



Committee and Date

Council

17 July 2014

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Item

**11**

Public

**COUNCILLOR STEVE CHARMLEY  
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR BUSINESS GROWTH, IP&E AND  
COMMISSIONING (NORTH)**

**1.0 Recommendations**

That Council approves the Portfolio Holder Statement.

**2.0 The specific portfolio purpose is:**

- To create the best possible conditions in order to foster business growth in Shropshire, creating new private sector jobs, improved average wages and increased competitiveness.
- To create resilient wealth by delivering the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy vision that "Shropshire's economy is sustainable and businesses are competitive".
- To use our public protection powers and capacity to redesign and maintain a fair, legal and highly responsive trading environment for business, always striving to maximise the economic potential from wealth generating businesses in the county.
- To lead redesign of how the council commissions outcomes in the North of Shropshire, based on customer demand, working with partner organisations resulting in action that is better, quicker and cheaper.
- To lead exploration and implementation of new ways of working through ip&e that deliver outcomes and generate income, responding to the commissioning decisions of Shropshire Council.
- To lead the whole system review and redesign of waste management services. Contract negotiations will take place to improve the quality and efficiency of the domestic waste collection service, the management and operation of household recycling centres and the disposal and treatment of waste materials. This will reduce the volume of materials going to landfill and increase recycling performance across the county.
- To ensure that suitable and good quality provision and capacity exists for burial and crematoria services for Shropshire residents.

## REPORT

### ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

#### **3.0 Marches Local Economic Partnership (LEP)**

- 3.1 The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) includes the Council areas of Shropshire, Herefordshire and Telford and Wrekin. It was launched in 2010 to create the conditions for economic vitality and sustainable employment across the sub-region. The LEP is led by an executive board with 70/30 private/public sector representatives, Shropshire Council is represented by the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder and is chaired by a leading business figure, Graham Wynn OBE.
- 3.2 The national role of LEP's is growing with an increased lead in driving economic growth including a remit to co-ordinate housing, economic infrastructure, business support and skills. We are now starting to see Europe and the Government directing their policies and funding through these new LEP mechanisms. The Marches European Strategic Investment Fund (ESIF) and the Marches LEP Strategic Economic Plans (SEP) were both submitted in March 2014. The ESIF has £98M allocated to the Marches whilst the SEP is bidding to Central Government for £107M. Shropshire Council is now the accountable body for all the future LEP finance. Herefordshire has similarly taken on the governance role.

#### **4.0 Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy (SEGS) 2012 – 2026**

- 4.1 Shropshire Council in partnership with Shropshire Business Board has co-produced the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy 2012- 2026 which is aligned with the Shropshire Local Development Framework. It ensures that all parts of the Council are working in harmony to drive Economic Growth. The delivery of this Strategy is private sector led; with Champions from the Business Board owning each action under the priorities below. The Portfolio Holder represents the Council on the Board. There are 4 priorities within the Growth Strategy and these are:
- i. Accelerating Business Growth;
  - ii. Infrastructure for Growth;
  - iii. Stimulating our Growth Sectors;
  - iv. Our skilled and loyal workforce.
- 4.2 The updates contained within this report are presented under these 4 priority areas and contribute in part to the Economic Growth Strategy.

#### **5.0 Accelerating Business Growth**

- 5.1 The procurement sub-group of the Business Board (COGS) has expanded to cover Telford and has simplified our procurement process to allow more local SMEs to benefit from contracts. Changes to contract rules approved by

Council mean that all quotes must include a local company. Local economic leverage in contracts has been made a reality with scoring introduced on this basis. Even in a very difficult economic climate the Council has now achieved 65% of total spend is local i.e. with a Shropshire post code. This is up from 62% last year and one of highest figures for all Local Authorities. There is also a Local Procurement Charter with over 90 signatories ranging from the Council, Health Bodies and major private companies.

- 5.2 The outreach business support work provided to Shropshire Businesses has supported over 2500 businesses over the last 12 months. This free service provides hands on support to small and medium sized businesses across all our market towns and rural areas. This is accompanied by regular communications and information bulletins, signposting, grants, loans, training and growth opportunities delivered to businesses when and where they need it. For companies that have suffered large scale redundancies, there is a redundancy and recruitment action support scheme. One example is Uniq Dairy in Minsterley, where we helped to support 250 employees and already approximately 80% of these have found new jobs.
- 5.3 One of the key actions in the SEGS was to pilot a new 'Business Hub' in Shrewsbury based at Shire Hall. In addition to this similar provision is now being made available in all Council Hubs. We have re-profiled the business support offer to provide more online 'Hub' information and booking facilities to access funding, events & business mentoring. Businesses receive a monthly e-newsletter and information is transmitted more widely across social media channels. Customers can now sign up for regular business support updates via our Shropshire Council website, selecting their area of interest.
- 5.4 The offer of free business clinics is now enhanced following the commissioning of this service to provide 2 day workshops for potential new starter businesses and Master-classes for Growing Businesses. This has been commissioned via the Marches LEP to a private sector supplier. Businesses can also request home visits or access online webinars or meetings via Skype, to ensure access to all businesses across our rural County. Overall customer satisfaction levels with this service are 89%.
- 5.5 Promotion of Shropshire to inward investors and expanding companies via the 'Invest In Shropshire' branding continues. Examples of recent successes are Muller Dairies with the £17M investment in a new butter plant creating 24 new jobs; Hales Sawmills re-locating to Shropshire to create 13 new jobs and Arla's new cheese packing facility in Oswestry valued at £9M.
- 5.6 Work has continued to progress the Flax Mill Maltings and in April 2014 funding of £6.6M was offered by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) towards bringing elements of the buildings back into use. The project is now being progressed by English Heritage. Further bids for ERDF, totalling over £1M in value have been approved and are up and running to deliver key actions in the SEGS. Examples include 'Eureka' to help businesses innovate. 'Optimising Broadband to help businesses get the most out of Super-fast broadband and a 45% subsidy to help businesses recruit graduates.

- 5.7 The Annual Shropshire Business Summit was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2014 with record business attendance – 90 companies with an evaluation showing that 96% of feedback forms rated the event as excellent or very good the highest ever rating. This was mainly due to having the first ever address by the Vice Chancellor of Chester University to talk about the new Higher Education Institution for Shrewsbury and table exercises facilitated to obtain business input into the re-design of Economic Growth Services across the Council.
- 5.8 The Business and Enterprise Fund (ERDF) continues to be a significant resource for businesses within Shropshire. In 2013/14, 81 businesses in Shropshire were assisted to improve performance and 24 businesses were assisted to help them start-up and 60 jobs were created. The grant awarded to these businesses totalled over £265,000. Due to its success the project was successful in being extended to the end of June 2015.
- 5.9 Further financial assistance has been provided to companies unable to gain bank finance with Shropshire's Investment Fund with £3M of loans available from £5000 to £150,000. Already 21 companies have been provided with essential financial help totalling £412,000.

## **6.0 Infrastructure for Growth**

- 6.1 The commissioning of essential economic infrastructure continues with the next phase of the Shrewsbury Business Park which started in November 2013. The scheme will open up over 6 acres with the capacity to accommodate 100,000 sq ft of office space together with a 10,000 sq ft local centre. This new phase will create 600 jobs.
- 6.2 Work is also underway on the provision of small workshops as part of Phase II of Tern Valley Business Park at Market Drayton. 9000 sq ft of new workshopswill be available this summeraddressing a shortage of such small workshops in the town.
- 6.3 The Council provides a wide range of starter units and small offices and work-shops to address market failure in all our towns. The 209 units have an occupancy rate of 89%; and support more than 150 companies and 400 jobs. The Shropshire Food Enterprise Centre is a good example of the provision of high quality incubator space for food and drink companies. Huge savings have been made by bringing the management of this facility back in house. Occupation is now 90% and in total well over 80 jobs have been created via this facility.
- 6.4 The £3.5M Market Towns Re-vitalisation Programme (MTRP) was due to complete on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 but has now been extended to allow £430,000 of critical economic projects to be completed including the refurbishment of Ludlow Buttercross and a range of projects in Bridgnorth. Work on the Whitchurch Civic Centre which was funded by MTRP has been completed and was opened in May.

## **7.0 Stimulating our Growth Sectors**

- 7.1 Business growth and the increase in the number of high value jobs will occur in our opportunity sectors.
- 7.2 We provide support for Environmental Technology businesses through the Marches Environmental Technologies Network and we have obtained new ERDF funding to extend this programme right through till December 2015. A recent evaluation found that it had generated £1.4M of GVA in the last phase.
- 7.3 All sectors have private sector Business Champions who are driving forward action plans to create new jobs in each sector. Examples of work this year include the visit by the Chief Executive of UKTI to highlight our investment opportunities in these sectors including a full Food and Drink and Agri-technology investment tour. Our champion for Creative and Digital industries organised a conference Creating Success with many of the fastest growing businesses in the sector to increase collaboration in the sector.
- 7.4 The Visitor Economy continues to be recognised as an important economic driver for Shropshire. Both the private and public sectors continue to invest at an impressive rate with over £40 million worth of projects identified within the last two years.

## **8.0 Our Skilled and Loyal Workforce**

- 8.1 Employment and Skills has a champion on the Business Board and key achievements over the year have been a 'Real Apprenticeship' event and targeted campaigns to boost apprentice numbers in small and medium sized businesses in our key growth sectors. In conjunction with training providers in Shropshire, Telford and Herefordshire, there is an ESF skills in the workforce project with a value of £400K. This is really up-skilling employees in the workforce and is a good example of collaborative working across all training providers. As regards the number of apprentice starts we still only have 12/13 numbers which were 764 apprentice starts compared to a target of 646 in 11/12. We are awaiting data on this for 13/14 from the National Apprenticeship Service.
- 8.2 Work on the new Higher Education Institution for Shrewsbury is moving on a pace. Government funding has been applied for to address what is termed as "higher education cold spots" and the Minister has mentioned that Shrewsbury and Shropshire is one of these. Detailed work on the property portfolio for the new University is taking place with options and master planning being completed. It is planned that the new University will once it has 4000 students, generate £61M of economic impact and create over 2400 jobs.

## **9.0 Visitor Economy**

### **9.1 Tourism**

The Tourism Team consists of two Tourism Officers with support from the Service Manager. The Team is responsible for the strategic support of the tourism sector, which is worth over £500m a year to the Shropshire economy. The governance of the sector is based on private and public destination partnership working in sub-county areas – The Shropshire Hills and Ludlow, Bridgnorth Area, Destination Shrewsbury and Shropshire Borderlands (Oswestry and North Shropshire). Each has a tourism strategy, a governing body overseeing implementation of the strategies and regular communication channels between the various parties involved. The Tourism Team is responsible for making this structure function effectively.

- 9.2 At county level the Shropshire & Telford Tourism Strategy Board is being re-structured to reflect the importance of The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership, bringing in the county of Herefordshire. The Marches LEP Tourism Group is leading on the development of a new European funding programme which will bring new resources in to the sector between 2015 and 2020. The Tourism Team is taking a leadership role in co-ordinating this new arrangement. A Shropshire-wide strategic group is being formed to co-ordinate the work of the Destination Partnerships and the Council will be represented by the Portfolio-holder and Deputy Portfolio-holder for Business Growth.
- 9.3 These groups are responsible for promoting the aims and profile of the visitor economy to national and regional bodies such as VisitEngland and The Marches LEP.
- 9.4 During the year the team was responsible for delivering externally funded regional programmes around promoting museums in Shropshire & The Marches and an innovative scheme to cross-sell heritage attractions called Heritage Ambassadors. The vital research activities continued with visitor surveys completed in the Shropshire Borderlands and Shropshire Hills & Ludlow. New opportunities appeared with the successful vote to implement the Shrewsbury Business Improvement District.
- 9.5 The Team continues to work with market towns across the county and has assisted with the development of tourism plans at a number of locations. The successful campaign to raise awareness of Much Wenlock's contribution to Olympic history was rewarded with three wins in various public relations awards schemes including Media Relations Campaign of the Year at the 2013 UK Public Sector Communications Awards.

## 10.0 Shropshire Museums

### 10.1 Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

After 5 years work the new Museum & Art Gallery opened to visitors on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. The project has transformed the former Music Hall and medieval Vaughan's Mansion in the heart of the town into six galleries, a shop, cafe and Visitor Information Centre creating a new hub for Shrewsbury and Shropshire's heritage offer. The galleries show off the best of Shropshire Museums' vast collection of historic artefacts in a superb architectural setting. The Museum & Art Gallery has proved to be very popular with a wide range of people and attracted very positive reviews on sites such as TripAdvisor.

10.2 The Museum works closely with the Friends organisation and has attracted a dedicated group of volunteers who look after visitors and help behind the scenes with cataloguing and research.

10.3 The Team running the venue are very focussed on maximising revenue and have built partnerships with a range of local organisations. Several rooms and spaces are available to hire and the venue is licensed for weddings. A substantial education programme is being offered to schools and the Museum is offering good value packages working with other local venues within the service and others such as the Sabrina Boat Trips.

10.4 The Special Exhibition Gallery has been showcasing a selection of contemporary art from the collection of Frank Cohen until the end of June. In mid-July the Gallery will launch 'Living Dangerously' a photographic exhibition by LIFE magazine photographer Terence Spencer. On the balcony there will be a special hands-on science exhibition 'Ancient Wisdom' based on the theories and discoveries of classical civilisations.

10.5 Closer working between Theatre Services and the Museums is being developed as part of transformational plans.

10.6 As part of the strategic restructure of the Service and commissioning approach the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre is now run by the social enterprise 'Grow Cook Learn' and work is underway to relocate Ludlow Museum from its current location to the Buttercross and then to be operated by the Town Council.

10.7 The Museum Development Project funded by Arts Council England has a dedicated Museum Development Officer hosted by Shropshire Council which provides valuable support to the independent museum and heritage sector.

10.8 Shropshire Archives underwent a restructure including a reduction in opening hours. A public consultation on options for the revised opening hours received over 500 responses, and the new hours were introduced in April 2014. Customers have generally adapted to the changes, though inevitably

the service is seeing increased use during the opening period. The restructure has allowed all the key elements of the service, including the acquisition of new books and archives and the processing of this material, to be retained.

- 10.9 The 'Volunteering for Heritage' project funded by the Heritage Lottery has continued to provide key support to Shropshire Archives and the Museums Service. To date over 400 volunteers have given over 6,600 days' worth of their time to catalogue more than 90,000 items, digitise over 35,700 and conserve over 9,000. In financial terms they have contributed over £1 million worth of resource to Shropshire Council. An end of project conference to highlight the achievements of the volunteers is planned for February 2015 at Theatre Severn.
- 10.10 The Arts Council funded Heritage Heroes project (see [www.heritageheroes.org.uk](http://www.heritageheroes.org.uk)) has enabled the volunteering offer to be extended to those who are unable to visit museums and archives. Over 100 'virtual volunteers' from around the world have already signed to help out. The project aims to create over 10,000 new records to add to existing databases, as well as testing the sustainability of this model of working.
- 10.11 The new storage facility at Hortonwood funded by capital funding has been completed to provide accommodation for archives, records and museum collections. The facility is shared with Electoral Services and will provide for the service's future storage needs as well as saving £44,000 annually in external storage costs.
- 10.12 Shropshire Archives has entered into a partnership with Find My Past to provide online access to Shropshire parish and non-conformist registers. These went on line in April and are already receiving hundreds of thousands of hits a month from family historians across the world. This new facility not only provides people with much better access to the material, but also produces a new income stream to the Council.
- 10.13 As part of county wide activity to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World War, £190,000 of funding has been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England to support nineteen arts and heritage projects across Shropshire. These include working with the Imperial War Museum and Shrewsbury St Chads to create a comprehensive online resource of Salopians who died, and to research the lives of those who served and survived, as well as those who contributed on the home front.
- 10.14 The new Archive Service Accreditation Standard is the UK standard for archive services and has been developed by the National Archives in consultation with the sector. Like Museums Accreditation the standard defines good practice and identifies agreed standards. It aims to help organisations to become more adaptable, resilient and sustainable by embedding a culture of sector-led continuous improvement, focusing on the needs of customers and local communities and on producing best value for money. Shropshire Archives plans to complete the accreditation process in Spring 2015.

## **11.0 Broadband**

- 11.1 The Connecting Shropshire (CS) programme has been in full engineering deployment for over 12 months, following contract signature in March 2013. The programme is currently in phase 2 of delivery and has connected over 10,000 premises to the network, with over 50 fibre cabinets providing superfast broadband across Shropshire.
- 11.2 In total 62,000 premises are scheduled to get upgraded to fibre as part of the 9 phase programme which will complete in spring 2016. Shropshire Council aims to connect up to 93% of premises to the network by the end of the programme. This figure relies upon the commercial providers delivering their original commitments as part of the pre contract engagement.
- 11.3 Details of the exchange areas planned and enabled are included on the [www.connecting.shropshire.co.uk](http://www.connecting.shropshire.co.uk) website. A map enhancement will be added to the website during the summer which will include a post code checker that will enable people to check service availability with their chosen Internet Service Provider.
- 11.4 A key element and focus for the CS programme is generating demand for the new network from businesses and communities. It is of critical importance that the public investments made in the contract generates 'take up' of fibre broadband which ultimately generates 'claw back' in our contract and boosts our county through a variety of socio-economic benefits.
- 11.5 In April 2014 CS received a further funding allocation from BDUK of £1.5m. This allocation followed an initial bid to DEFRA under the Rural Community Broadband Fund scheme. Survey works are in progress and structures will be added to the current contract as part of change control procedures.
- 11.6 As part of the Government's continued commitment to improve broadband nationally, Shropshire has been allocated an additional £11.38m as part of Phase 2 of the BDUK programme. The sum is aimed at working towards the Government's target of 95% Superfast Broadband (SFBB) by 2017. CS is continuing to work closely with the Shropshire Broadband Group which aims to address the challenge of seeking £:£ match funding. A number of opportunities including private match and LEP monies are currently being evaluated as part of this process. BDUK have provided assurance to CS that there is full support and a shared aspiration to provide all residents and businesses with faster broadband.

## **PUBLIC PROTECTION**

### **12.0 Public Protection Service Strategy 2013/14– Year 2 Priorities**

#### **12.1 Service Transformation - New Delivery Models**

12.2 The focus in the first year of the 3-year Public Protection Service Strategy was to embed the new service delivery model and service structure through an effective and sustainable cultural change programme. The new culture emphasised the need to put service users at the heart of services and to deliver a programme of real and sustainable improvement in satisfaction levels. In 2013/14 the emphasis was very much on radical service re-design to support the Council's aspiration to become a Commissioning Council.

12.3 Therefore, in addition to focusing on shorter-term transformation and improvement, the Service also explored a number of new service delivery models to develop a more sustainable model for future service delivery. This was a key feature of work in the preceding 12 months. As part of the wider re-design work, we completed a number of functional reviews of individual services that did not sit comfortably within the new delivery model.

12.4 The reviews included Car Parking and Environmental Enforcement, Pest Control, Bikeability, Benefit Fraud and CCTV. This work resulted in significant efficiency improvements and cost reductions for the administration of car park cash collection. The Bikeability Scheme was no longer financially viable and so the service's direct involvement with the scheme was concluded in 2013. The Pest Control service has embraced new ways of working which has resulted to the provision of a cost-neutral service which we believe can be transformed into a profit-making operation through the new delivery model. The Benefit Fraud Service has transferred to the Revenues and Benefits team in advance of national changes and the likely transfer of the function to the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS). The Community Safety function, along with CCTV, has moved to Public Health pending the development of an alternative model for future CCTV provision.

12.5 The major effort in 2013/14 was to develop a new delivery model encompassing the wider group of council regulatory services which have a direct interface with businesses in Shropshire. This resulted in a detailed and comprehensive exploration of new service delivery models. The options that were considered in the early stages of the work included:

1. Strategic Partnership/Joint Venture with a Private Sector Partner.
2. Social Enterprise/Staff Mutual arrangement.
3. Collaboration/Shared Service with other Local Authority partners.

This work developed and resulted in a model which proposed the creation of a wholly owned council company with legal advice suggesting that the most effective model was to form a subsidiary of ip&e. The model developed further to embrace a wider range of services than Public Protection. The

services in scope included: Planning and Development Management, Building Control, Public Protection, Historic and Natural Environment and regulation of the Private Sector Housing sector. The work has resulted in the development of a Business Case which will be reported to the Council's Cabinet on 30 July 2014 following consultation with service users, partners and stakeholders.

### **13.0 Operational Achievements - 2013/14**

13.1 A brief summary of some of our operational achievements over the previous 12 months are highlighted below. These have been delivered against a background of significant change and re-design. We have tried to ensure delivering business as usual, whilst trying to create the capacity to create a radical and innovative delivery model for regulatory and business support services referred to earlier. Our operational teams have worked exceptionally hard to remain customer-focused, accessible and responsive in the face of significant challenges but have remained enthusiastic and determined in their quest to support business growth and protect vulnerable people and communities.

- In November 2013, following a 12 month investigation and legal process, an individual was ordered to pay £20,000 under the Proceeds of Crime Act. In addition, he was ordered to pay full prosecution costs of £5,422. He had earlier pleaded guilty to a number of offences under the Trade Marks Act 1994 selling counterfeit film posters on eBay. He was given 120 hours of unpaid work as sentence for these offences. This is the first occasion that Shropshire Council has used the Proceeds of Crime Act to confiscate the assets of a trader who has been supplying illegal goods. The decision to institute confiscation proceedings in this case was not taken lightly. The Proceeds of Crime Act will be a useful tool in tackling consumer-related crime in order to protect legitimate businesses and communities.
- We have made significant improvements to our information, intelligence and analytical capacity by moving to "IDOX Uniform" back office software system which is also used by the Planning teams. The IDOX product offers improved options such as mapping, a document management system and a work planning system as well as integration with planning and more effective integration of mobile working options.
- Targeted investigations into the misuse of disabled persons parking badges have taken place in the past 12 months. The Council is committed to protecting the needs of disabled persons who are entitled to parking concessions. Enforcement days are undertaken to specifically review the use of blue badges in the towns. On 4 January 2013, a Shrewsbury woman pleaded guilty to charges relating to the misuse of a Blue Badge in the first case we have taken to court.
- We continue making a significant contribution to emergency planning responses. For example, we responded to the partial collapse of a commercial building affecting residential premises, public footpath and gas

supply in Shrewsbury on New Year's Eve. Officers also investigated an illegal deposit of chemicals on the roadside resulting in significant pollution of a Severn Trent drinking water supply where we worked with Severn Trent and Environment Agency to investigate the offender and ensure the recovery of the water supply.

- Resident liaison groups established to address issues involving pollution from large industrial and commercial operations.
- Intelligence-led enforcement action, in collaboration with colleagues from police and neighbouring councils, to improve public safety in taxi and private hire trade has been successful in improving standards of driver and vehicle safety within Shropshire.
- Building on the success of our Antisocial Behaviour Team we have been actively involved in the Church Stretton Locality Commissioning Project to review how ASB is dealt with and reported in the County. The focus is on improving the call handling and risk assessment and promotion of the single reporting line to provide more robust statistical data to identify trends, prioritise work and co-ordinate responses with partners.
- Officers have worked effectively with partners to achieve the best resolution for a number of cases of filthy and verminous residential premises. By supporting and facilitating changes to personal circumstances we have been able to significantly affect the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. This often necessitates a 'non-regulatory' approach to an issue aimed at achieving maximum benefit to all concerned.
- We have promoted an intelligence-led enforcement approach to work closely with Liverpool City Council which has resulted in bringing a rogue trader to court who was subsequently found guilty of serious offences.
- Finally, we developed a comprehensive methodology for determining discretionary licensing fees. This provides a useful foundation for further development as Government moves away from nationally to locally set statutory fees.

## IP&E

### 14.0 ip&e Activity

- 14.1 In the past 12 months, the Council's ambitions for ip&e have started to be realised though an accelerated programme of implementation. The first two business units, 'ThreeSixty communications' and 'Business Design' have been created within the company and are now working in Shropshire and beyond. Plans are well advanced, subject to detailed business cases and consultation, for three further significant business areas to be established covering; Inspire to Learn (support services to schools), Help 2 Change (public health improvement) and Core Offer (organisational support services for commissioning organisations).

- 14.2 During the same period, the two companies have been formally established. ip&e Limited is able to undertake work for Shropshire Council, and ip&e Trading is then able to sell expertise to other customers outside of Shropshire. The Boards of both companies are also now up and running chaired by Cllr Michael Wood and Cllr Keith Barrow respectively.

Although separate companies, both are committed to a common set of ambitions focusing on:

- Anticipating and delivering on the expectations of new commissioning organisations
- Using expertise and commitment from existing Shropshire Council staff and unlocking their full potential
- Winning business from within Shropshire and beyond, reinvesting profits back into the county

*ThreeSixty Communications* - delivers comprehensive communication and media services for Shropshire Council and other local and regional commissioning organisations. Since moving into ip&e the team has provided essential support on key campaigns and initiatives such as Shropshire's plans for a new University, the Council's approach to redesigning everything we do based on demand, and in support of major public health activity such as heart age, transplant consultation and weight management.

*Mercury* – by bringing together capacity from the programme management and service design functions this team is the engine-room driving all redesign activity across the council, as well as with key partners. Its expertise in creativity works across frontline teams, with the community and helps managers and Cabinet leaders navigate and accelerate change. The team is increasingly developing a national profile through innovations such as Gusto, People 2 People and work outside Shropshire with the health sector in Liverpool. It recently submitted a series of case studies to Government as part of the Transformation Challenge. It is also playing a key governance role in driving the University project in Shropshire.

- 14.3 The next phase of ip&e's growth will see a significant growth in the business. Inspire to Learn and Help 2 Change are likely to be the next teams to be created, bringing a considerable number of staff respectively into the business. Crucially both are continuing the ip&e approach to business growth - which is to understand and carefully design what the market needs. With the arrival of Inspire to Learn, the significant increase in staff numbers will require an equivalent step-up in both companies business infrastructure.
- 14.4 The model for ip&e Limited and Trading enables flexibility – with a shared Chief Operating Officer, and with Directors of HR and Finance also being seconded from the Council to cover this period of rapid growth across both companies.

## Waste Management and Bereavement Services

### 15.0 Waste Management

15.1 The Waste Management service has delivered on several key initiatives and has been instrumental in shaping the service for the future since the letting of the Council's 27-year Integrated Waste PFI contract with Veolia Environmental Services (Now Veolia) in September 2007. Together with Veolia as part of the post closure PFI programme the following recent service changes have been successfully implemented which include:

- Standardisation of opening hours at all Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) resulting in £50,000 annual savings to the Council with no adverse impact on the operation of the service.
- Introduction of major service change involving the roll out of kerbside collection of plastics followed by the introduction of mixed plastic containers (pots tubs and trays) in November 2012. This has so far resulted in an increase of nearly 25% of plastic diverted from the residual waste stream.
- Continue to exceed 2020 National target of 50% for Recycling & Composting with 53% achieved in 2013/14.

15.2 In addition to the above service changes there have been a number of improvements to waste management infrastructure and service development, which include:

- Successful hand over of operation of Biocycle Company to a local charity Cwm Harry Land Trust (CHLT) involving transfer of all assets associated with the anaerobic digestion (AD) plant to the Council and disengagement of the Council from the Board of Biocycle South Shropshire Ltd.
- Successful decommissioning of amenity skip site in Ludlow resulting in projected annual savings for 2014/15 of £100,000 and opening up the site for development of community resource management issues.
- Implementation of the Love Food Hate Waste programme operating in Shropshire – with Shropshire Council leading the West Midlands LFHW campaign involving 33 local authorities focussing on advertising and community engagement and funded through the West Midlands Waste Alliance.
- Provision of kitchen caddies to the north Shropshire area in 2012/13 and to Bishop's Castle area in 2013 along with a food waste collection service promotional campaign. This resulted in a 6% reduction in residual waste to landfill.
- Effective waste prevention campaigns e.g. promotion of Junk Mail campaign which has resulted in 50,000 Shropshire households having signed up to date to the Mailing Preference Service. This results in annual savings of around £10,000 through landfill diversion. Promotion of home composting scheme with 600 units sold last year. Every tonne of waste diverted saves the Council £100.

- Implementation of the Waste Transformation project to reduce waste and increase recycling using a customer segmented approach. The implementation stage of this project commenced April 2011 and concluded in 2013 which involved a series of advertising and communications activities focusing on improving knowledge and awareness of services within the community.
- Review by the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) of the management of the Council's waste PFI contract from which 11 recommendations were made. These recommendations were presented to the Councils Scrutiny Committee in July 2012 and developed into an Action Plan.

### Current issues

- 15.3 Construction of the 95,000 tonnes per annum Battlefield Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) commenced in December 2013 and is scheduled for completion and full-operation September 2015. Progress is on track with no lost time or accidents incurred on the site, and donation of bonus to local charity.
- 15.4 The Council is currently trialling a series of prototypes for household collection of waste and recycling with the aim of providing the best possible service to Shropshire residents and to boost the amount of waste recycled. The materials collected on the trials include cardboard, which was removed from the garden waste collection scheme in 2011. Following completion of the trials in September 2014, a recommended option will be made to Cabinet and Council with the full service commencing roll-out across the county in mid to late 2015.
- 15.4 Continued focus on delivery of the Council's Waste Prevention Plan and recycling awareness campaigns which has resulted in, since 2005, over £4m in external funding from various sources with £64,000 in 2013/14. The effects of these campaigns have resulted in increased recycling rates and a reduction in the tonnage of waste presented for collection further resulting in reduced costs for disposal or treatment.

## **16.0 Bereavement Services**

- 16.1 In August 2011 Cabinet approved the award of a 30-year concession contract and lease for bereavement services to Co-operative Funeral Services Ltd with commencement of the service on September 12<sup>th</sup> 2011.
- 16.2 A key benefit from outsourcing of this service was the transfer of risk in funding the upgrading of Emstrey crematorium including cremators and buildings to meet future demand and to comply with Government requirements for abatement of emissions before January 2013.
- 16.3 All upgrades were successfully completed on time with replacement of three 'Newton' cremators, with two 'Joule' cremators. The Newton cremators were subject to continual breakdowns and could not satisfy future environmental

emissions criteria for abatement of mercury. The new cremators are state of the art and fully compliant with environmental emissions criteria, with all infrastructure investment provided by Co-operative as part of the concession agreement.

- 16.4 During the bereavement services procurement process it was identified that further capacity for burial and that the Emstrey cemetery would only provide limited capacity due to groundwater issues. In this regard a phased burial closure plan for Emstrey cemetery was initiated whilst a new cemetery location was sought.
- 16.5 The new cemetery Mytton Oak Remembrance Park (MORP) is located west of Shrewsbury and will provide up to 100 years burial capacity. Construction on MORP commenced June 2013 with start-up of operations scheduled for Spring 2015.

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

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Steve Charmley

**Local Member**

**Appendices**

None.