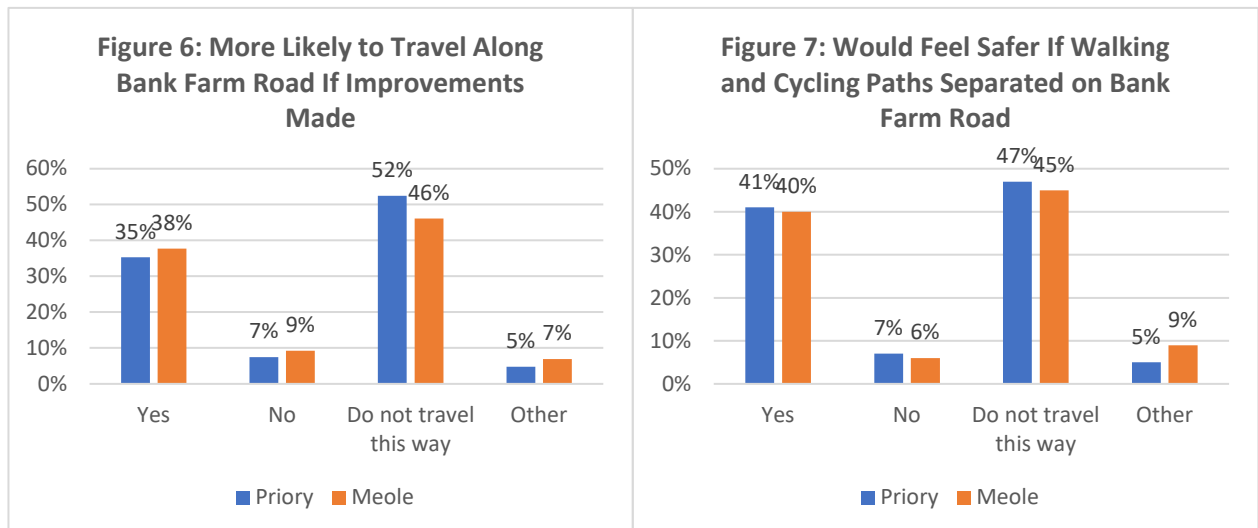
School	Walk	Cycle	Wheel
The Priory	93	52	21
Meole Brace	50	39	25

These students provided their thoughts in **Figures 4 & 5** about how safe they feel traveling along Bank Farm Road when using active travel methods. For a majority of students at both schools, active travel feels mostly “very safe” or “somewhat safe” along Bank Farm Road, though there are sizable minorities at both schools that feel

“somewhat unsafe” or “very unsafe” along this route. For instance, as much as 40% of the 25 Meole Brace students who use scooters along this route feel unsafe.



Students were asked further questions about whether changes might make a difference to their feelings of safety along Bank Farm Road. These responses are summarised in **Figures 6 & 7**. Large minorities of students at both schools said that they would more likely to use active travel along Bank Farm Road if improvements were made. Additionally, around 40% of students at both schools said that they would feel safer along this route if the walking and cycling paths were separated.



Respondents at both schools who travel along Bank Farm Road were asked to provide open-ended suggestions about what might be improved on the route. The responses from both schools have been grouped together and various themes identified. These themes are presented in **Table 2** and are discussed in more depth with examples below.

In total, 67 respondents across both schools provided comments on this question. Some respondents covered more than one theme in their responses, and so there are a total of 82 instances of one of the themes below being mentioned.

Table 2: What Could Be Improved - Bank Farm Road

Theme	Count	%
Improved walking/cycle paths (wider pedestrian lanes/separate and clearly marked walking and cycling paths)	22	27%
Safer crossings	11	13%
Too busy (too much traffic/route too busy)	11	13%
Slow traffic down (cars too fast/speed limits/speed cameras)	10	12%
Improve state of the paths (Cut hedges/clean up litter/better drainage/fill holes)	10	12%
More traffic lights	6	7%
Improve aesthetics	3	4%
Very specific or very general safety suggestions	5	6%
Other	4	5%

The largest theme, mentioned by 27% of respondents, was around wanting **improved walking/cycle paths**. These captured sentiments around the need for wider lanes and more distinct differences between the two lanes. For example:

- “Bigger pedestrian lanes.”
- “Bigger paths on both sides, maybe a bike lane.”
- “Separate walking and cycling paths and a wider pavement.”
- “More indication as to which is the cycle lane and which isn't because sometimes it's confusing.”
- “Should have wider cycle lane.”

13% also wanted to see **safer crossings** on the route. For example:

- “More safe places to cross the road.”
- “Also a zebra crossing.”
- “Assistance to cross Grange Road.”
- “There could be more places to cross.”
- “Safer crossing on cycle paths.”
- “More crossing lights.”

7% of respondents (all of these but one from Meole Brace), said that introducing **traffic lights** would improve safety along the route. It was unclear from the context of the comments whether students meant traffic lights for the purposes of crossing, but if so, then these might combine with the “safer crossings” theme to make up the second biggest theme for Bank Farm Road improvements. These comments included, for example:

- “More traffic lights.”
- “Traffic lights.”

13% of respondents were also concerned about the road being **too busy**. For example:

- “The roundabout at the top of Longden Coleham road could be improved, as it gets very busy and congested.”
- “Less traffic.”
- “The traffic and the amount of cars.”
- “There are a lot of kids walking at the same time so can get crammed.”

12% of respondents felt that cars travel too fast, and many had suggestions about how to **slow traffic down** to improve safety along the route. For example:

- “More school signs so cars can drive slower.”
- “Speed humps.”
- “Slower speed for cars.”

One respondent felt that it was cyclists who travel too fast:

- “The speed in which the cyclists travel at, they can knock us over and even bang into us.”

12% of respondents also felt that the **active travel paths need improvements** to increase safety along them. These suggestions included, for example:

- “Possibly by adding a drainage system or something like this as the paths can get water logged which occasionally is deep.”
- “The amount of traffic and debris that is on the road is really dangerous.”
- “New pavements because some have holes in them.”
- “The hedges need to be cut so there is more space on the path.”
- “Not much other than maintaining already made routes as the size is fine however many hedges overlap onto the pedestrian lanes forcing them into bike lanes.”

A few respondents wanted **aesthetic changes** to the route, and five others made **very general suggestions about safety or very specific ones** that are not necessarily within the purview of this proposal. For example:

- “More safety as I saw a young kid get clattered off his scooter.”
- “Less sharp corners more awareness from priority kids.”
- “Helmets should be administered.”

4 Longden Road/Roman Road

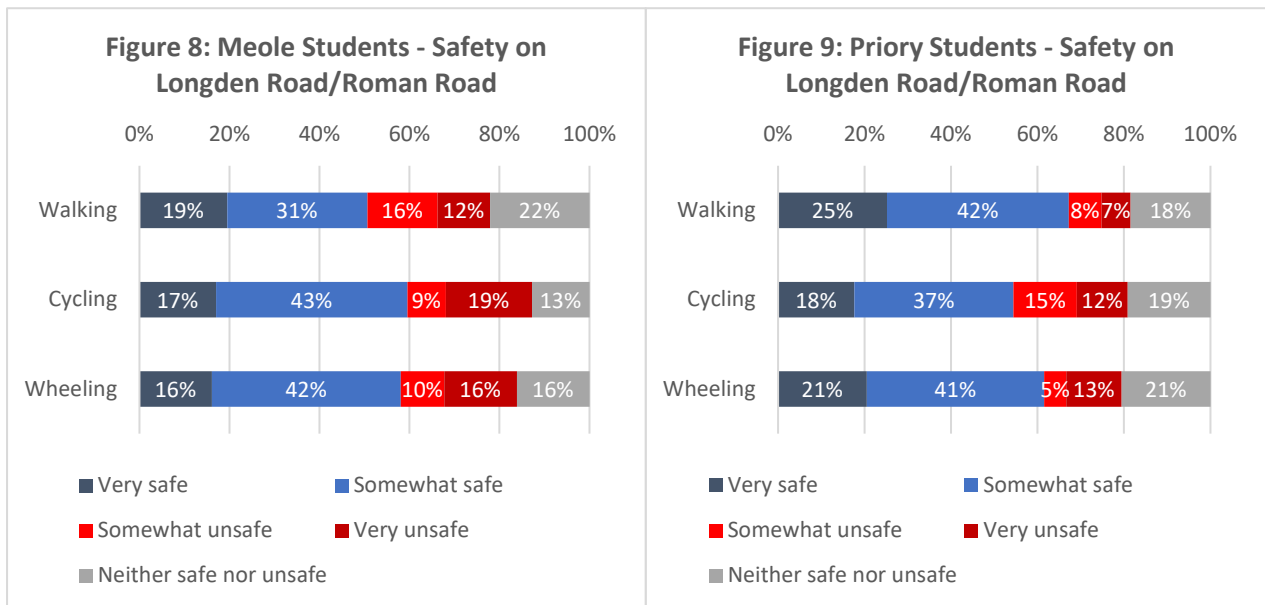
Students at both schools were asked a series of questions about their experiences generally (as opposed to school travel only) when taking part in active travel on Longden Road/Roman Road. Some students said that they do not travel along this route at all. However, as **Table 3** shows, large number of students at both schools said that they walk, cycle or wheel along this route.

Overall, this was a more travelled route by students responding to the survey than Bank Farm Road.

Table 3: Number of Students Saying They Use Active Travel Methods on Longden Road/Roman Road

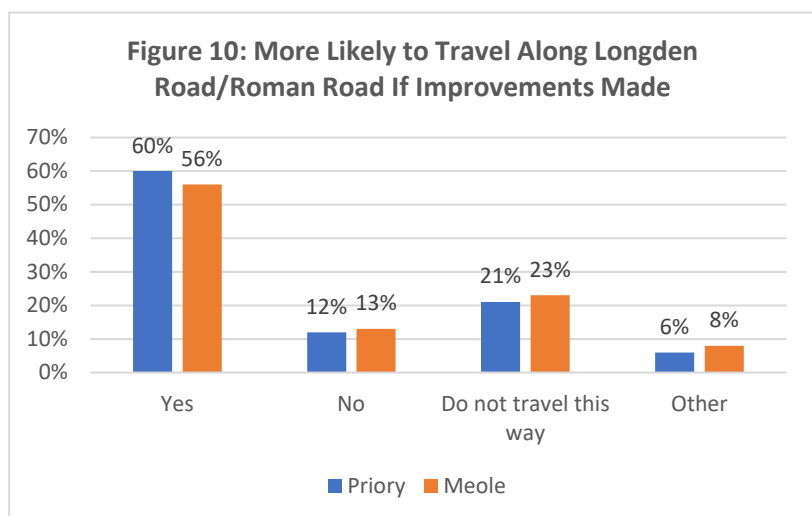
School	Walk	Cycle	Wheel
The Priory	119	68	39
Meole Brace	77	47	31

These students provided their thoughts in **Figures 8 & 9** about how safe they feel traveling along Longden Road/Roman Road when using active travel methods.



For a majority of students at both schools, active travel feels mostly “very safe” or “somewhat safe” along Longden Road/Roman Road, though there are sizable minorities at both schools that feel “somewhat unsafe” or “very unsafe” along this route. For instance, 28% of Meole Brace students and 27% of Priory students responding to the survey feel “somewhat unsafe” or “very unsafe” cycling along this route.

Importantly, unlike Bank Farm Road, where only a minority of students said that making improvements to this route would make them more likely to travel along it, **a majority of respondents from both schools said that improvements to Longden Road/Roman Road would make them more likely to use the route (see Figure 10).**



Respondents at both schools who travel along Longden Road/Roman Road were asked to provide open-ended suggestions about what might be improved on the route. The responses from both schools have been grouped together and various themes identified. These themes are presented in **Table 4** and are discussed in more depth with examples below.

In total, 107 respondents across both schools provided comments on this question. Some respondents covered more than one theme in their responses, and so there are a total of 132 instances of one of the themes below being mentioned.

Table 4: What Could Be Improved - Longden Road/Roman Road

Theme	No	%
Improved walking/cycle paths (wider pedestrian lanes/separate and clearly marked walking and cycling paths)	48	36%
Improve state of the paths (Cut hedges/clean up litter/better drainage/fill holes)	21	16%
Safer crossings	18	14%
Too busy (too much traffic/route too busy)	14	11%
Slow traffic down (cars too fast/speed limits/speed cameras)	13	10%
More traffic lights	12	9%
Other	6	5%

As was the case with the Bank Farm Road comments, **improved walking/cycling paths** was the largest theme mentioned by students who say they travel along Longden Road/Roman Road, with 36% of respondents mentioning it. Comments here were similar to those about Bank Farm Road as well, with this theme capturing a desire for both wider walking paths and wider cycling paths, and for these to be clearly distinguished. For example:

- “The pavements need to be wider for larger groups because i always get told to move out of the way by the bikers.”
- “The walking part of the path could be bigger due to cyclists and people walking.”
- “Make the pavement larger and make another cycle path this side of the roundabout.”
- “Wider paths/cycle lanes and more restrictions on people walking on cycle lanes.”

16% of respondents in suggested that there needed to be **improvements to the state of the paths** (cycling and walking) such as filling potholes, cutting hedges, and clearing debris. While it may at first appear funny that young people are complaining about potholes, one comment made it clearer why students may be concerned about this:

- “Wider footpath and less potholes in the road so the cars don’t try to avoid them and come onto the pavement.”

Potholes in cycle lanes might also be a safety concern for students travelling by bike. For example:

- “Maybe clear out all the dirt as it’s all over the walking half of the pathway which pushes people onto the cycling lane meaning its easy to be hit by or hit someone with a bike.”

Similar to Bank Farm Road, 14% of respondents to this question about Longden Road/Roman Road also talked about the need for **safer crossings**. For example:

- “Zebra crossings or pelican lights to ensure cars must stop for walkers / cyclists.”

Many of the comments about traffic lights were also clearer in responses to this question that they pertained to crossings specifically. For example:

- “Maybe tragic lights so that we do not have to run across the around about.”

However, 9% of respondents still only mentioned **traffic lights** outside the context of crossings.

11% of respondents felt that the travel area is simply **too busy**. Some mention cars, others congested walkways or cycle paths. For example:

- “Not sure but very crowded.”
- “The Longden road stretch is always a high traffic area for cars and others.”
- “Less cars and big trucks/lorries.”
- “Separate bike side because there’s too many bikes.”

Finally, 10% of respondents said that **slowing traffic down** (both cars and cyclists) would be important for improving safety. For example:

- “Slow the speed of cars travelling round the area.”
- “Yet again the cyclists travel too fast!!!”
- “I don’t know how you could improve it but when it’s busy crossing the roundabout can be quite difficult as cars turn off quite quickly.”
- “You could have cars going at a slower pace.”
- “Wider pedestrian access because you have to go out into the bike lane sometimes to get around people, and the bikes whizz down there and it’s dangerous.”

5 Additional Feedback

As the final question of the survey to both schools, respondents were asked whether they had any additional comments about their journey to school, or about travel on Bank Farm Road or Longden Road/Roman Road. 93 students responded to this question, but 52 of these responses were literally to say that they did not have more to add (e.g. “no”). These were excluded from the analysis, and the remaining 41 responses were therefore grouped thematically and these themes are summarised in **Table 5**. Very few of the comments overlapped this time, meaning that most comments were only tagged with one theme.

Table 5: Additional Feedback on Travel

Theme	No	%
No more feedback	52	54%
Very specific or very general safety suggestions	7	7%
Slow traffic down (cars too fast/speed limits/speed cameras)	6	6%
More traffic lights	5	5%
Improved walking/cycle paths (wider pedestrian lanes/separate and clearly marked walking and cycling paths)	4	4%
Safer crossings	4	4%
Too busy (too much traffic/route too busy)	2	2%
Concerns about road works	2	2%
Improve state of the paths (Cut hedges/clean up litter/better drainage/fill holes)	1	1%
Other ²	13	14%

7% of respondents to this question offered **very general comments about the need for greater safety, or very specific safety concerns** outside the remit of this proposal, for example:

- “All the city needs to be more safe.”
- “It has taken a long time to make improvements. Lots of accidents have happened, safety measures should have been made years ago.”
- “On bank farm road next to co-op there are traffic lights next to the traffic light there are posts in the middle of the path and when I’m biking I have crashed into them so can you please remove them.”

A total of 21% of respondents used this question to reiterate their points made in previous open-ended comments. 6% reiterated the need to **slow traffic down** in the area, 5% the need for **more traffic lights**, 4% said that **cycle/walking paths need improvements** (such as widening), 4% reiterated the need for **safer crossings**, 2% mentioned that the travel route is just **too busy**, and one respondent said that the **state of the paths** could use improvements.

One important new theme that emerged, albeit among a small percentage of respondents, was that road works initiated to make these improvements might in themselves cause safety problems. These comments were:

- “To be honest, getting around the road works would be more of a pain than anything that comes from the roadworks.”
- “I’m concerned about the length of works required and the impact on the community due to already high traffic. Any extensive work will have a large, but temporary, effect.”

6 Summary and Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings:

² The “other” theme had more for this question, as several respondents took the opportunity to be a bit silly with their responses to this question. A few, however, did use this space to do things like thank the council for providing them the opportunity to input.

- Active travel is currently the most common method of school transport for a majority of students at both The Priory and Meole Brace schools.
- A majority of students at both schools generally feel safe when traveling along Bank Farm Road and Longden Road/Roman Road. However, approximately 40% of students at both schools said they would feel safer traveling along Bank Farm Road if walking and cycling paths were separated on that road. Additionally, a majority of students at both schools said they would be more likely to travel along Longden Road/Roman Road if improvements were made along that route.
- Along both the Bank Farm Road and Longden Road/Roman Road routes, respondents wanted to see improvements made to the walking/cycling paths, such as widening them and marking them more clearly.
- Many students also cited making crossings safer, slowing or reducing traffic along these routes, and improving the state of the current active travel paths would make these routes safer for those walking, cycling or using scooters.

Conclusion

Many thanks are extended to those 377 students at The Priory School and Meole Brace School for taking the time to provide truly thoughtful and helpful feedback on their active travel through the Meole area. The feedback will be taken into account by the Sustainable Travel Team at Shropshire Council as it works to implement improvements to active travel in the area through the Meole Active Travel Quarter programme.

March 2024

Analysis and reporting by:
Feedback and Insight Team, Communications and Engagement, Resources
Shropshire Council
Email: TellUs@shropshire.gov.uk

Shropshire Council Lead Department: Sustainable Travel Team



Shropshire
Council

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