

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL
MEDIUM-TERM PLAN
2012/13 TO 2014/15

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FORWARD

We are pleased to introduce the Council's Medium-Term Plan for 2012/13 to 2014/15

As a Co-operative Council, our work is not solely about what we do but more importantly, how we do it.

At the cornerstone of this are our Co-operative Values of **honesty, openness, fairness and respect, involvement and ownership.**

These values are the core of what a Co-operative Council is all about - being accountable for our actions and empowering people to help themselves. We will look at everything we do and ask ourselves - are we living these values when we talk to our customers, work with our partners and work with each other, not just today, but every day?

This Plan provides an opportunity to reflect on and be proud of our achievements over the past year as well as focusing on our future goals. In the last year we have:

- Continued to invest in the regeneration of Hadley, Malinslee and Oakengates while Brookside, our co-operative pilot ward, is now receiving the attention it needs after years of underinvestment
- Demonstrated the difference a Co-operative Council makes through initiatives including
 - the small business loans fund
 - the new Health Hub at Civic Offices with the PCT
 - opening an employability centre at Meeting Point House with TCAT offering employment advice and training to get people back into work
 - seeking as many people's views as possible on a wide range of consultations through our Your Views Matter initiative and getting record numbers involved in our budget consultation
 - our Flexideal scheme for employees, giving greater choice over work patterns
- Made huge progress on our Southwater plans, including investing in the Ice Rink and securing new developments that will create 300 jobs and a living heart to Telford town centre
- Committed investment in stabilising and protecting the Ironbridge Gorge – our World Heritage site
- Committed £18 million to improve our roads network
- Increased opportunities for young people – our commitment is to treble the number of apprentices by next April
- Reshaped our Building Schools for the Future programme so that we will be building six new secondary schools in the borough

- Making £20 million of savings while continuing to deliver our services and protecting as far as possible front line services

Looking ahead we know we will continue to face difficult times and tough choices. But our goals are clear and we will work tirelessly to:

- Make Telford & Wrekin ***a business supporting and business winning council,***
- Be a much more customer focused organisation that treats our customers as we would want to be treated and making every contact we have with our customer count
- Continue our development as a Co-operative Council
- Build the reputation of Telford and Wrekin nationally and internationally as a place to live, to work and invest.

We have an excellent platform from which we can now drive forward our Co-Operative Council vision and transform both the Council and the Borough and making a real difference to the people we serve.

Kuldip Sahota
Leader

Richard Partington
Managing Director

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1. OUR VISION, PRIORITIES & VALUES

As a Co-operative Council, we will work with our communities to create:

'Telford & Wrekin – the Place of Partnership, Enterprise and Innovation'

We will:

- *put our children and young people first*
- *protect and create jobs as a 'Business Supporting, Business Winning Council'*
- *improve local people's prospects through education and skills training*
- *protect and support our vulnerable-children and adults*
- *ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained*
- *improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities*
- *regenerate those neighbourhoods in need and work to ensure that local people have access to suitable housing*

Being a Co-operative Council is not an end in itself rather it is a way of doing things. Essentially, it is about three important things:

- **Bringing more public services together so that people get what they need at the right place and the right time;**
- **Involving local people and our employees more in planning and running services;**
- **As a Council, supporting our community better and encouraging people to do more to help their own communities.**

To be a Co-operative Council and deliver our priorities, challenges us to work even better in partnership, to be even closer to our community, to provide even higher standards of public service, to improve leadership and management practice, to develop new and better skills, and to think ever more creatively at how we can help to solve problems and deliver services differently to address needs and expectations. We want to be a Council:

- that the community, members and employees are proud of
- that puts customers first and treats our customers the way we ourselves would want to be treated
- that is 'business supporting, business winning'. We need to work even better with the private and voluntary sector – a growing, thriving economy is key to both the future of the borough and the Council
- that works efficiently, manages public money very well and delivers and commissions good services

- which is a good employer, which treats employees with dignity and respect and involves everyone in determining the way we operate
- which supports ward members effectively to undertake their role of community advocates and representatives
- which works effectively in partnership right across the borough

As a Co-operative Council, it is essential that we are driven, not just by a set of aims and goals that we want to achieve, but also by a clear sense of the way we want to be as an organisation.

Through consultation with our employees and partners, we have developed and shared our co-operative values. Our challenge for 2012/13 is to put these visibly at the heart of what we do, how we function and our relationship with the community and our partners.

Co-operative Values

- **Ownership**

We will – be accountable for our own actions and empower people with the skills to help themselves

We would like everyone to – take action and responsibility for themselves and their community to the best of their abilities

- **Openness & Honesty**

We will – be open and honest in the way we work and make decisions and communicate in a clear, simple and timely way

We would like everyone to – be open and honest about what they want to improve in their community

- **Involvement**

We will – work together with the community, involve people in decisions that affect their lives and be prepared to listen and take on new ideas

We would like everyone to – work with and support others, get involved and share their views to help us develop the way we do things

- **Fairness & Respect**

We will – respond to people’s needs in a fair and consistent way

We will and would like everyone to – respect and care for themselves and others, value the different ideas and skills that people bring and treat each other as equals

2. OUR CHALLENGES

The Borough and the Council faces a very difficult set of challenges as a result of the economic situation. Impacts on the community and our services include:

- Higher unemployment – unemployment is currently 8.6% with youth unemployment (16-24) at 23.5% both of which are disproportionately impacting on our most deprived communities.
- Increase in Council Tax and Housing Benefit applicants – the number of claimants for Housing and Council Tax benefits is at an all time high with a 10% increase over the last 2 years (up to April 2011). In 2011/12 our benefit expenditure was more than £2.8m higher than the previous year. In addition, there has been an increase of over 5,000 more ‘change of circumstances’ assessments since the same point last year.
- Slow down in the housing market. There is also evidence of increased pressures on demand for social housing and increasing pressures around household debt. Typically, associated with our more deprived areas.

The pressures the Council faces include:

- Projected grant cuts of £40m in real terms over the period of the current Parliament.
- The withholding of almost £3m grant in 2012/13 that the Government calculate should come to this area but which is paid to other parts of the country through the grant “damping” mechanism.
- A shortfall in grant of up to £2.8m due to the methodology used by ONS to estimate population between annual censuses.
- Reduced income from having a comparatively low council tax. If the Council had the same level of council tax as the average in the Midlands, an additional £5.6m pa would be generated.

Whilst a number of services are experiencing increasing demand (benefit services), there are particular pressures on social care services for children and adults.

- **Children’s Social Care** – in line with national trends, we continue to have an increase in numbers of Children in Care this continues to lead to significant financial pressures.
- **Adult Social Care** - we have also been experiencing increasing demand for our Adult Social Care Services as a result of increasing numbers and life expectancy of older people and increasing complexity of care.

Another challenge for the Council is that from April 2013, the responsibility of running **Public Health Service** will transfer formally from the NHS to the Council. A wide

range of services will transfer in to the Council and are likely to include health protection plans, sexual health, national child measurement programme, Health Check and public health advice to NHS commissioners.

RESPONDING TO THESE CHALLENGES

The Council has already prepared for these challenges for some time, including:

- Identification of ongoing revenue savings over the 5 years up to and including 2011/12 of over £28m
- Reducing the number of senior managers by 55% and cutting the pay of the most senior managers by up to 17% saving a total of over £2.1m pa
- Savings identified from “back office” functions of almost £6m or 33% over the period 2009/10 to 2012/13 – far more than has been achieved by most organisations that have gone down a shared services route and without incurring significant project costs or delays.
- A ‘100 day budget review’ by the new administration which will save just under £3m pa on debt repayments compared to previous plans.
- Reductions in the cost of the special responsibility allowances paid to Cabinet Members.
- An ongoing organisation wide restructure programme which will see most staffing budgets across the Council cut by an average of 20%. This has largely been achieved through vacancy management, extensive redeployment and over 386 voluntary redundancies with 21 compulsory redundancies to date during the process.
- Strict controls placed on the use of agency staff, consultants and external job advertisements.
- A detailed line by line analysis of budgets by Assistant Directors and their teams cutting out spending where ever possible and identifying efficiencies with an emphasis on protecting front line services as far as possible.
- The most extensive consultation exercise ever undertaken by the Council to inform service priority and budget decisions.
- A detailed programme to rationalise our buildings across the borough to realise both revenue savings and capital receipts.
- A strong focus on procurement which will deliver savings of in excess of £4m and ongoing improved contact management.
- Re-establishment of an “Invest to Save Reserve” of £0.5m to fund money-saving initiatives with a significant payback to the Council.

Given the context of very significant cuts in Government grants and the uncertainties over the impacts of the Local Resource Review, the scope for additional investments is very limited.

In all of this, we recognise that the Council has a key role to play in mitigating the effects of the economic downturn and planning for recovery, through supporting the growth of key economic sectors, promoting the Borough's business and leisure tourism offer, and creating a 'business supportive environment' with available employment land and an effective infrastructure. As part of this, we have completed a further restructure of the Senior Management Team to help the Council respond effectively to this agenda. The continued development of the Town Centre and regeneration of the Borough Towns are essential elements of our strategy. It is important that we continue to show confidence, leadership and investment in the future of the area.

This Plan, sets out our strategy for responding to these continuing pressures, transforming how we are working and being clear about what we are seeking to achieve within the resources we have available.

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3. CREATING AN ORGANISATION TO DELIVER OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES

OUR ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Council is made up of 54 members in 33 wards. The current political make-up of the Council is:

- Conservative 17
- Labour 33
- Liberal Democrat/Independent 4

The next full Council election is due in May 2015.

From May 2011, Telford & Wrekin Council has formally operated the ‘**Strong Leader and Executive Cabinet**’ model for its executive arrangements. This is a significant change in emphasis on how the Council is run and managed. In the new model, the Leader is responsible for all executive functions and can decide whether to delegate functions to the Cabinet collectively, individual councillors or officers. The Leader determines the size of the Cabinet (maximum of 10, minimum of two) and is able to appoint and remove councillors to/from the Cabinet.

The Council’s **Cabinet** is made up of 9 Members and one ex-officio member (unremunerated) with each having a portfolio of responsibilities and collective responsibilities for the development and delivery of the Council’s policies and strategies. Cabinet meet regularly with members of the Senior Management Team in a “Policy Review Meeting” to progress key projects and performance issues and to help shape policy and strategy development.

The Council has also appointed 5 Scrutiny Committees that are each linked to the Cabinet Member functions. These Committees undertake its scrutiny role through monitoring of Cabinet decisions, undertaking detailed investigations into specific service areas (and making recommendations to the Cabinet /Council if necessary) and contributing towards policy development.

- **Scrutiny Committee - Finance & Budget**
- **Scrutiny Committee - Children & Young People**
- **Scrutiny Committee - Co-operative & Community**
- **Scrutiny Committee - Health & Social Care**
- **Scrutiny Committee - Housing, Economy & Infrastructure**

The **Senior Management Team** (SMT) comprises a Managing Director, currently 2 Directors and 11 Assistant Directors (formerly known as ‘Heads of Service’). Its focus is on planning and managing the business of the organisation fostering corporate working, innovation, sharing ideas and learning. ‘SMT’ is responsible for driving the delivery of our priorities and the implementation of our financial strategy.

TAKING THE ORGANISATION FORWARD

SERVICE & FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Council faces a prolonged period of significant pressure on resources. In developing our response, the Council's service and financial planning strategy for is based around 4 **guiding principles** informed by community consultation. They are:

- In line with our co-operative values, work together with and involve our residents and employees in developing our strategy;
- Adopt a commercial approach and facilitate growth;
- Minimise the impact of savings on front-line service delivery;
- Minimise the impact of savings on our employees as far as possible.

In line with these principles, the starting point for our strategy is to protect front-line services and employees as far as possible, such as:

- **Improving procurement** e.g. re-tendering contracts, reviewing and robustly re-negotiating existing contracts, making greater use of framework agreements and getting added social value from procurement;
- **Property rationalisation and generation of capital receipts** – we have ambitious plans to invest in schools, regeneration and other capital projects to transform the Borough. In order to minimise the burden of ongoing debt repayments we're committed to a significant programme of asset sales totalling £110m over the medium-term;
- **Driving down non-staffing costs that have minimal impact on service delivery** - reviewing and challenging budgets 'line by line' e.g. stationery, hospitality etc to ensure we have exhausted as many options as possible before considering changes or reductions to services.

However, due to the scale of the budget gap, some impact on service delivery and employees is inevitable. Our approach involves:

- **Carrying out planned, long-term service re-design, based around priorities**, not quick-fix options, such as withdrawing services or changing eligibility criteria e.g.
 - Children's Services – better help for people in the early stages of difficulties and more targeted help for families with complex needs;
 - Adults' Services – re-ablement to help ill or disabled adults learn or re-learn how to live independently;
 - Customer Services – more enquiries dealt with first time through a single point of contact
- **Facilitating growth** – becoming a 'business supporting, business-winning Council', increasing prosperity in the Borough and maximising income from business rates and the New Homes Bonus;

- **Working co-operatively with local people, organisations and partners**
e.g.
 - Co-production and other new service delivery partnerships with the community;
 - Joining up services better to remove overlap and duplication;
 - Partnership with Town and Parish Councils to secure environmental improvements;
 - Encouraging local people to recycle more and reduce waste disposal costs.

- **Increasing income generation and external trading** – a more commercial approach and a particular focus on providing support services at affordable cost to local voluntary and community organisations, Town & Parish Councils, partners, schools;

- Our aim is to actively seek applications for voluntary redundancy and to promote flexible working arrangements in order to keep compulsory redundancies to a minimum although some continuing **targeted restructuring activity** is inevitable.

2012/13 and Projected Medium-Term Budget

The financial summary below sets out our projected budget gap for future years and how we will close it.

Projected Budget Gap	12/13 £m	13/14 £m	14/15 £m	15/16* £m	16/17* £m
Base Budget Gap	21.847	30.635	34.306	40.366	47.076
2011/12 - 2014/15 Tax reduction grant ceases to be paid from 2015/16 onwards				1.400	1.400
Council Tax Increase of 2.5% each year	- 1.400	- 2.800	- 4.200	- 5.600	- 7.000
Non-Staff savings - proposals identified	- 8.437	- 16.333	-18.907	-19.387	- 19.867
Savings from planned service redesign and restructures	- 8.622	- 9.247	- 9.247	- 9.247	- 9.247
Single Status Provision - cease funding for 12/13 and 13/14, net of costs	- 2.000	- 2.400	- 0.500	- 0.500	- 0.500
Agreed use of balances	- 1.390				
BSF additional temporary borrowing costs	0.002	0.145	0.319	0.248	- 0.077
Savings still to be identified	0.000	0.000	1.771	7.280	11.785

*Projections for 2013/14 and 2014/15 have a high degree of uncertainty given the local government financial system is subject to fundamental changes from 1/4/2013 the detail of which is yet to be announced. Projections for 2015/16 and beyond have an even higher level of uncertainty given they fall outside the current Comprehensive Spending Review period.

These projections will be rolled forward as part of the Service & Financial Planning Strategy during Autumn 2012. Current Government announcements tend to indicate that the position may be considerably higher than shown above.

Council Tax - for 2012/13 we have increased council tax by 2.5 per cent. This increase equates to 41 pence per week for the average property in the Telford & Wrekin area and with this increase council tax is still amongst the lowest in the country and is the third lowest in the Midlands.

Capital spending - during 2012/13, we are planning to invest £95.919m as part of a £336.092m capital programme, to build and improve the facilities, assets and infrastructure to support the delivery of these objectives. This investment has been secured primarily through a combination of Government grants and supported borrowing allocations, use of the Council's own resources (capital receipts), and Prudential Borrowing by the Council. Over the planning period, our capital programme is as follows:

Priority	Total	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	Later Years
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Protect and Support Our Vulnerable Children & Adults	6,807	2,968	2,917	922	0	0
Protect and Create Jobs as a 'Business Supporting, Business Winning Council'	41,854	6,100	27,207	6,854	1,693	0
Improve the Health and Well Being of our Communities and Address Health Inequalities	8,708	2,769	4,495	271	223	950
Regenerate Those Neighbourhoods in Need and Work Hard to Ensure That Local People Have Access to Housing	24,158	8,993	8,730	5,494	941	0
Ensure That Neighbourhoods are Safe, Clean and Well Maintained	57,621	18,700	8,762	8,423	13,736	8,000
Improve Local People's Prospects through Education and Skills Training	189,146	40,341	42,108	51,111	27,072	28,514
Managing the Organisation	7.798	4.398	1.700	1.700	0.000	0.000
	336.092	84.269	95.919	74.775	43.665	37.464

Improving procurement – (£2.18m gross in procurement savings identified for 2012/13) - through a combination of re-tendering contracts, reviewing and robustly re-negotiating existing contracts and making greater use of framework agreements. We are also committed to protecting our front-line services through better more effective procurement. To continue the momentum **we have established a Corporate Procurement Task Force** which is chaired by the Assistant Director for Development, Business & Housing with the Cabinet Member for Resources attending.

Driving down non-staffing costs that have minimal impact on service delivery, such as stationery, postage and hospitality (£3.88m gross in operational efficiencies identified for 2012/13) – by reviewing and challenging budgets ‘line by line’ to ensure that we have exhausted as many options as possible before considering changes or reductions to services;

Service Redesign - is at the core of our strategy and is to avoid ‘quick-fix’ solutions in services that are critical to the delivery of these outcomes, such as Children and Families, Environmental Services and Adult Social Care. Wherever possible, we are focusing on planned, long-term, positive service changes, as opposed to withdrawing services and closing facilities.

For **Adult Social Care**, we plan to radically change services to enable and reable people to live as independently as possible and to give them more choice and control over how their needs are met. A key element of this service re-design will be the shift towards re-ablement; helping ill or disabled adults to learn or re-learn the skills for daily living and using equipment to live more independently. Re-ablement will help people realise their full potential and promote independence, whilst also releasing savings from long-term care budgets over time. Although not appropriate in every case, we expect that the vast majority of people will go through a short period of re-ablement, before their need for ongoing services is assessed and that this will result in significant savings.

Our long-term strategy for **Children and Families** is about more support for people in the very early stages of difficulties and more intensive, targeted help for families with more complex needs. These services in combination will help to reduce the pressures on and costs of child and adult protection services and wider Council services. At the same time, we will continue to focus on reducing the number of expensive external foster care placements.

For both Adult and Children’s Services, we will also improve customer access, so that we can resolve more enquiries at the first point of contact, signpost people to sources of community support and develop a comprehensive menu of self-service options accessible via the Council’s Website that will allow people, who are able and willing to, to help themselves.

Looking at **Neighbourhood Services**, our long-term strategy is to continue to offer a universal, defined standard of environmental maintenance across the Borough, with additional resources targeted at areas of greatest need.

We will proactively engage with Town and Parish Councils to look at opportunities to work co-operatively to raise environmental standards at a local level. Building on the positive recycling performance across the borough we will continue to work with residents and contractors to reduce costs on waste collection and disposal, whilst retaining high quality residential services.

We are transforming our **Library Service** into providers of the Council’s First Point Services to increase customer access to our services. The First Point Services that will be available in the libraries include:

- Applying for concessionary travel passes and blue badge parking permits;
- Requesting replacement and additional bins and recycling containers
- Reporting faulty street lights, potholes, graffiti and fly tipping
- Services for Housing & Council Tax Benefits
- Making payments for council services
- Citizen Advice Bureau surgery at First Point Wellington

Balances - At the start of 2012/13, around £3.698m was expected to be available in **balances**. This is after setting £0.25m of General Fund balances aside in order to allow greater freedom and flexibility in managing the leisure services budget.

In addition, to the available balances, the Council has a one-off contingency fund of £2.145m to supplement the base budget contingency of £1.6m on a one-off basis in 2012/13.

PUTTING OUR 'CUSTOMERS FIRST'

Most public sector organisations are both large and complex and can be confusing to the people who require and receive their services. It is often the case that people require services that span traditional operational boundaries and normal ways of working. In simple terms, customers should be able to get the services and information they need in the way they require them, quickly, accurately and cost effectively.

Since 2008 we have seen some real improvements in the way we serve our customers including the development of First Points, our ASB and Parish Council hotlines, the telephone contact centre, extended opening hours, the partial deployment of our single citizen record, a robust compliments and complaints procedure and the redesign of a number of services from the customers perspective particularly in Revenues and Benefits and Environmental Services, all of which have contributed to an ongoing improvement in customer satisfaction. However this is a journey and there remains a distance to travel.

One of our main objectives of the new Co-operative Council is to ensure that we serve the public and businesses to the best of our ability and to be known for a 'Customer First' ethos, where going that extra mile is part of our day to day activities. While the level of savings that we must find will undoubtedly impact on the range and standards of some of the services that we will provide in the future, this does not mean that there should be any erosion in the quality of our customer contact. We must place real emphasis on the way we talk, listen and correspond with our customers and service users. As a public service, we must remember that it is the public we serve and, because of the difficulties we will face due to funding cuts, it is essential that we do not allow this to distract us or use it as an excuse for accepting poorer customer service. Our mission must be, every single time, ***to treat people the way that we ourselves would want to be treated.***

To be successful we need to approach this on a number of fronts:

- 'Make Every Contact Count' – we want to break down the barriers between our services and provide our key front-line officers with the knowledge and skills to

identify where a resident might benefit from support from another Council or partner service. For example, when a Benefit Officer undertakes a house visit, they might identify whether the house does not have a smoke alarm or that they have concerns around 'slipping and tripping' hazards. These issues would, with the resident's permission be referred to the relevant services. Making Every Contact Count is part of the NHS ambition to systematically improve healthy lifestyle advice given at the front line, the health lifestyles hub at First Point Telford will be a key vehicle to make this work.

- Customer engagement will be essential. We should never assume we know best and, from experience, the most powerful outcomes are realised when a group of customers meet in the same room as the service providers with an objective of improving customer service;
- We need to focus our services even more to get them to think about what it's like to be a customer and work with them to become more efficient in the way they serve the community, removing waste, time delay, addressing unnecessary bureaucracy and form filling, helping to speed up decision making and keeping customers informed of progress. Our Workforce Development Plan needs to identify how we intend to work with those services where we know from customer feedback that customer service can be improved;
- Colleagues working on our front line have a wealth of information about what's working and what's not from our customer's perspective. We need to harness their concerns and knowledge and put remedies in place. We need the shortest routes between customer experience and those responsible for shaping employment policy in order that effective policies to achieve customer needs are implemented. Our front line staff can act as the 'voice of our customers' and therefore we need to share with them the important role that we want them to play in helping us to put customers at the heart of our business. It will be important to celebrate those individuals or teams who have gone the 'extra mile' to serve our community through appropriate reward and recognition;
- To establish a 'First Point for Business' single point of contact for businesses to readily access Council services;
- The branding of our Co-operative Council also needs to reflect our 'customer first' culture and we will need to ensure that our services reflect the way in which the community prefer to do business with us e.g. face to face, telephone, on line, self service or alongside our partners.

A 'BUSINESS SUPPORTING, BUSINESS WINNING COUNCIL'

In the Borough, we have the right mix of skills, the workforce, the land, the infrastructure, the drive and desire to be a modern centre of excellence to attract inward investment. However, to achieve this and create jobs for local people, particularly in the current economic climate, the Council has to be dynamic and proactive. It is not enough to be a passive 'business friendly' organisation rather, the Council has set out to become a 'business supporting, business winning Council'.

As part of this we need to be clear about our narrative as a place, our theme for this is “**Destination Telford – Live. Work. Visit. Locate.**” Destination management is not a marketing exercise but requires a fundamental change in the culture of the business facing areas of the Council. It is a holistic approach to how the Council is viewed by and interacts with current businesses, potential investors, visitors and potential visitors in order to make the council ‘Business Supporting, Business Winning’. While the theme ‘Destination Telford – Live. Work. Visit. Locate.’ may be regarded as brand, the strategic philosophy behind it requires all business facing service areas to buy into it and be fit for purpose. This means, for example, traditional service areas such as Planning and Building Regulations being required to become primarily enabling service areas rather than primarily regulating ones as currently.

The Council alone cannot achieve the goal of increasing jobs and investment in the Borough, and as a Co-operative Council, we are dedicated to working in partnership with public and private sector organisations to deliver jobs and economic activity in our Borough.

As part of its senior management review the Council has created a Development, Business & Housing service area with a mandate to streamline the existing processes and deliver a commercial approach to our business to truly become a ‘Business Supporting, Business Winning Council’ and to bring the customer to the heart of everything delivered within the service. The new structure will embed an approach and culture to the way we do business with investors and existing businesses and most importantly the way we support customers. Taking the best of each process, learning from the business sector and ensuring our behaviour mirrors Council values, we will improve our service, deliver new jobs, provide sustainable economic growth, regeneration and progress towards meeting housing needs.

Core to this is our new Development & Business charter. This sets out a series of pledges which will ensure a streamlined, consistent, personalised and supportive service is provided to our customers. The implementation of the Charter will require commitment by all parts of the Council, not just the teams within Development, Business & Housing and a range of partners including HCA, external consultees and Registered Providers. The result will be delivery of some ‘quick wins’ to establish Telford as a recognised Enterprise Area and that we are ‘open for business’.

An Early Action Plan has been developed as part of the Business & Development Charter. This will focus on:

- Performance, behaviour and values
- Business Support & Aftercare
- Tailored Customer Management of all business and development enquiries
- Join up and coordinate responses from all in house services so advice is timely and aligned with corporate priorities
- Add value, speed up and provide specialist support
- Land and Property enquiries – One Stop Shop for development
- Housing offer

The Council and HCA are establishing a protocol to enable the Council's property team to proactively promote and manage the development of HCA employment land as part of the localism agenda which will allow the council to facilitate growth and take decisions locally. With the management of HCA land together with existing Council owned land it provides in excess of 90% of all available employment land within the borough being managed and controlled through a single point of contact. This will provide investor confidence and certainty in taking investment decisions together with a single point of contact which will be another critical factor in securing growth.

The new service area will embed a 'critical friend' approach to delivering continual improvement in the service by working with a representatives drawn from key sectors including new and long standing investors, The Co-operative Commission Sub Group, Telford Business Board and other business networks. to work with officers to review service delivery, address barriers and further develop the offer.

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4. 'A CO-OPERATIVE COUNCIL WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY'

Being a Co-operative Council underpins everything we do as an organisation. To embed this in the organisation and in relationships with our partners and the wider community we have identified 4 work streams:

1. Adopter Programme

On becoming a Co-operative Council, an adopter programme was developed to identify practical steps to put co-operative working into practice. Key successes to date include:

- Working co-operatively with the Primary Care Trust, we have launched a Health Hub at Civic Offices First Point so that First Point customers can now also access a range of health services
- Working co-operatively with Telford College Arts & Technology, we have opened a new Employability Centre at Meeting Point House offering a full programme of training and advice sessions to help young people and adults back into employment, education and training;
- In Brookside, a pilot ward for co-operative working, we are working alongside local residents, partners, members and the Parish Council to deal with some immediate issues in this area, such as improving street lighting and an environmental clean-up involving Community Payback;
- Over 3,000 people have taken part in an extensive programme of community engagement and the results of this have been used to develop a new vision and priorities for the Borough and to inform the Council's budget strategy;

This programme will continue based on these principles:

- There will be at least one review or project in each service area (based on proposed new service areas);
- Reviews/projects will be clearly linked to the Council's emerging priorities;
- Reviews/projects will take account of the Council's service and financial planning process and budget position.

A full list of the programme can be found on the Council's website www.telford.gov.uk/

2. Co-operative Commission & Employee Commission;

One of the first steps, the Council has taken to become a Co-operative Council, is to establish a Co-operative Council Commission made up of our key partners and community leaders and an Employee Commission. **These Commissions were set up in recognition that the Council does not have all the answers or resources**

to address all of the challenges that the Borough faces. The Commissions provided an opportunity to capture the knowledge, experience and ideas of both partners and all employees.

Meeting for the first time in September 2011, both of these groups identified issues which they felt would either benefit from or add value to a 'co-operative approach'. These themes were:

Co-operative Commission

- Co-operative values and Communication
- The Image of Telford & Wrekin
- Employment, Skills & the Economy
- Volunteering
- Procurement & Commissioning

Employee Commission

- Employee Engagement & Communication
- Financial Management
- Employee Volunteering
- Social Responsibilities
- Skills Planning Development

Over this year, delivering these recommendations will be a key goal of the Council. Both Commissions will meet later in the year to review the progress the Council has made against those recommendations it has adopted. Importantly, we will be looking to both our partners and employees to share in the responsibility of delivering these recommendations.

3. Strengthening Relationships with the Community

To help strengthen our relationship with local people and organisations, we will develop a new overarching 'Settlement' in conjunction with the community. The Settlement will be based on the co-operative values (see page 5). The Settlement will set out what the Council will do and what we would like the community to do to put the agreed co-operative values into practice.

Our three existing agreements with the community, the Parish Charter, the Customer Charter and the Voluntary Sector Compact, will be updated to reflect the overarching Settlement once agreed. These agreements will set out in greater detail how we will work with Town and Parish Councils, service users and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

A particular priority will be to incorporate a number of new service pledges into an updated 'Customer Charter'. Rather than the Council deciding which pledges to make, we will develop the pledges alongside local people, based on the services that are most important to them. This approach will also mean that pledges will be two-way – clearly setting out what both the Council and the community can and will do to deliver the pledge.

4. More Effective Partnership Working

The Co-operative Council approach involves a new partnership between local people, the private and voluntary sector and public services. We recognise that the Council does not have all the answers or the resources to address all the challenges facing the Borough.

To support the development of the Co-operative Council, we will work with other organisations in the Borough to refocus partnership working. A proposed new partnership framework is shown in Appendix 1. The framework includes four main elements:

1. **Boards** – will develop the strategic direction and a high-level delivery plan for a defined agenda. These include:
 - **Children, Young People and Families Board** – with a cross-cutting brief to ensure that the needs of children, young people and families are central to the work of all of our partnership activities. This Board's Plan sets out to identify and address the key challenges which need to be addressed to improve the lives and outcomes for children young people and families.
 - **Health & Wellbeing Board** – created through the Health & Social Care Act, this Board will be formally constituted in April 2013 – until then a 'shadow' Board with responsibility for developing the provision of health and social care services in the Borough commissioned by the Council and the new Clinical Commissioning Group led by GPs. By April 2013 a Health & Wellbeing Strategy will be in place which will identify the core health and wellbeing challenges facing the Borough and set out how this new partnership will work to mitigate them.
 - **Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards** – central to protecting the most vulnerable in our community. Their role is to 'challenge' to the Council and its partners to ensure that the needs of these most vulnerable groups are met and that they are supported. Both of these Boards are 'cross-cutting' and its their role to see that safeguarding is at the heart of all that the Council and these partners sets out to achieve.
2. **Delivery Functions** – will take forward the priority actions identified by the Boards' plans. These will include 'Co-operative Neighbourhood Delivery Groups' that will work at a community level and 'Task Forces' that will be set up to address specific problems, such as families with complex needs;
3. **Engagement Partnerships & Forums** (including the Co-operative Commission) – will seek the views of key partners to inform priorities and plans;
4. **Local Strategic Partnership** – will ensure that partnership working is fit for purpose, review the work of the Boards and has a key role to play in addressing the challenges of the Borough. This partnership is made up of leaders from:
 - TCAT
 - West Mercia Police
 - Shropshire Fire & Rescue
 - Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust
 - Clinical Commissioning Group
 - CVS
 - Shropshire Chamber of Commerce
 - Telford & Wrekin Council
 - Job Centre Plus
 - Primary Care Trust

One of its core role is to understand and address the shared challenges facing the Borough and how collectively these organisations can address them. The LSP's immediate focus is on:

- **'Strengthening Families' Task Force** - to improve the outcomes for those families which need multi-agency support through better co-ordinated support (see page 24).
- **'Employment & Skills' Task Force** – lack of preparedness for work and the necessary skills has been identified as a core barrier to employment in the Borough. This task force is focused on ensuring better communication between employers, training providers (including schools) and those seeking work. It will also focus on developing and enhancing pathways to work such as apprenticeships and volunteering
- **'Corporate Parenting'** – 'Outcomes' for Children in Care are typically worse than those of their peers. The LSP has recognised that all partners not just the Council have a role to play in supporting our most vulnerable children and young people.

Co-operative Arrangements to Tackle Child & Family Poverty

Addressing poverty in the Borough is a central objective of the Council and its partners (see diagram page 24). Our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment shows that many of the Borough's core challenges are disproportionately found in the poorest communities: low levels of education attainment and high levels of children in care, high rates of teenage pregnancy, smoking in pregnancy and, poor health, including lower life expectancy.

The Council's **co-operative approach** to tackling poverty is to work together with residents, Elected Members, Town and Parish Councils, partners, local organisations and key Council services to collectively 'narrow the gap' between our communities. We want to drive this forward through:

- Effective working between the Council and its partners particularly around poverty and inequalities across communities in relation to Education, Training, Skills and Employment by developing or building upon a partnership approach in key areas across the Borough. A review of these arrangements has been completed by the Council's Co-operative Commission (see page 24) and a partnership task force is being established to implement their recommendations.
- a multi-agency **'Strengthening Families' Task Force established by the LSP** to improve the outcomes for families in the Borough. This is both a local priority and one which Government has identified – making available additional funding through a payment by results model. This task force will focus on:
 - **Engage with families** to better understand their needs and the way in which they want to receive support – rather than a simple 'we know best' model from the Council and its partners
 - **Providing co-ordinated support to families** to meet their needs and to establish their independence from support services.

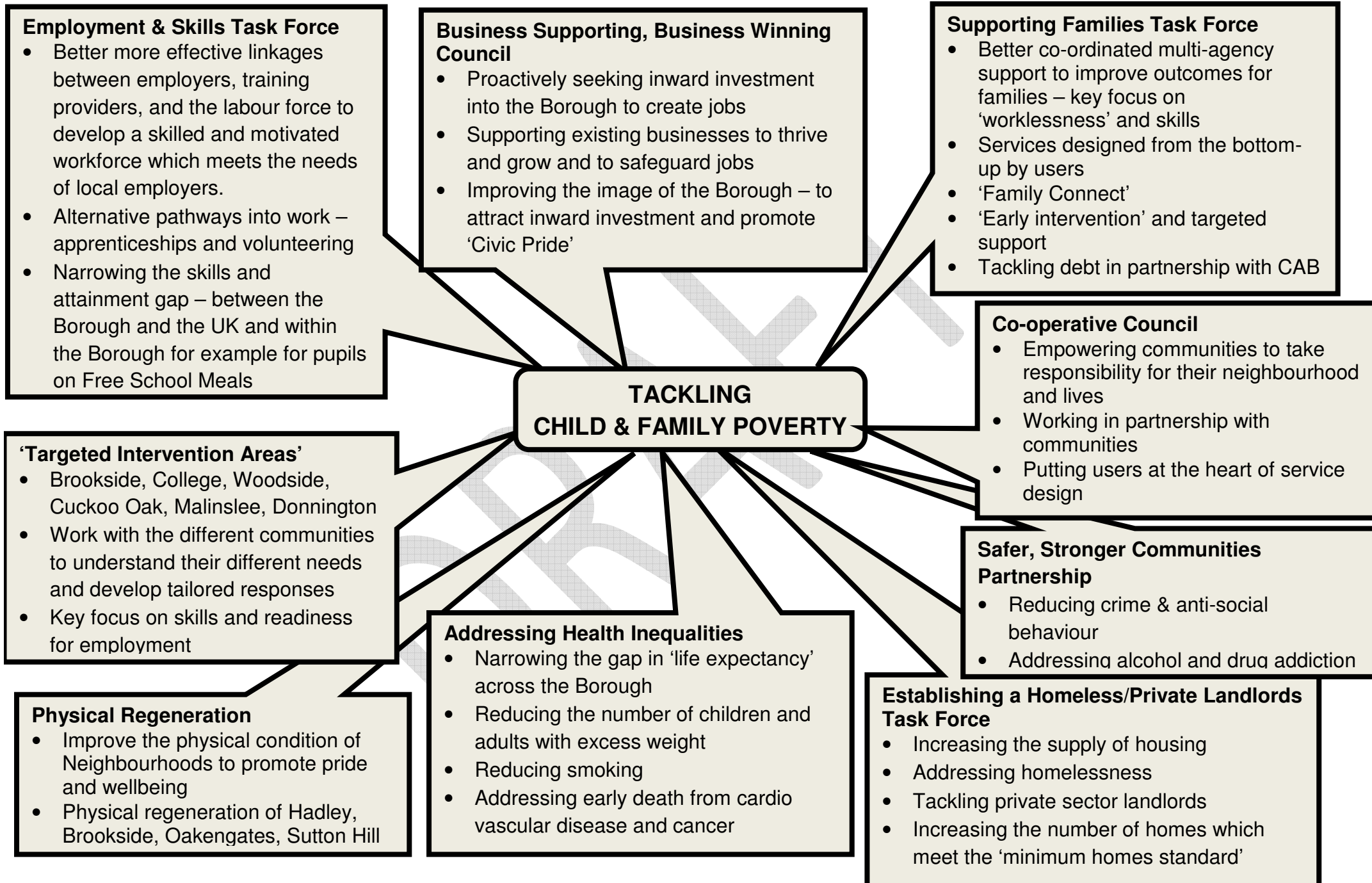
- **Taking a holistic view of the ‘family’** with an initial emphasis on supporting adults back into work, addressing criminal and anti-social behaviour and improving school attendance for children.
- Building the capacity of communities and local voluntary organisations to fully engage in a co-operative approach and enabling people to do more for themselves, this will involve the following:
 - Continuing to support new and emerging grass roots resident and community groups via mentoring and skills development, helping them to access funding, and enabling them to take an active role in identifying and addressing local need;
 - Ensuring wherever possible interventions involve an element of ‘up skilling’ local people, by working closely with colleagues from Job Centre Plus, education providers such as TCAT, and other Council services;
 - Developing and implementing local projects and interventions through volunteers from within the community, via the private sector as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility and through the use of ‘Community Payback’;
 - Providing support to small community organisations to build their capacity to develop and deliver co-operative approaches to service delivery;
 - Supporting Ward Members to engage with their communities in their role as local champions and to assist them to understand local need;
 - Working closely with Town and Parish Councils to identify alternative service delivery models.

There will be 3 areas of focus to do this:

- a) **Geographic areas** that have been identified as a priority through the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) or other Strategic Needs Assessments that are carried out locally. It is proposed to initially target the 6 wards with the greatest concentration of residents within the 10% most deprived nationally on the overall IMD as follows, **Woodside, Malinslee, Cuckoo Oak, Brookside, College and Donnington**. The Priority Action Team will operate from various ‘community bases’ within these areas in order to facilitate close working relationships at a local level.
- b) In relation to **Brookside**, this has been identified as the pilot ‘**Co-operative Ward**’ in our Co-operative Council programme and we will be developing a comprehensive action plan, in conjunction with the community, to develop and take forward this initiative.
- c) **Specific Groups** that are identified through analysis as experiencing significant inequalities in comparison to other groups in the Borough. For example, narrowing the attainment gap between children in receipt of free school meals and their peers and children of a Pakistani heritage and their peers. Addressing these two challenges have been adopted as the Council’s ‘equality objectives’

For all of these issues, the Council’s Priority Action Team will facilitate partnership arrangements to ensure that interventions – are developed that address local need. **We will not adopt a one-size-fits-all approach.**

CO-OPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS TO TACKLE CHILD & FAMILY POVERTY



It is proposed to review the existing local partnership arrangements such as the Neighbourhood Delivery Groups to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' and able to address local issues. It is not proposed to create burdensome partnership structures but to use a range of mechanisms that are appropriate to local circumstances and issues. It is likely that these local working arrangements will include:

- **Multi-agency Task Force and Task and Finish Groups** developed where appropriate to consider the data and intelligence, agree key issues and develop and monitor appropriate action plans.
- **Involvement of Ward Members, Town and Parish Councils** local agencies and services, voluntary groups, and residents as appropriate
- Groups to be actively looking for '**co-operative solutions**' to issues through consideration of alternative delivery of services or interventions, or improving existing service delivery to better meet community needs
- Delivery through or links to other existing partnerships such as **Donnington Partnership** or **Regeneration Partnerships** where applicable, this may involve those groups developing interventions that contribute to the action plans
- Reporting will be to the **LSP Executive, Cabinet** and relevant **LSP Delivery Partnerships** on progress, sharing good practice and highlighting issues and blockages as appropriate – these groups will also 'task' the local partnership to provide support in tackling specific issues identified at a strategic level.

5. Making the Change

Communication - Co-operative Council is a challenging concept to communicate. We therefore plan to continue to step-up the communication campaign as more schemes begin to give residents, employees and other groups a better understanding of what being a Co-operative Council means, the difference it makes and how they can get involved.

Skills - workforce planning sessions have been taking place with Service Delivery Areas following restructuring to establish their workforce needs for the future and how restructuring has changed these. A Workforce Strategy will be developed based on these findings together with the needs of being a Co-operative Council. The strategy will be kept under review to ensure that emerging themes and priorities are addressed

The 'day job' - whilst the Adopter Programme will include at least one major review or initiative in each service area, it is also important that those working in services that are not directly involved in this are also starting to think about how they can work more co-operatively on a day to day, smaller-scale basis, for example how could employees and service users be more involved in planning the service? To support this, we will ask all services to identify how they could work more co-operatively as part of the service planning process.

Leadership - central Co-operative Council Delivery Team has been created to play a key role in the transition to becoming a Co-operative Council and in the longer-term, a Co-operative Borough. This will focus on:

- on developing a new vision and priorities, overseeing service planning and performance management, gathering intelligence and developing partnership working, including through the Co-operative Commission ;
- on community engagement and involvement, developing relationships and co-operative working with Town and Parish Councils and the Voluntary and Community Sector, promoting volunteering and civic participation and carrying out targeted work with local communities to help 'narrow the gap'.
- proactive, priority-led communication and marketing of the Council and its services;
- developing our approach to becoming a Co-operative Council/Borough, overall project management and co-ordination of Co-operative Council work-streams and supporting policy/strategy development Council-wide, particularly the Service & Financial Planning Strategy.

DRAFT

5. DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES

Our focus as a Co-operative Council has to be on addressing the needs in the community and the delivery of key outcomes within the resources available. Following a 6 month period of consultation with the community and its partners, the Council has adopted seven priorities:

We will:

- ***put our children and young people first***
- ***protect and create jobs as a 'Business Supporting, Business Winning Council'***
- ***improve local people's prospects through education and skills training***
- ***protect and support our vulnerable children and adults***
- ***ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained***
- ***improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities***
- ***regenerate those neighbourhoods in need and work to ensure that local people have access to suitable housing***

We will put our children and young people first

We want to ensure that children and young people have the best possible start in life to improve their life chances as adults. We want children and young people to have healthy and active lives to ensure good physical and mental health throughout their lives. We want to tackle excess weight in children and young people to avoid health issues such as diabetes later in life and reduce the number of children and young people who start to smoke to reduce heart disease and cancer. We want to support children and young people to maximise their potential through education and training. We will give children and young people a voice to shape and inform their lives. We want to encourage our children and young people to play a positive active role in our communities through for example volunteering to nurture community cohesion.

It is through the delivery of our other priorities that we will put children & young people first.

We will protect and create jobs as a 'Business Supporting, Business Winning Council'

We will work better, more effectively with our partners to support existing businesses and to attract new businesses and investment into the Borough to create jobs. We will work to support entrepreneurs, whatever the size of the business.

Our measures to assess progress against this priority are:

- A net increase in number of jobs

- Reduce unemployment in the Borough
- Reduce youth unemployment (aged 16 to 24)
- Increase the number of young people in education, employment or training

We will improve local people's prospects through education and skills training

Through investment in education and training, we will work to ensure that all local people have opportunities to fulfil their potential. We will work to address inequalities in educational attainment to reduce deprivation in the Borough. We want to keep our own local talent and develop a well educated and trained workforce. We will improve the prospects of 18 to 24 year olds through apprenticeships and work experience opportunities.

- Improve achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy
- Narrow the gap between children on free school meals and their peers at KS2 and KS4*
- Narrow the gap between Pakistani children and their peers at KS2 and KS4*
- Increase achievement of level 4 or above in both English and maths at KS2
- Increase achievement of 5 or more A star - C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and maths
- Increase achievement of a level 2 qualification by the age of 19
- Increase achievement of a level 3 qualification by the age of 19
- Increase the percentage of apprenticeships in the Council which lead to employment, education or training.
- Increase the percentage of the local workforce with level 4 and level 3 qualifications

(* these two measures have been adopted as the Council's Equality Objectives)

We will protect and support our vulnerable children and adults

The best place for most vulnerable children, young people and adults is with their families and in their own communities. Children will be in care for the right reasons. Services for families will be stronger, and will offer support early on. Outcomes for children in care will improve and adults will keep their independence in their communities for longer. We will work to support children and adults who care for a family or friend.

Improve Outcomes for Children in Care:

- Increase percentage of Children in Care who get 5 good GCSE's
- Increase the percentage of Children in Care who are in education, employment or training.
- Reduce the number of children in care
- Reduce the number of children who are the subject of a child protection plan for more than 2 years
- Reduce the number of children who are the subject of a child protection plan for the second time
- Increase the percentage of our children in care living with local foster carers

- **Support people to live independently:**

- Increase social care self-directed support
- Increase the percentage of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into re-ablement services
- Reduce people receiving re-ablement services who need ongoing support
- Reduce Delayed transfers of care from hospital

Improve carers' health and wellbeing:

- Improve carer-reported quality of life
- Carers who feel they have been included in discussions about the person they care for

We will ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained

Through partnership working, we will work to improve the physical condition of our neighbourhoods reduce the level of crime and anti-social behaviour in the Borough to improve neighbourhood pride. We will work with families that display anti-social behaviour and people will not be as worried about this issue and crime. We want to celebrate the things that are special about Telford and Wrekin and work to develop a stronger local identity. Volunteering will be at the heart of community action and we will work with local people to build respect for the Borough.

We want to have high and consistent levels of cleanliness across all of our neighbourhoods. The condition of roads and footways will have improved. We will have one of the highest recycling rates in the West Midlands and household waste services will be efficient and easy to use.

Reduce Crime and Antisocial Behaviour

- Reduce overall level of crime
- Reduce the overall level of anti-social behaviour

Reduce fear of crime

- Reduce residents' fear of crime

Create a Cohesive Community

- Increase the percentage of residents who feel that their neighbourhood is one where people of different backgrounds get on well together
- Increase resident satisfaction with:
 - Recycled and household waste collection
 - Cleanliness of local neighbourhood
 - The condition of roads and footways
 - District parks
 - Town Park
- Increase recycling rates

We will regenerate those neighbourhoods in need and work hard to ensure that local people have access to suitable housing

We will complete our plans to regenerate Brookside, Hadley, Sutton Hill and Oakengates. We will work with our partners to ensure that there is enough good quality housing for residents and newcomers into the Borough. New housing developments will be well designed and help to build sustainable communities and there will be a balance of private and affordable housing that meets the needs of the local community. We want the condition of privately rented accommodation to be consistently better.”

- Deliver 700 new homes each year
- Increase the number of properties that meet the ‘decent homes standard’

Reduce Homelessness

- Reduce the number of homeless households
- Reduce the number of homeless 16-17 year olds
- Reduce the use of B&B as temporary accommodation

We will improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities

There is a significant ‘gap’ in life expectancy and differences in the experience of ill-health between different communities across the Borough. We want to address this by improving the health and wellbeing in our most deprived communities. Key to this will be the adoption of ‘healthy lifestyles’, including using the opportunities provided by our leisure and culture facilities for people to become more active.

Improve the health of the Borough

- Reduce the percentage of children who are obese
- Improve the percentage of infants who are breastfed
- Reduce early death before 75 years from cardiovascular diseases (heart disease and stroke) and cancers
- Increase male and female life expectancy
- Increase the numbers of people immunised against preventable diseases

Ensure people have a positive experience of health and care services:

- Increase the proportion of people accessing services who feel they were treated with dignity and respect
- Increase the number of Dignity Champions across the Borough

Reduce risk taking behaviour

- Reduce the under 18 conception rate
- Reduce smoking related deaths
- Reduce hospital admissions attributable to smoking
- Reduce smoking in pregnancy

6. TELFORD & WREKIN THE BOROUGH: KEY FACTS & FIGURES

THE PLACE

- Located at the heart of the UK, the Borough covers some 112 miles², **68% of which is classified as 'rural'**
- The key settlements are:
 - **Telford** - made-up from 1960s new town estates and 'Borough towns' which existed before Telford was developed. These Borough Towns include Oakengates, Wellington, Madeley and Dawley
 - **Newport** - to the north-west of the Borough and the location of Harper Adams University College.
 - **Ironbridge** - a UNESCO World Heritage Site located on the northern banks of the River Severn the birthplace of the industrial revolution.
- The Borough is well connected to the UK via the M54 and Telford International Railfreight park. Developed as a new town, Telford has a modern road network with little congestion and ample capacity.

POPULATION

- The population of the Borough is some 170,300 (2010)
- Its is 'younger' than the national age structure:
 - 0 to 15 population 34,300 20.1% compared 18.7% nationally
 - 65+ population 24,800 14.5% compared to 16.5% nationally
- The population is growing and is expected to rise to 196,300 by 2026.
- As it grows the population is changing:
 - By 2026 the number of residents aged 65+ will have increased by 37%
 - The proportion of the population from Black or Minority Ethnic Group is increasing – from 5.4% in 2001 to 9% currently

ECONOMY

- There are some 4,500 registered businesses in the Borough employing around 81,000 people.
- Some 20% of these jobs are in foreign owned companies: 48 are US, 28 German, 16 French and 14 Japanese.
- Manufacturing remains important in the Borough. The proportion of jobs in key sectors are:
 - Public 26%
 - Retail, hotels and restaurants 23%
 - Banking and finance 21.7%
 - Manufacturing 18%
- There is a strong bias in local economy towards automotive and advanced manufacturing, logistical and engineering related activities. The Borough is a favoured location for Tier 1 and Tier 2 automotive suppliers including Borgers, Denso, Cobra, Johnson Controls and Stadco.

- The Borough has some 400 acres of available land for commercial development – more than any other local authority in the West Midlands.
- Weekly wage rates in the Borough (£459) remain below the national average (£507)

EDUCATION & SKILLS

- The Borough has excellent education and training providers: including local schools, New College, Telford College Arts & technology, Harper Adams University and the University of Wolverhampton.
- Educational outcomes in the Borough are improving:
 - GCSE (5 A* - C including English & Maths) attainment (57.9%) has risen each year for the past 5 years, closing the gap to national rates (58.4%)
 - Foundation stages (78 points) – is now 52%, a 15% improvement from 2007.
- However, there are still significant differences in outcomes for children in receipt of free school meals, Pakistani heritage children and Children in Care.
- Higher level workforce skills NVQ3 (15.6%) and NVQ4 (28.4%) level qualifications are improving, although they both remain below national average (16.2% and 35.6% respectively).

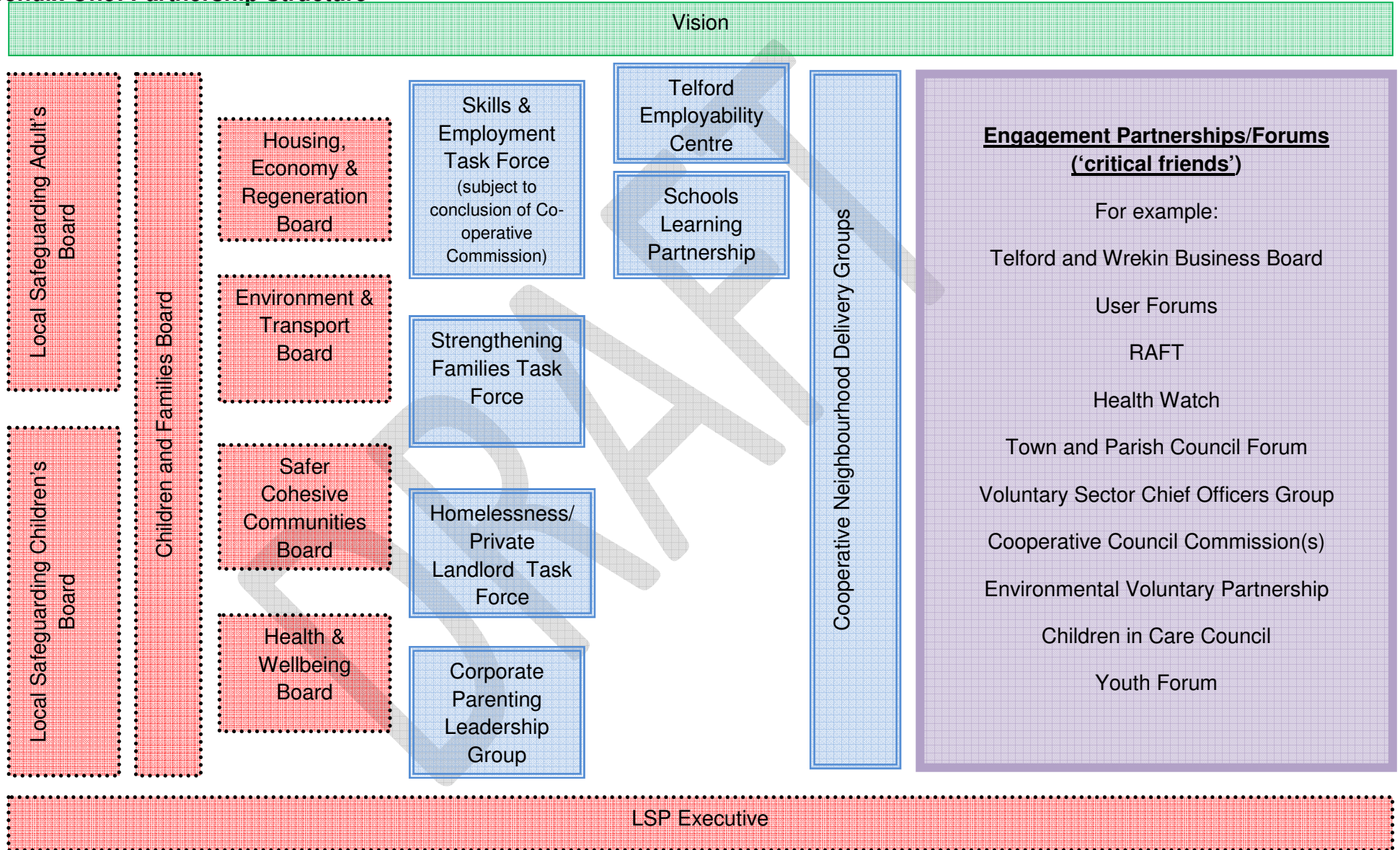
DEPRIVATION

- The Borough is ranked as the 96th most deprived local authority area in England
- 14 neighbourhood areas are ranked among the 10% most deprived in England. These are focused in 6 wards: Woodside, Malinslee, Cuckoo Oak, Brookside, Hadley & Leegomery, Dawley Magna, College and Donnington.
- Around a quarter (24%) of the Borough's total population live in the amongst the 20% most deprived parts of England.

HEALTH

- Although increasing, male life expectancy is worse than the national average (77.5 compared to 78.6 years). The female rate is broadly the same as the national rate.
- The two key causes of early death in the Borough are cancer (217 per year) and cardiovascular disease (140 per year) and rates are worse than the national average.
- Levels of breastfeeding and smoking in pregnancy are worse than the national average, particularly among young mothers
- Although improving, childhood obesity in 4-5 year olds remains above the national rate (24.9% and 22.6% respectively). However the rate for 10-11 year olds is below the national rate and falling.
- Teenage pregnancy rates are falling (47.5/1000 pop 15-17 year olds) but remain above the national rate (35.4).

Appendix One: Partnership Structure



Key:

Pink – Strategic Function

Blue – Delivery Function

Purple – Engagement/Critical Friend