

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 14 FEBRUARY 2019

APPENDIX 16 - DRIVING DELIVERY OF THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES – 6 MONTH PERFORMANCE REPORT (1 APRIL 2018 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 19)

PART A) – SUMMARY

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

1.1. This Appendix provides an overview of the progress made delivering the Council's community facing priorities.

2. INFORMATION

2.1. The refreshed Council Plan approved by Council on 10 April 2018, sets out 7 community facing priorities that provide the strategic and operational focus of the organisation. These are:

- **Protect and support our most vulnerable children and adults**
- **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**
- **Ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained**
- **Support neighbourhoods most in need and work to ensure that local people have access to suitable housing**
- **Improve the Health & Wellbeing of our Communities and Address Health Inequalities**

2.2. To understand the progress made delivering these priorities, a performance report is presented to Cabinet twice each year. Delivery of these priorities relies on partnership working, and for many of the priorities, external factors beyond the Council's control have impact on our ability to make the progress we would always like to.

2.3. In this Appendix, headline findings for the first six months of 2018/19 are presented against each priority. This includes positive progress and challenges, and in this particular report, any significant changes from the 2017/18 end-of-year report presented to Cabinet in July 2018.

2.4. Highlights of our pressures and successes:

Pressures

- Continued increasing levels of **demand on Adult and Children's Social Care**
- **Enhanced statutory responsibility to prevent homelessness** with insufficient resources allocated from Government.
- The **uncertainty of Brexit** is impacting on business investment in the Borough
- Budget and cost pressures of delivering the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) agenda.

We continue to work to reduce these pressures through, for example investment in staff training, implementing the Early Help Offer and reviewing Council services to further improve efficiency.

Successes

Despite delivering £117m+ savings we continue to innovate and deliver. Examples include:

- ✓ **Attracting and securing growth** - we are the 7th fastest growing population in the UK (outside of London) and the fastest growing authority for housing sector growth.
- ✓ **Through NuPlace** increased the availability of high quality homes in the private rented sector acting as a committed and responsible landlord and bringing in a total revenue benefit to the Council for last year of £1.238m.
- ✓ **Putting Telford on the map** - successful delivery of the Telford @ 50 events led to over 100,000 residents and visitors participating in our vibrant cultural calendar.
- ✓ **Working to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in care** - adoption timescales are 4th best in the England.

2.5. This Appendix demonstrates that despite the £117m+ savings the Council has made and increased demand for services, as an organisation we remain focussed on delivering our community priorities and we continue to make real, positive progress in many areas.

2.6. Protect and support our most vulnerable children and adults

Children

2.6.1. We want children to live safely at home but where they cannot we want the very best for our children in care and care leavers.

2.6.2. We have continued to sustain the reduction in the number of children on Child Protection Plans (down from 297 at the same point last year to 226). The number of children in care continues to be around 370. Importantly, the rate of re-referrals and child protection plan re-registrations have improved giving confidence that decision making is sound. (Re-referrals have reduced from 21.2% at the end of 2017/18 to 19% at the end of September and re-registrations from 17.5% at end of 2017/18 to 17% at the end of September).

- 2.6.3. Where appropriate, we want children in care to benefit from adoption, in a timely fashion. The Council's performance on this is good with the process from a child entering care to moving in with an adoptive family taking one year (345 days) compared with statistical neighbour rate of 516 days.
- 2.6.4. Whilst placement stability of children in care continued to improve through the first six months of 2018/19 we want to see this improve further. At the same point last year 44% of children in care who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years have been in a placement for more than 2 years, this has increased to 59% at the end of September. There are significant variables that impact upon performance that include complexity and age of child coming into care, placement sufficiency of foster carers, matching of child with appropriate placement, education provision etc. The new refreshed Permanence Strategy, placement stability panel (which looks at a placement when there are concerns about stability which any agency can refer into to) and learning from disruptions will continue to assist in improving performance.
- 2.6.5. The development of the Local Offer for Care Leavers (which will be published this Spring) will outline our commitment to further develop our support for Care Leavers to live independently and ensure they are in education, employment and training.
- 2.6.6. The work undertaken over the last 12 months to improve our core processes is now demonstrated in the timeliness of our Children & Family Assessments, which has improved from 73% at the end of 2017/18 to 90%, exceeding our target of 82%. We continue to improve our performance through a variety of methods, including implementing our Recruitment and Retention Strategy (further improving skills and capacity).

Adults

- 2.6.7. As demand continues to grow on Adult Social Care, our resources are increasingly focussed upon those with the most complex of needs within our community.
- 2.6.8. In the first half of the year there were 1,483 contacts into the service (an increase on 1,274 at the same point the previous year), with only 27% required to have a Care Act Assessment. The other 73% have been provided with information & advice or signposted to other agencies or the voluntary sector. These rates are comparable to the previous year (71.2% at the same point in 2017/18).
- 2.6.9. We continue to reduce the number of people in residential care particularly through the development of supported accommodation and the use of re-ablement and assistive technology to increase independence. Our rate of 182 admissions per 100,000 population 65+ in the first six months of 2018/19 was down slightly from the same point the previous year (188) – we are on track to remain significantly better than the national rate therefore supporting more people to remain in their own home for longer.
- 2.6.10. As reported previously, with more people in Telford ageing we do have some challenges around the long-term impact of our approach to re-enablement when we

compare our rate to other local authorities but this is improving. Equally, we want more people to take control of their own support through ‘direct payments’.

2.6.11. The pressures within the NHS are well known. It is essential that we continue to play our part by ensuring that people with complex needs who are ready to leave hospital are enabled to do so. We are successfully supporting this as measured by “Delays in Transfer from Hospital”. Our performance continues to be significantly better than both the national and regional rates (at year end the national rate was 12.3 significantly higher than our rate of 4.7).

2.6.12. Quality in adult social care provision is measured by CQC ratings. Our My Options CQC ratings for Lakewood Court, Shared Lives and Community Support are all ‘good’.

2.7. Put our children and young people first

2.7.1. This is a cross-cutting priority which is delivered through our other priorities – this is about ensuring that all children can attend a good or outstanding school, that they have good health and diet, are able to access the right training and job opportunities to fulfil their potential.

2.8. Protect and create jobs as a “Business Supporting, Business Winning Council”

2.8.1. Telford has been described by Department of International Trade as the “Beating heart of Foreign Direct Investment”:

- **7th fastest growing authority in England outside of London**
- **Number 1 for housing growth in 2018;**
- **98% of the Borough have access to superfast broadband speeds.**

2.8.2. There are though challenges. Some are as a result of uncertainty about BREXIT - nationally, investment and expansions are down and this is mirrored locally and there are also clear challenges in the high street as shopping habits change and centres need to provide a wider leisure and retail offer to maintain footfall.

2.8.3. In response our strategy is to focus on strengths and developing opportunities:

- The Borough is one of only 3 Department of International Trade National High Potential Opportunity Pilots, the only one in the UK for Agri-Tech;
- New opportunities of auto development around “light weighting” and “battery” technology;
- Using our unique land deal with Homes England to ensure development sites are de-risked and prepared for investors to move onto – and to acquire land and build premises bespoke to investors requirements through our Growth Fund;
- Continue to offer business support - we have continued to see an increase in footfall at the Growth Hub and the number of start-up businesses supported;

- Seek mechanisms (including Government grant funding) to support SMEs to automate production, increase their skills base and understand and provide for the whole digital agenda, including cyber security;
- Seeking to support the High Street through Pride in Our High Street grants to bring empty units back into use and to improve retail facades to improve the look and feel of the High Street as a destination for leisure activity. For example two new business were created in Oakengates through the empty premises grant in the first six months of the year. Oakengates through the empty premises grant in the first six months of the year with others in the pipeline; and
- Linked with reviving the High Street, delivering the Young High Street Challenge, a national first for engaging young people in the future of their High Street

2.9. Improve local people's prospects through Education and Skills training

- 2.9.1. Whilst school performance in the Borough is now amongst the best in the West Midlands, we want to ensure that all pupils, whatever their background fulfil their potential. At KS2, pupils in Telford perform 3% points higher than the national average. In terms of KS4, attainment for SEND, disadvantaged, children in care, and pupils with English as an additional language, these are broadly in line with the performance of these groups nationally. A continuing area of challenge is the attainment of the relatively small number of Pakistani pupils which was lower than Pakistani pupils nationally.
- 2.9.2. 3.3% of the school population have EHCPs (Education Health and Care Plans). We have continued to make progress regarding timeliness whereby 98% of all new plans issued were within the 20 week timescale (including valid exceptions). This is an increase from 77% in 2017 and 23% in 2016.
- 2.9.3. The number of fixed term exclusions across the authority remains a concern. However, recent data indicates that the rate of exclusions in both primary schools and in most secondary schools is beginning to reduce. A small number of secondary schools are nevertheless, still showing a high exclusion rate.
- 2.9.4. Addressing the above challenges is a key focus of the Telford Education Strategic Partnership which includes Heads from primary, secondary and special schools, the Principal of Telford College, early years representatives and the Severn Teaching Schools Alliance.
- 2.9.5. Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training, has been an ongoing challenge for Telford and Wrekin with too many young people in this position. We continue to make progress against this – narrowing the gap to the national position. We are now better than national for the number of 'not knows' (young people where we do not know what they are doing) but higher than national for our NEETs (5.4% compared to 2.7% nationally). Importantly, engagement and participation in our Life Ready, Work Ready programme continues to grow with 9 primary schools now signed up (up from 0 at the same point the previous year).
- 2.9.6. In April 2018, as part of the implementation of the Telford Online Digital Strategy, we launched iDEA (The Duke of York Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award) to give people the opportunity to develop their digital skills and gain a nationally accredited

certificated. It was launched initially to schools and then to the wider community; to date over 2,300 badges have been completed.

2.10. Ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained

2.10.1. Our Community Safety Partnership is core to ensuring that our neighbourhoods are safe. The Partnership continues to progress its 3 priorities, tackling child sexual exploitation (CSE), addressing domestic abuse and tackling crime and reducing antisocial behaviour. From a Council perspective:

- CSE continues to be a key priority of the Council, with continual raising awareness campaigns (TellSomeone), training for all employees and increasing the capacity to tackle the issue and support those affected by it. The Independent review into CSE in the Borough will continue to progress during 2019.
- Addressing Domestic Abuse – the updated partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy was endorsed by Cabinet in December 2018 and sets out how we, alongside our partners will address the levels of domestic abuse in the Borough.
- Tackling Crime and Reducing Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) - from a Council perspective, our enforcement programme is core to this. We continue to make full use of all our enforcement powers and results include reports of fly tipping down by 4% on the same period last year. More specifically, there has been a 31% reduction in fly tipping reports from the Brookside area as a result of our intervention and education campaigns - this is currently being deployed to other hot spot areas. A total of 115 fixed penalty notices covering various aspects of ASB have been issued during this 6 month period. We have also secured a number of high profile prosecutions involving HMO landlords, food businesses operators due to food hygiene offences and private hire taxi drivers caught plying for hire. We have issued a substantial number of improvement notices and warning notices to a cross section of business regarding their duty of care to dispose of waste correctly. Our Environmental Health Officers are also on track to achieve 100% of our Borough wide food safety inspections by Feb 2019. Our social media campaigns, highlighting our enforcement successes, are helping to get the message out that we will take action against the minority who continue to blight our community.

2.10.2. Idverde have been appointed as our new grounds and cleansing contractor commencing from April 2019. The contract will deliver major improvements in standards for both grounds and cleansing services. Specifically, in relation to more frequent street sweeping and litter picking, and protecting the additional grass cuts currently funded by the Pride in Our Community programme. In achieving these enhanced standards we have also secured excellent value for money by delivering savings of £500,000 per annum through the new contract.

2.10.3. Our Pride in our Community Programme remains a core driver of our approach to ensure that neighbourhoods are well maintained. During 2018/19, the Council is investing £45m into roads, footpaths, drainage, structures and street lighting.

- 2.10.4. Over 17,000 street lights have been replaced with LED lighting and the programme will complete in March 2019 with over 20,000 street lights being upgraded to LED, saving over £500,000 per annum whilst improving safety at the same time. We have resurfaced 60,000m of footpaths and 19,000m of roads, completed a major white lining refresh across the Borough and delivered 216 additional off street parking spaces to date with more to come over the next 6 months. We are ranked 6th out of 112 authorities for satisfaction with our Highways.
- 2.10.5. We have responded to 468 Pride in Our Community rapid response jobs including site clear ups, weeding, overhanging trees and vandalism during this reporting period and have planted 1 million spring bulbs at our key gateways to the Borough. 99.9% of household waste collections were also completed on time (5.8million collections per year).

2.11. Support neighbourhoods most in need and work to ensure that local people have access to suitable housing

- 2.11.1. A key priority has been to improve standards in the private rented housing sector through the Better Homes for All initiative. This combines enforcement with education in order to tackle rogue landlords whilst also recognising and supporting good landlords. As part of Better Homes for All, we have established a Rogue Landlord Taskforce and have also stepped up our enforcement resulting in 120 legal notices and 2 prosecutions. We have also introduced a new Landlord Accreditation Scheme, which currently has more than 90 members, provided new advice and support for tenants including free tenant passports and launched the first ever Better Homes for All awards which are due to take place in February 2019.
- 2.11.2. Homelessness continues to be a challenge, however, significant improvements have been made in the proportion of people prevented from being homeless due to an increased focus on prevention. This is in part also linked to the implementation of the new Homelessness Reduction Act which extended the time period during which local authorities should treat someone as threatened by homelessness (from 28 to 56 days), giving longer for homelessness to be prevented. These improvements have been delivered in conjunction with a range of local partners. Additional legacy funding of £100k has also now been allocated to implement a package of measures targeted at tackling the root causes of homelessness
- 2.11.3. At year end we reported the increased pressure in using temporary accommodation. In the first six months of the year we have seen a significant decrease in the length of time in temporary accommodation, from 26.4 weeks at the end of 2017/18 to 19.6 weeks. However, temporary accommodation continues to be under pressure as we are seeing more complex cases where it is more difficult to find 'move on accommodation'.
- 2.11.4. The Council's wholly owned housing company, NuPlace, now has 290 homes available for private rent. Demand for these properties is high and are oversubscribed. Overall, we are on-track to deliver a portfolio of 420 houses by 2020. Importantly, we continue to sustain excellent performance with regard to the management of NuPlace properties and tenancies: minimising rent loss (2%),

timely repairs (100%) and rent collection (95%). Further to a report to Cabinet in June 2018, NuPlace has now identified a site to build 19 specialist accommodation units and subject to planning permission will start work on site in Spring 2019, with an anticipated completion date of Spring 2020. The total revenue benefit to the Council last year from NuPlace, after covering all additional costs, was £1.238m. NuPlace made a pre-tax profit of £0.343m in 2017/18, expected to increase to £0.5m in 2019/20.

2.11.5. Overall, housing growth remains strong in the Borough with a projected net completion of 1200+ dwellings in 2018/19 with 270 classified as 'affordable'. The new Local Plan is an essential part of our ability to manage growth and secure the funding necessary to develop the associated infrastructure to accommodate growth.

2.11.6. The Local Plan enables the Council to manage growth within the Borough and protect green spaces. We continue to increase the area of protected green space in the Borough, with the designation of a further 50+ green guarantee sites and approval to (currently) 15 Local Nature Reserves across the Borough, providing three times the national standard provision.

2.12. Improve the Health & Wellbeing of our Communities and Address Health Inequalities

2.12.1. We continue to work with communities to improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities within our Borough. A core element of this strategy is to develop more community capacity to support each other to improve their wellbeing – for example we now have 66 trained health champions working with passion in their communities. They are supporting a wide range of activities such as the 'Feed the Birds' programme aimed at reducing social isolation. We are supporting a wide range of community groups and residents to offer more peer and volunteer support, and get involved in local projects to improve wellbeing using the assets and resources of those communities. A recent example is working with a local volunteer chef and Wrekin Housing Trust to start 'Men in Kitchens' supporting older men to get together and learn to cook some meals.

2.12.2. The Healthy Lifestyle Service has evolved over this year. We have in-sourced the external quit smoking service and incorporated lifestyle support for children, young people and families so that we are able to offer holistic behaviour change support for all ages. The service are nearly on track to delivering the target number of brief interventions (17,482 or 97% of target) and, whilst this represents a reduction on last year, more brief interventions are being delivered by our health champions in their communities thereby allowing our healthy lifestyle advisors to focus their work on supporting clients with behaviour change. Smoking quit rates have improved and are at 53% which is better than the national average and the service is targeting support at those most in need, for example, manual workers and those with mental health problems

2.12.3. Our leisure and outdoor education offer plays an important part of this. In addition to free swimming for under 16s and free swimming lessons for children through primary schools, the number of children having swimming lessons was above target in the first 6 months of the year. Whilst the overall number of visits to leisure

centres is being impacted by competition from new budget gyms entering Telford, there are more than 7,000 Aspirations members using the Council's health and fitness facilities.

- 2.12.4. A key area where we want to have greater impact is **excess weight in children** – provisional figures for 2017/18 show a slight improvement in proportion of reception age children with excess weight (22.6% down from 24.8% the previous year) but shows an increase in the proportion of children in year 6 with excess weight (38.2% up from 34.6%). As previously reported, this remains a significant challenge for the Borough and nationally; it is one where external factors and policy drivers, e.g. the debate over sugary drinks, impacts on the progress that we can make on this. This challenge was the focus of the Public Health Annual Report published in September 2018; the report made 24 recommendations for a whole system approach to tackle this issue and we will be closely monitoring the impact of these actions over the next 12 months.
- 2.12.5. When drug and alcohol misuse becomes more of a problem, we want to engage those people with addiction and dependence issues into our Telford STARS (Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Service) and our peer-led recovery organisations, such as TACT, Recharge and A Better Tomorrow for treatment and wider support. The treatment completion rates for people with alcohol misuse have markedly improved, and are now significantly better than the England average, with 51.1% completing treatment in Q2 2018/19, compared to 44.5% during 2017/18. Improving treatment completion rates for people with drug misuse issues will be a key priority the Drug & Alcohol Strategy which is currently being refreshed.
- 2.12.6. Creating cultural events that people enjoy creates a sense of wellbeing within the Borough. Our successful calendar of Council-run events during our 50th Anniversary year were attended by over 100,000 people and over 40 events organised by our communities potentially reached more than 30,000 people. Many community groups, schools, businesses and residents themselves got involved – for example giving 759 volunteer hours to help these events run smoothly or 1,000 people having their photo taken as part of our People's Portrait Gallery. This successful Telford@50 year has raised the profile of Telford locally, regionally and nationally. Also, with Big Top in particular, new audiences have been for our theatre. The Place, with ticket sales up by 16,500 tickets or 27% in the first 9 months of this year compared to 2017/18.