

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 27th June, 2013 at 5.00 p.m. at the AFC Telford Learning Centre, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 3rd JULY, 2013

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 8th JULY, 2013)

PRESENT: Councillor K.S. Sahota (Leader and Chair), E.A. Clare, S. Davies, A.R.H. England, W.A.M. McClements, H. Rhodes, C.F. Smith and P.R. Watling

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A.J. Eade (Conservative Group Leader), Councillor W.L. Tomlinson (Liberal Democrat/Independent Group Leader)

The Leader reported that Paul Clifford, Director of Care, Health & Wellbeing, was retiring from the Council on 5 July 2013. On behalf of the Council, he thanked Paul for all his many years of service and contribution to the achievements of the Council, and extended best wishes for his retirement.

CB-11 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 30th May 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

CB-12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor R.A. Overton

CB-13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CB-14 SERVICE & FINANCIAL PLANNING – 2012/13 OUT-TURN AND 2013/14 UPDATE

Key Decision identified as **Financial Monitoring – 2012/13 Out-turn and Initial Trends for 2013/14** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 30 April 2013.

Recommendation to Full Council – not subject to Call-in

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance, which informed Members of the final outturn position for

Revenue and Capital for 2012/13, and the initial trends for the current financial year.

The gross revenue budget for 2012/13 was £411m – and the net budget for reporting purposes was just over £126m. The revenue outturn position was within budget, with a final net under-spend of £0.06m (-0.04% of net budget). Given the context of having to make £19m of budget savings in 2012/13, this was a positive year-end position and thanks were extended to the management team, officers and Cabinet colleagues for their strong and effective financial management and the ability to drive out efficiencies. There had been a number of favourable variations during the year which contributed to the final out-turn position. These included further savings of £2.1m relating to vacant posts, £0.9m arising from treasury management activities, reduced fleet/transport costs, and a contingency balance of £1.7m at year end. Provision had been made to create the £2.5m one-off budget contingency for 2013/14 as approved as part of the agreed Service and Financial Planning Strategy.

There had been a number of service pressures experienced in 2012/13, particularly the cost of children in care placements (£2.7m overspend relating to both placements and the use of agency staff), adult care and support services (£5.5m overspend on purchasing care packages, although this was part mitigated by one-off funding from the NHS), winter maintenance costs (£0.324k overspend due to adverse weather conditions) and income shortfalls totalling £1.7m.

Capital spend ended the year at £62.8m, against an approved estimate of £79.7m, which was in the main due to re-phasing into 2013/14. The main scheme delays/re-phasing to 2013/14 were detailed in the report, along with a number of new approvals and virements.

Council Tax collection (£61m), Business Rates (£69m) and sales ledger income collection (£37m) were all slightly behind target for the year. However, this was in line with the national trend and reflected the current economic climate.

Summaries of the outturn on revenue and capital, along with major variations, were appended to the report.

The Council faced an even more challenging year in 2013/14, and there were some emerging issues and cost pressures. These were outlined in the report, along with measures being taken to control and monitor expenditure.

During the ensuing debate, the Opposition Group Leaders welcomed the balanced budget. Some questions were raised around the capital programme, particularly the likely impact of delays and re-phasing of schemes, as well as the projected shortfall in capital receipts in 2013/14, including implications on revenue spending. The Cabinet Member stressed that the main capital spending projects, such as school building and the Southwater development, were long term projects where the costs were spread over many years, with variations within individual years to be expected.

RESOLVED – to RECOMMEND to COUNCIL that

- (a) the Revenue out-turn position and related virements for 2012/13, shown in Appendix 3 of the report, and the transfer to reserves detailed in paragraph 6.4 of the report, be approved, subject to audit by the Council's external auditors;**
- (b) the Capital out-turn position and related supplementary estimates, virements and re-phasing, shown in Appendix 4 of the report, be approved;**
- (c) performance against income targets be noted;**
- (d) the initial pressure areas identified for 2013/14 be noted.**

CB-15 PLANNING OF SCHOOL PLACES: PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL IN LAWLEY

Key Decision identified as **Ironstone School, Lawley** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 30 April 2013.

Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Education & Skills, which sought approval to establish a new primary school in the Lawley area to cater for the increasing numbers of children living there as a result of on-going housing development.

The increase in demand for primary school places in the Lawley area had so far been accommodated by expanding the capacity of the existing schools closest to the new housing developments. However, the continuing pace of development meant more primary school places were necessary, which the existing schools would be unable to provide. A primary school site had been designated within the new development, and it was forecast that a one form of entry school (210 places) was likely to be needed by September 2015.

The expected cost of the new school was £4.7m, which would be funded through a developer's contribution (via a Section 106 Agreement) of £3.6m and £1.1m from the Council's capital programme. It was anticipated that the new school would need to expand to provide a two form of entry school, and the central infrastructure would be designed and built to accommodate up to 420 pupils.

Under Government rules, the new school would have to be an academy, independent of the local authority. The report set out the processes that had to be followed to establish a new academy and to invite proposals/bids.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the establishment of a new 210 place primary school within the Lawley area to open in September 2015 be approved;**

- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Education & Skills, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, to take the steps necessary to progress the new school, including inviting proposals under Section 6A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 as amended by the Education & Inspections Act 2011.

CB-16 REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2013/14

Non-Key Decision

The Leader presented the report of the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & Public Protection, which set out the appointments to outside bodies that the Council was required to make for 2013/14.

The list of outside bodies for which appointments were required for 2013/14 was appended to the report. Nominations had been sought from the political groups for those appointments that were not by position. The nominations received were shown in the Appendix.

RESOLVED – that the nominations to represent the Council on Outside Bodies for 2013/14, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.

CB-17 SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE CHILDREN IN CARE PLACEMENT STRATEGY

Non-Key Decision

Councillor M.G. Ion, Chair of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, presented the Committee's report into the Council's Children in Care Placement Strategy.

The Committee had focussed on three main strands of enquiry:

- Whether current policies, procedures and practices kept children and young people in the Council's care safe?
- If the Council's strategy and processes for care placements offered the best value for money?
- What responsibility, if any, did the Council have for children placed in care in the Borough by other local authorities?

Thanks were expressed to the people who had provided evidence to the Committee, particularly foster carers and social workers, as well as senior Council officers and the Police. Visits to children in care were postponed, and, while it was recognised that the complex needs of many children in care made this challenging, it was hoped to meet with them at some point.

The Committee had concluded that the main strengths were the presence of a full time Director of Children's Services, which had made the lines of accountability much clearer, and joint working with other partner agencies, particularly the police. There were some areas that it was felt could and must be strengthened, and the report set out a number of recommendations aimed

at addressing the issues raised. The Chair highlighted, in particular, the recommendations around quality assurance of Systems and Processes and in relation to identifying the location of external children's homes in the Borough that cared for children placed by other authorities.

Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Families, responded to the report on behalf of the Cabinet. He thanked the Committee for the thoroughness of their review, and felt it was really positive that there was broad agreement that the Council was moving in the right direction. The detailed response to each of the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations was appended to the report attached to the agenda. All the recommendations had been all or partially accepted, and actions identified to implement them. It was intended to bring together all the providers of children's care in Telford & Wrekin, by September 2013 with a view to encouraging co-operation across agencies and providers in order to better meet the needs of the young people in care.

Members commented on the relatively high numbers of children in care in Telford & Wrekin who were placed by other local authorities. It was recognised that this may arise from lower costs compared to other areas. It was also felt it was important that Elected Members, as Corporate Parents, continued to be involved in monitoring the Strategy and in visiting care homes where possible. The Scrutiny Chair advised that it was the intention that members of the Scrutiny Committee would visit children in residential care outside the Borough on an annual basis as part of its work programme.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the recommendations made by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee be noted, and the response set out in paragraph 3.2 and Appendix 1 of the Cabinet Member's report, be approved;**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Director of Children & Families Services, following consultation with the Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, to implement the proposals made as a result of the review of the Children in Care Placement Strategy.**

The meeting ended at 6.02 pm.

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & Public Protection
Date: 3 July 2013

Signed:

Date:

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

**CABINET – 25 JULY 2013
COUNCIL – 12 SEPTEMBER 2013**

2013/14 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: FINANCE, AUDIT &
INFORMATION GOVERNANCE (CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER)**

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR BILL McCLEMENTS

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1.0 SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

1.1 2013/14 Revenue

Current financial monitoring shows revenue spending for the year is projecting to be within budget at year end which is after using £4.1m of the budgeted contingencies (which includes allocation of the contractual inflation contingency) leaving £1.36m available in remaining contingencies.

There are a number of variations from the approved budget, including some beneficial variances. The main areas to highlight are:

- The cost of Children in Care Placements continues to be a pressure with an overspend of £1.3m being reported;
- A shortfall of £0.254m in relation to Lifelong Learning lost grant income;
- Care & Support Services are projecting a net overspend of £1.6m which is mainly due to savings anticipated from transformation initiatives not currently being delivered. There are also pressures relating to Care Leavers;
- ICT – the cost of maintenance contracts is giving rise to an overspend of £0.303m;
- A benefit of £0.500m arising from active treasury management;
- A refund of £0.731m in relation to previously top-sliced revenue support grant;
- A benefit of £0.148m from the West Mercia Energy Dividend.

1.2 Capital

The capital programme totals £127.7m which includes slippage from 2012/13. Spend at the time of compiling this report was around 4% which is broadly in line with previous years.

The capital programme funding includes a significant amount of capital receipts anticipated to be delivered over the medium term. Failure to achieve, or delays to, the receipts would have financial implications for the Council. The total value of receipts required in 2013/14 is £45.1m.

Early monitoring indicates that £30m of these receipts will not now be received until future years and options to manage this issue are currently being developed.

1.3 Corporate Income Collection

Collection levels for NNDR, council tax and Sales Ledger outstanding debt are all behind the targets set for the year.

1.4 Spending Round 2013

The Government's Spending Round 2013 was announced on the 26 June 2013 which set out spending plans for 2015/16. This included a 10% cut to local government funding and plans to increase overall capital spending from 2015/16. The Spending Round does not provide detailed information for individual local authorities and the actual impact for Telford & Wrekin Council will not be known until the Local Government Finance Settlement announcements are made for 2015/16. The Service & Financial Planning strategy will be updated as appropriate as more detail becomes available.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Cabinet Members are asked to

- (i) Note that 2013/14 revenue spend is currently projecting to be within budget at year end and approve the uses of the budgeted contingency detailed in para. 6;**
- (ii) Note the position in relation to capital spend and approve the new allocations and slippage detailed in Appendix 3;**
- (iii) Note that collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger are all slightly behind the targets set for the year.**
- (iv) Note the key points in the Governments Spending Round 2013 which re-affirm the continued pressure on local government funding.**

3.0 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priorities?	
	Yes	Delivery of all priorities depend on the effective use of available resources. Regular financial monitoring helps to highlight variations from plan.
	No	
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	To outturn within budget at 31/3/14	

FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The financial impacts are detailed throughout the report.
LEGAL ISSUES	No	None directly arising from this report. The S151 Officer has a statutory duty to monitor income and expenditure and take action if overspends /shortfalls emerge.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Borough Wide

4.0 **PREVIOUS MINUTES**
07/03/13 – Full Council, Service & Financial Planning Strategy

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5.0 2013/14 REVENUE BUDGET

- 5.1 Financial monitoring is the responsibility of budget holders and is supported by Finance staff using a risk based approach: more focus is given to high risk areas (high value/highly volatile); less frequent monitoring is undertaken on low risk.
- 5.2 Variations of more than £0.100m are detailed in section 5.3 for each Service Delivery Unit. The overall 2013/14 budget position is summarised in the table below :

Service Delivery Unit	Total Current Variation
	£
Children's Safeguarding	527,847
Education & Skills	350,000
Family & Cohesion Services	0
Development, Business & Housing	212,000
Neighbourhood & Leisure Services	110,000
Care & Support	1,623,223
Customer & People Services	402,500
Law, Democracy & Public Protection	0
Finance, Audit & Information Governance	(204,961)
Cooperative Council Delivery Unit	0
Council Wide	(1,479,240)
Total Projected Variation	1,541,369
Call on Corporate Contingency	(1,541,369)
Projected Year End Position	0

5.3 Projected variances over £0.100m are highlighted below.

Service Delivery Unit	Variance £m
<u>Children's Safeguarding</u>	
<p>Children in Care – currently projecting £1.3m overspend; this reflects 316 CiC at the 14 June (321 at 31 March 2013). The cost improvement plan is well established with the aim of bringing spend back in line with the budget. Current forecasts are that cost reductions are being seen as a result of implementing the plan however the specific contingency set aside will be required in full. Work is ongoing.</p>	+1.348
<p>Contingency – set aside to meet CiC pressures; will be required in full based on current projections.</p>	-0.930
<u>Education & Skills</u>	
<p>Lifelong Learning & Skills – loss of grant funding</p>	+0.254
<p>Joint/Community Use – loss of income from Phoenix and Shortwood schools.</p>	+0.100
<u>Family & Cohesion Services</u>	
<p>Monitoring shows no significant variances to report at the current time. It should however be noted that the transport review is in its early stages, the outcome of which will confirm whether the savings required in 2013/14 will be delivered. Any variances will be highlighted in future reports.</p>	
<u>Care & Support</u>	
<p>Purchasing budgets – the projected overspend relates to 2013/14 savings taken out of budgets which have not been delivered. One-off funds from the CCG are being used in 2013/14 to cover the significant pressure relating to Continuing Health Care clients experienced throughout last year.</p>	+1.700
<p>Employees – underspend arising from posts not yet filled</p>	-0.331
<p>Care Leavers – overspend relating to the cost of supporting 16-18 year olds as they leave care. A review of the service is</p>	+0.700

commencing soon which is hoped will result in cost reductions.	
Supporting People – delay in achievement of saving combined with an increase in demand for the service.	+0.515
One off funding- During the Year end closedown process one-off funding of £0.928m was identified which is being used to reduce the overall Care & Support overspend.	-0.928
<u>Neighbourhood & Leisure Services</u>	
There are currently no variances over £0.1m to report.	
<u>Development, Business & Housing</u>	
Southwater – the multi-storey car park currently being constructed is not expected to be operational until April 2014 and therefore the part-year budgeted income anticipated will not be received.	+0.162
<u>Customer & People Services</u>	
ICT – overspend relating mainly to increased costs associated with maintenance contracts.	+0.303
<u>Finance, Audit & Information Governance</u>	
There are currently no variances over £0.1m to report.	
<u>Law, Democracy & Public Protection</u>	
Detailed monitoring has not yet been undertaken for this Service Area in accordance with the risk based monitoring approach being adopted.	
<u>Cooperative Council Delivery Unit</u>	
Detailed monitoring has not yet been undertaken for this Service Area in accordance with the risk based monitoring approach being adopted	
<u>Government Funding Refund</u> –refund in relation to previously top-sliced Revenue Support Grant.	-0.731
<u>Treasury Management</u>	
Benefit of active treasury management seeking to maximise benefits from low interest rates and lower borrowing than anticipated in the early part of the year. This position is likely to improve as the year progresses.	-0.500

<u>Housing & Council Tax Benefit Subsidy</u> Projected benefit from recovery of overpayments.	-0.100
<u>Purchase Rebates</u> Surplus dividend from West Mercia Energy relating to 2012/13 outturn performance.	-0.148

6.0 **CONTINGENCIES**

- 6.1 The 2013/14 budget includes a contingency of £2.5m, which is set aside to meet any unforeseen expenditure plus an amount held centrally for contractual inflation totalling £1.67m; and a specific amount of £1.3m earmarked for Safeguarding (children and adults).

	£
General Revenue Contingency	2,500,000
Inflation Contingency	1,670,000
Safeguarding Contingency	1,300,000
Total Contingency	5,470,000
Commitments:	
Estimated of contractual inflation (based on 2012/13 - actual will be allocated when detailed information known)	1,522,000
Safeguarding contingency applied to service overspend	930,000
Contribution to Georgia Williams Fund	500
Additions to Grass Cutting Programme	50,000
Winter maintenance pressures	66,000
Amount required to meet current Revenue Shortfall	1,541,369
Total Use of Contingency	4,109,869
Balance remaining in Contingencies (this includes the £370k remaining in the specific safeguarding contingency earmarked for Care & Support)	1,360,131

7.0 **CAPITAL**

7.1 **2013/14 Capital Programme**

The capital programme totals £127.7m which incorporates slippage approved at the end of 2012/13.

The financial position is shown in the table below which shows spend at 4% of the budget allocation. Projected spend is currently shown in

line with budget after adjusting for the new allocations and slippage shown in this report.

Priority	Budget £m	Spend To Date £m	%
Protect and Support our Vulnerable Children & Adults	3.958	0.152	3.8
Improve the Health & Wellbeing of our Communities	1.985	0.079	4.0
Protect and Create Jobs as a Business Supporting, Business Winning Council	20.861	0.790	3.8
Improve Local People's Prospects through Education & Skills	69.317	3.160	4.6
Regenerate Neighbourhoods in Need	9.676	0.618	6.4
Managing the Organisation	3.600	0.013	0.4
Ensure that Neighbourhoods are Safe and Clean	18.319	0.007	0.0
Total	127.716	4.819	3.8

Slippage and new allocations for approval are included in Appendix 3.

The 2013/14 programme relies on £45.1m capital receipts as part of its funding. Early monitoring indicates that around £30m of these receipts will not now be received until future years and options to manage this are currently being explored. The cost of short-term borrowing for the current year would be £113k which has been reflected in the net treasury management position reported.

8.0 CORPORATE INCOME MONITORING

- 8.1 The Council's budget includes significant income streams which are regularly monitored to ensure they are on track to achieve targets that have been set and so that remedial action can be taken at a very early stage. The three main areas are Council Tax, NNDR (business rates) and Sales Ledger. Current monitoring information relating to these is provided below. The Council pursues outstanding debt vigorously, until all possible recovery avenues have been exhausted, but also prudently provides for bad debts in its accounts.
- 8.2 In summary, the overall position shows collection levels for council tax, NDR and sales ledger debt are behind the targets set.

INCOME COLLECTION – May 2013			
	Actual	Target	Performance
Collection Levels:			
Council Tax Collection	19.59%	19.77%	0.18% behind target
NNDR Collection	21.97%	23.63%	1.66% behind target
Sales Ledger (Outstanding Debt)	7.58%	5.50%	2.08% behind target

8.3 Council Tax (£65.9m)

The percentage of the current year liability for council tax which the authority should have received during the year, as a percentage of annual collectable debit. The measure does not take account of debt that continues to be pursued and collected after the end of the financial year in which it became due. The final collection figure for all financial years exceeds 99%.

Year end performance 2012/13 97.3%

Year End Target for 2013/14 97.0%

Performance is cumulative during the year and expressed against the complete year's debit.

Month End Target	Month End Actual	Last year Actual
19.77%	19.59%	20.07%

The introduction of Council Tax Support, which replaced Council Tax Benefits on 1 April 2013 and cut funding, is expected to have an impact on collection as the number of claimants in receipt of full benefit/support has reduced.

Collection in the second month of the year is still behind performance for last year and the target for this year, but only by 0.18%. We are now proactively telephoning all benefit customers who receive a summons for non payment with a view to creating a payment culture by making payment arrangements with them and encouraging customers to pay.

8.4 NNDR-Business Rates (£70.9m)

Collection of Business Rates is of greater importance in 2013/14 as under the new Local Government Funding mechanism an element of rates collected is retained locally and directly forms part of the Council's overall funding. This transfers more risk to the Council from Central Government and it is vital that business rates income and collection is maximised.

The % of business rates for 2013/14 that should have been collected during the year. This target, as for council tax, ignores our continuing collection of earlier years' liabilities.

The measure does not take into account the debt that continues to be pursued and collected after the end of the financial year in which it became due. As a general rule the final collection figure for any financial year exceeds 99%.

Year end performance 2012/13	97.3%
Year End Target for 2013/14	97.3%

Performance at the end of January is 0.24% behind the month end target and the collection at the same time last year. Collection performance for NNDR tends to fluctuate throughout the year, but at this stage, it would appear likely that collection will outturn below target.

Month End Target	Month End Actual	Last year Actual
23.63%	21.97%	23.63%

NDR collection for May is 1.66% behind target and performance at this time last year. During June we will introduce proactive telephone calls to businesses that receive summons, and then monitor the effectiveness of this new approach on collection. We are closely monitoring NDR collection on a monthly basis against the predicted level of income we expected to achieve when the budget was set.

8.5 **Sales Ledger (£37.8m)**

This includes general debt and Social Care debt. Debt below 2 months is classified as a normal credit period.

The target percent is set relating cumulative debt outstanding from all years to the current annual debit. The targets and performance of income collection for are as follows:

Age of debt	Annual Target %	May 2013	
		£m	%
Total	5.50	2.865	7.58%

Performance for sales ledger outstanding debt is currently outside target and work has begun in earnest with colleagues in Legal to try to recover some older debts that are outstanding.

9.0 **SPENDING ROUND 2013**

The Spending Round 2013, published on the 26 June 2013, announced the Government's spending plans for 2015/16. It specifically detailed how the Government plans to make £11.5bn of savings and increase capital spending plans by £3bn a year from 2015/16.

The main points to highlight are:-

- It only dealt with spending plans for 2015/16;
- £11.6bn Government savings were identified;
- This included a 10% cut in Local Government funding (but the impact will vary between authorities, in part because it is a net reduction after allowing for national totals for new homes bonus and council tax reduction grants);
- The Labour party have pledged to match the spending totals for 2015/16;
- The “Investing in Britain’s Future” document –sets out how £100bn infrastructure investment will be allocated over the next Parliament;
- A £3.8bn pooled budget for health and social care services for older and disabled people in 2015/16; transfer of £200m from NHS to local authorities in 2014/15;
- £335m available in 2015/16 so that council’s can prepare for reforms to social care funding;
- Consultation on a national funding formula for schools;
- Public Sector pay awards limited to 1% in 2015/16;
- School funding and pupil premium protected in real terms;
- A Council Tax freeze grant offer in 2014/15 and 2015/16 (although the spending round didn’t include details of the offer, information published since implies that the grant will be equivalent to 1% council tax prior to local council tax support scheme impacts);
- Council Tax referendum threshold in 2014/15 and 2015/16 to be 2%;
- As part of the funding for the “Investing in Britain’s Future” programme, the Government intend to use £400 million from the national control total for New Homes Bonus. The Government intend to consult on the mechanism for doing this which could have a significant impact on the level of New Homes Bonus assumed in the budget projections and consequently increase our assumed budget gap.

The Spending Round does not provide detailed information for individual local authorities and the actual impact for Telford & Wrekin Council will not be known until the Local Government Finance Settlement announcements are made for 2015/16 (it is not yet clear if this will be provisionally published in December 2013 or December 2014). The Service & Financial Planning strategy will be updated as appropriate as more detail becomes available.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

2013/14 Budget Strategy / Financial Ledger reports

Report Prepared by:

Ken Clarke, Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance (Chief Financial Officer) – 01952 383100;

Pauline Harris, Corporate Finance Manager – 01952 383701

Summary of 2013/14 Projected Variations

Service Delivery Unit	Total Current Variation
	£
Children's Safeguarding	527,847
Education & Skills	350,000
Family & Cohesion Services	0
Development, Business & Housing	212,000
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Customer & People Services	402,500
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Finance, Audit & Information Governance	(204,961)
Cooperative Council Delivery Unit	0
Council Wide	(1,479,240)
Total Projected Variation	1,541,369
Call on Corporate Contingency	(1,541,369)
Projected Year End Position	0

2013/14 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description	Budget	Variation	Comments	
	£	£		
Childrens Safeguarding				
Children in Care Placements	10,004,147	1,347,970	The 2012/13 reported outturn position was £2.397m overspent. The budget strategy included growth of £600k and a review of costs resulting in a Cost Improvement Plan. The Cost Improvement Plan is well established and is being actioned to aim to bring costs back in line with base budget. In addition to the service base budget a corporate contingency was established as part of the 2013/14 estimates to meet demand from new admissions. (Some new admissions are inevitable to keep children safe). Current forecasts are that the service is having some success in implementing the plan, and cost reductions of around £935k are being forecast to be achieved resulting mainly from "Step Down" from residential to other (cheaper) types of placements. However, this leaves around £1.3m in placement costs over budget and therefore the forecasts include use of the Contingency in full and a residual overspend of around £0.4m remains. Work continues to assess the placement costs being incurred, including reviewing unit costs, numbers of children in care and the placement strategy, and currently around £140k of further cost reductions has been identified from further "Step down" of care placements. The number of Children in Care at 14th June: 316 compared to 31st March 2013:321	
Corporate Contingency	930,000	(930,000)	Use of one off contingency set aside as part of the budget strategy	
Staffing	5,570,317	(84,776)	The Cost Improvement Plan referred above also includes a target to reduce the use of Agency staff from the numbers called upon in 2012/13 of around 13fte's. The final 2012/13 Safeguarding overspend included £558,617 for the net cost of agency staff after accounting for vacancy savings - a total of £814k was spent on agency workers in 2012/13. The current forecast is for an outturn of around £272k in 2013/14 with the target number of agency staff being reduced down to 2 by the end of 2013/14. Current number of agency staff 7(Cost improvement plan target at end May- 6)	
Variations under £50k	2,980,471	194,653		
Total Children's Safeguarding	19,484,935	527,847		

2013/14 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description		Budget	Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Education & Skills				
Lifelong Learning		879,690	254,786	Largely as a result of Government grants no longer being received. This issue was partially resolved through the budget strategy when around £550k of grants were identified as no longer being received. The resulting pressure will be dealt with by savings reported against other service budgets and determining whether DSG underspends can effectively be used to replace General Fund spending.
Joint/Community Use		728,600	100,000	Loss of income from Shortwood and Phoenix Schools
Miscellaneous Management costs		93,530	(60,000)	General operational underspends
Variations under £50k		10,362,020	55,214	
Total Education & Skills		12,063,840	350,000	
Family & Cohesion Services				
		16,449,970	0	Detailed monitoring has been undertaken and there are no significant variations to report
Total Family and Cohesion Services			0	
Care & Support				
Purchasing-all types of care for all client groups		37,695,160	1,700,000	The overspend now forecast is the result of savings of £1.667m taken out of purchasing budgets. The savings are expected to result from various Transformation initiatives which are as yet not resulting in decreasing costs or are being offset by growing costs of care. The overspend reported throughout 2012/13 included the significant impact of CHC clients no longer funded by the PCT, this position has been reflected within the base budget and is dependant on significant funding from the CCG including £2.771m-"Lansley funding" and £3.4m of one off's of which £2.4m although yet to be received is now agreed and £1m is part of a £3m payment received in 2011/12 and is being released over 3 years. Therefore a total of £6.1m of funding is included within the base budget to offset pressures resulting from the many pressures to impact the Social Care budget including CHC which is estimated to be costing the Council £8.5m per annum.

2013/14 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description		Budget	Variation	Comments
		£	£	
				The budget strategy for 2013/14 included growth of £300k for inflation on care contracts and £370k of the additional "Lansley" money received from Government. Expenditure against these sums remains uncommitted and therefore £670k is being held to meet the future costs of inflation and demand. The above reported overspend does not include this. Including this now would leave the service exposed to the effects of in year cost escalation and therefore these budgets are held to offset and therefore stabilise the current reported position. The other pressures include the demographic related increase of older people in particular who are eligible for support, inherited costs of young people in transition, reducing admission rates and shorter lengths of stay in hospital settings, increased provider costs reflected in higher placement prices, all against a historic base of T&W Council spending below the national average, though the gap has now reduced significantly
One-off Funding			(928,000)	One off funding available
Care Leavers		574,560	700,000	This overspend is based on forecast costs from 2012/13. A review of the service is expected to commence shortly and there may be in year cost reductions.
Supporting People		2,042,050	515,000	A large part, £385k of this overspend is as a result of the additional savings agreed with WHT expected to result from a claim against Housing Benefit by the WHT. The remainder is forecast to arise from demand on the service
Staffing and operational budgets		1,275,000	(331,283)	This underspend has arisen due to vacancies in posts yet to be filled
Drugs and Alcohol Services		2,563,032	(73,952)	This is the result of contracts agreed as part of the handover of Public Health. Some contracts have been agreed at lower/higher cost than
Sexual health Services		1,012,218	58,000	This is the result of contracts agreed as part of the handover of Public Health. Some contracts have been agreed at lower/higher cost than
Variations under £50k		10,878,710	(16,542)	
Total Care & Support		56,040,730	1,623,223	

2013/14 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description		Budget	Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Neighbourhood & Leisure Services				
Leisure	Town park - Crazy Golf income	(50,000)	30,000	Contracts for the construction of the Crazy Golf course in Telford Town Park are out to tender and the course is expected to be operational in the Autumn. Therefore the projected income for 13/14 has been reduced in order to reflect the part year impact of the new facility.
Arts and Culture	The Place Theatre	(677,321)	80,000	The 2013/14 budget proposals included increased income from The Place of £100k. Whilst income from the pantomime is projected to be above budget and an improvement on last years income it is unlikely that the increased and challenging income target can be met.
Public Realm	Winter Maintenance	586,527	66,000	Additional pressures on the severe weather budget anticipated in order to maintain a service based upon an average winter. This figure will increase if we get periods of prolonged severe weather during winter 2013/14. It is proposed that this is funded from the budgeted contingency
Public Realm	Environmental Maintenance	4,465,574	50,000	Following requests from the public and Members two additional grass cuts have been carried out as an additional to the existing TWS contract following service reductions in 2011/2012. It is proposed that this is funded from the budgeted contingency.
			(66,000)	One off from budgeted contingency to meet winter maintenance overspend
			(50,000)	One off from budgeted contingency to meet cost of additional grass cuts
Total Neighbourhood & Leisure Services			110,000	
Development, Business & Housing				
Facilities Management and Cleaning		(1,534,955)	50,000	The net impact of loss of school trading income on property, cleaning and facility management services
Southwater	Multi Storey Car park	(162,000)	162,000	The multi storey car park currently being constructed in Southwater is planned to be operational by 1st April 2014. Therefore the part year budgeted income for 2013/14 cannot be achieved.
Total Development, Business & Housing			212,000	

2013/14 Revenue Budget Variations over £50,000				
Description		Budget	Variation	Comments
		£	£	
Customer & People Services				
ICT	Supplies & Services	1,041,510	302,903	Over spend against software maintenance budget for various Council systems. Budget is £243k with costs projected totalling £563k. This is in line with 2012/13.
ICT	Income	(2,672,460)	88,191	Shortfall against service specific income budget of £539k. This is in line with previous years.
Revenues & Benefits	Supplies & Services	144,300	78,432	Additional costs projected on printing and postage in line with 2012/13.
Variations Under £50k		6,147,320	(67,026)	
Total Customer & People Services			402,500	
Finance, Audit & Information Governance				
Variations Under £50k		679,770	(204,961)	Under spends mainly arising from staffing due to vacant posts and back fill arrangements. £15k saving from Life Assurance Policy due to reducing numbers of staff on old Wrekin terms.
Total Finance, Audit & Information Governance			(204,961)	
Council Wide				
Treasury			(500,000)	Benefit from low interest rates and slippage in 12/13
Housing Benefit Subsidy		(74,540)	(100,000)	Variation from budget as a result of recovery of overpayments. It should be noted that there is no spend to date on B & B accommodation as the temporary leased accommodation has been used and has not been at full capacity as yet.
Central Government Grant Refund			(731,000)	The Revenue Support Grant settlement included a reduction in funding relating to central support costs of academies; the information and formula used to calculate this has been changed which results previously disadvantaged local authorities receiving a refund. £351k was returned to the Council in 2012/13; £731k is expected in 2013/14.
Purchase Rebates		(202,500)	(148,240)	Surplus dividend from West Mercia Energy
Total Council Wide			(1,479,240)	
Total Variations			1,541,369	

Capital Approvals

Slippage

Scheme	13/14 £	14/15 £	15/16 £	Comment
Ensure That Neighbourhoods are Safe, Clean and Well Maintained	(520,000)	520,000		Funded from Prudential Borrowing
Integrated Transport				

New Allocations

Scheme	13/14 £	14/15 £	15/16 £	
Improve Local People's Prospects through Education and Skills Training				
Devolved Formula Capital	-54,487			Reduced allocation due to schools converting to Academies; Standards Fund Grant
Basic Need - Contingency	630,238			1 of 2 year allocation; Standards Fund Grant
Contingency for reactive works	-190,344			Reduced allocation - approved allocation based on prior years; Standards Funds Grant
Hollinswood Primary - Infant and Junior Merger	50,000			External - School Contribution
Donnington Wood Infants - New Early Years Development	29,500			Section 106 Funding
Muxton Primary - 3 Class base extension	24,500			Section 106 Funding
Teagues Bridge Primary - 3 class base extension , Hall , Boiler & Roof	293,486			Section 106 Funding
Improve Health & Well Being of Our Communities				
Newport Fitness Facility	60,000			Prudential
Protect & Support our Vulnerable Children & Adults				
ICT Social Care Review	300,000			Prudential
Total New Allocations	1,142,892	-	-	

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 25 JULY 2013

WINTER MAINTENANCE SERVICE REVIEW

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: NEIGHBOURHOOD AND LEISURE SERVICES

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR SHAUN DAVIES

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

1.1 To provide a review of the performance of the Winter Service with regard to operational and policy during the 2012/13 winter season.

1.2 To identify options for an enhanced winter maintenance service from 2013/14 which will compliment the current service and minimise disruption to the road network and key services across the borough in the event of severe snow/ice.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the recommended changes to the Winter Service to be adopted, namely:

- That the carriageway spread rate for salt when dealing with the risk of significant snow events be increased from 20 grams to 30 grams when required
- To change the 'winter season' to cover the period from 16th October to 16th April
- Existing treatment routes to remain the same for 2013/14 with the addition of one location - Apley Castle – access to the Severn Hospice
- That the winter maintenance budget for 2014/15 is increased by £66,000.
- Service option 2 is adopted during extreme snow events with a view to commence at the beginning of the winter season October 2013. The projected costs of £62,000 (based upon winter 2012/13) to be met from Corporate contingency funding.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

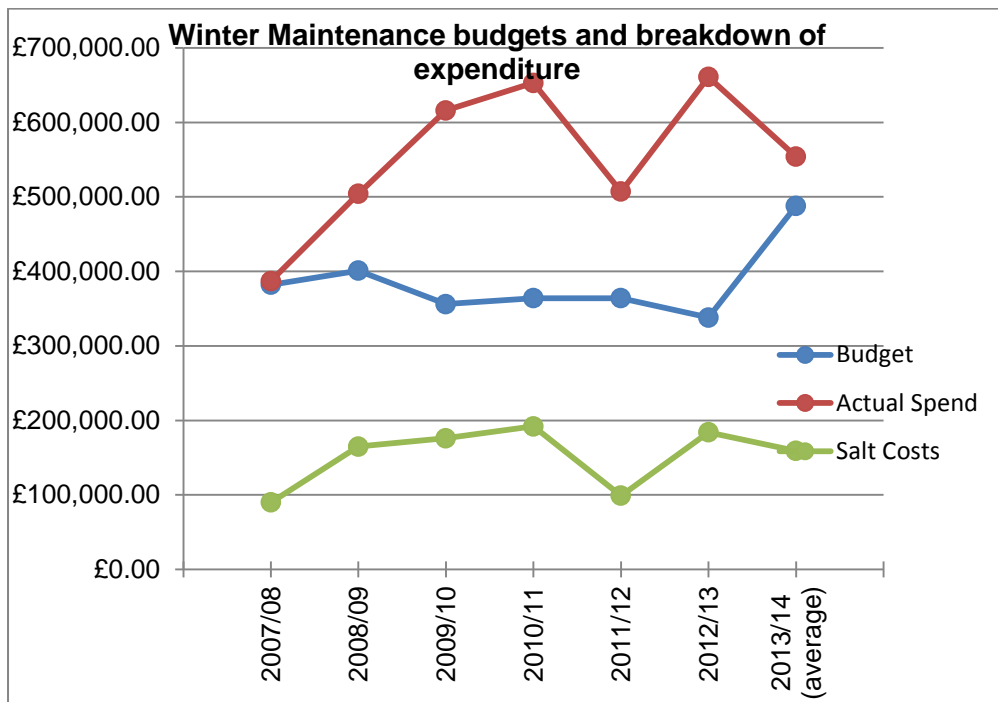
COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council <u>Priorities</u>?	
	Yes	Ensure that our Neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well-maintained Business Supporting, Business Winning Council
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	Borough wide impact.
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	October 2013 – Beginning of winter season	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The increased pressures on the Winter Maintenance Service, as detailed within this report, resulted in an overspend against available budget in 2012/13 of £334k – which was funded from Corporate underspends and reserves. The winter maintenance budget has been increased in 13/14 by £150k to £488k. However, when further comparing the current budget with expenditure during recent severe winter seasons it is recognised that an additional £66k growth in the budget is required to account for an average winter season. Approval is sought, therefore, to further increase the winter maintenance budget by an additional £66,000 in 2014/15. This report recommends enhancements to the winter maintenance service which, if agreed, may increase the annual expenditure on the service dependant upon the number of salt treatments and snow events. Based upon the number of snow events in winter 2012/13 that would have required enhanced treatment the projected cost of Service Option 2 is £62,000. This

		<p>additional expenditure cannot be accommodated within existing budgets and approval is sought to meet the additional costs of adopting Service Option 2 from Corporate contingency funding. This is in addition to the requested £66,000 growth to the winter maintenance base budget in 2014/15.</p> <p>Expenditure on the winter maintenance service will be monitored and variances reported through monitoring reports as necessary.</p> <p>JAC 10/7/13</p>
LEGAL ISSUES		<p>The Council is under a statutory duty to maintain those highways in the Borough which are not trunk roads. The Council's duty in respect of snow and ice on the highway is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.</p> <p>In any action against the Council in respect of any alleged breach of this statutory duty, it is a defence for the Council to prove that had acted within the bounds of reasonable practicality. The Council therefore needs to devise its policies in accordance with best practice and implement them to address the foreseeable risks.</p> <p>Review, amendment and proper implementation of policies for winter highways maintenance are key elements of the Council's response to its statutory duties and would be referred to in any action against the Council.</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES		<p>It should be noted that in the case of continued severe weather – the extent to which an 'enhanced' service is carried out would be reviewed to enable and ensure that the Council would meet its statutory obligations around winter maintenance and highways. Priority will need to be given to the defined network and at times of severe weather and in the event of national salt shortage, routes will be reduced in order to maintain stocks.</p>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Borough wide impact.

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. WINTER SEASON 2012/13

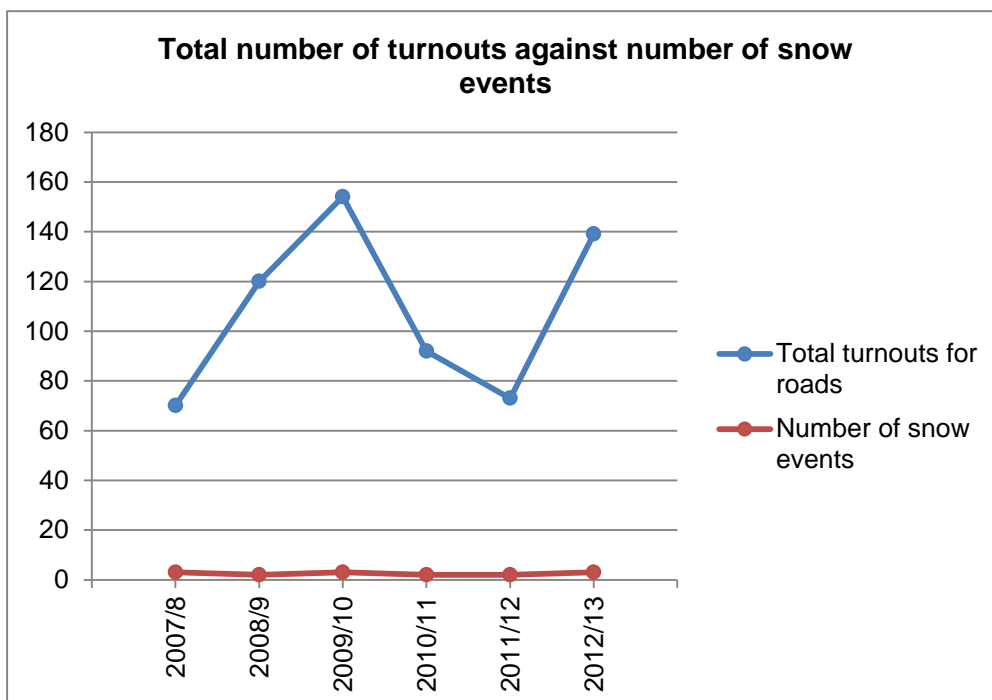
- 4.1** The winter season service operated between the 1st October and the 30th April. Throughout the winter season 2012/13 there were 3 snow/ice events over 9 days which occurred between January and March 2013.
- 4.2** The changing pattern of adverse weather in recent years, has also seen the actual spend for winter maintenance continually increase with a significant overspend against the historical budget, particularly over the severe winters of 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11. To help accommodate these seasonal changes, the 2013/14 budget for winter maintenance had initially been increased by £150,000. However, when taking in to account the full 2012/13 winter season, it is recognised this is still below the average spend for more recent typical winters. The graph below illustrates the trend in the winter maintenance budget and spends over the last five years.



4.3 Having established this revised trend, to continue to provide an effective winter maintenance service it is recommended that the budget is increased by a further £66k to remove the budget gap for an average winter.

4.4 It has also been established that the number of turnouts in both the start and end few weeks of the current winter season i.e. 1 to 15 October and 15 to the 30 April has resulted in four turnouts since 2004. It is therefore proposed that the winter season is revised to the 16 October to the 16 April, which would have no adverse effects on service and would result in a small saving in the region of £2,000. There will however be the necessary weather forecast monitoring to accommodate any predicted out of season adverse weather and appropriate treatment.

4.5 In addition to the normal turnout for precautionary salt treatment for frost, the recent annual service review included the number of turnouts for significant snow events. The table below shows the trend in turnouts over a winter season against the number of snow events.



4.6 During the recent snow events there were a total of 49 turnouts for the pre and post treatment of snow and ice. 2,940 tonnes of salt (60 tonnes per treatment) were used at a cost of £105,800. It was concluded that by increasing the spread rate to 30g, the number of turnouts could have been reduced by 9. The total amount of salt used would need to be increased (85 tonnes per treatment) at an additional cost of £16,600 however taking into account the reduction in turn out costs and the difference in rates paid this would result in a saving of £10,894. However this would have been offset by the additional salt costs. A more detailed review of service performance over the 2012/13 winter season is detailed in appendix 1.

4.7 Over the winter season a number of other issues on our untreated network were highlighted during the snow events including:

- **Car parks snow and ice clearance** - The gritting and snow clearance of Council owned car parks are not currently included in the Councils winter maintenance policy. The snow events earlier in the year highlighted this as an issue, when compacted ice/snow developed on many of the car parks across the borough due to prolonged freezing conditions making access for users difficult and potentially dangerous.
- **Access to public buildings, footway gritting and routes to schools** - The Councils current winter maintenance policy includes the gritting of a limited number of public footways during snow/ice events. An exercise has been undertaken to see where additional footways and access routes could be reasonably included as part of the winter maintenance programme to enable a continuous 'flow' through borough and district centres and enable passage/access to public buildings.
- **Grit bins** - Grit bins are currently provided through the Councils grit bin policy on 'non-defined' roads at high risk sites such as steep hills, severe bends, etc and only on the adopted highway. A limited number of grit bins are provided at key locations on the footway/cycleway network. The misuse of grit being used in private property is estimated to cost the Council a minimum of £1,000 per year. Options to help prevent the continued misuse of grit include putting signs on the inside and outside of grit bins to reinforce that the grit is for 'highways use only' to be run alongside a PR campaign next winter to increase awareness and educate the public on its appropriate use. Where appropriate, the council will work with partners so that grit bins may also be located to assist Snow Warden Volunteers, particularly in residential areas where there are a high number of elderly and/or infirm residents.

4.8 It was encouraging that partial response to these issues was delivered by our 44 fully trained neighbourhood snow wardens, five Parish Environmental Teams and 169 hours of community payback dedicated to snow/ice clearance. This response was effective however, cannot be solely relied upon to deliver a solution to the issues that were encountered during significant snow/ice event.

4.9 In response to the issues raised a review of the of the Councils winter maintenance arrangements was undertaken. A detailed costing exercise looking at options for different service standards has been undertaken.

5. SERVICE STANDARDS OPTIONS

5.1 The service standard options were developed from a selection of service enhancements to the current winter maintenance policy with a view to reduce the adverse affects on the boroughs residents, schools and local economy during a significant snow event. It is estimated that the cost the Telford economy per snow event is approximately £700,000. Below is shown an indication of suggested enhancements to the current winter service and the increased costs over the season. The current winter maintenance service standard is shown in appendix 2.

Snow Event Treatments	Cost per treatment
Car Park Gritting	£1,580 (41 no)
Car Park Snow Ploughing	£77 per hour x 41= £3,157 minimum
Localised Footways	29,628sqm @ £1029
Walking bus routes	12,196sqm @ £398
Single routes to schools	17,682sqm @ £572
Cemeteries	£72 (salt only)

5.2 The 2 service options that have been looked at build on the existing winter maintenance arrangements to address the issues raised over the last winter season. It is considered that any extension to the service would benefit both residents and businesses in the borough during a significant snow event. The table below sets out the different options and associated costs. The full detail of the different service standards can be found in appendix 3.

Service Option	What is included	Cost per occasion
1	Existing service plus walking bus routes and car parks	£5,207
2	Option 1 plus enhanced localised gritting and single routes to schools	£6,808

5.3 The service options include additional treatment and snow clearance of certain footways and highways across the borough with a view to:

- Reduce the impact a snow event has on the local economy
- Ensure consistency with additional treatment and snow clearance across secondary centres
- The service will be complimented and enhanced by utilising the Parish Environmental Teams and Community Payback Service
- Link into 'zone one' street cleansing areas
- In addition TWS environmental operatives will be utilised to clear snow and treat footways while their normal activities for example landscape maintenance, street sweeping and litter picking, are suspended during a snow event.

5.4 Taking into consideration the financial pressures facing the Council, the additional costs associated with the enhanced service options to address significant snow events would be challenging and not necessarily allow for above average winter seasons. Highlighted in the table in 4.5, it is recognised that on average there are 3 significant snow events per year which could take up to 9 days to address the local issues regarding the build up of snow and compacted ice, especially on car parks and key footways..

5.5 Additional GIS computerised mapping layers have been created as part of the work that has been undertaken to inform the review. As a result, an overarching winter maintenance layer has been developed, including gritting routes, PET teams, neighbourhood snow wardens, walking bus routes across the whole borough. This valuable information will be used to target available resources where appropriate.

5.6 The new computerised mapping will be used in conjunction with our partners to inform decision making and improve communication during snow/ice events.

5.7 To compliment the service standard in 2013/14 a red/amber/green service system will be developed with our partners which will compliment the computerised mapping work to date and will clearly set out what happens and when and who is responsible for doing what during a snow/ice event.

6. **CO-OPERATIVE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

6.1 In addition to reviewing additional routes for localised gritting, the review has considered areas where there is an opportunity to work more co-operatively with our Parish and Town Councils, Schools, Businesses and Neighbourhood Snow Wardens to assist with strategic snow clearance. Following the success of the introduction of Neighbourhood Snow Wardens for the 2013/14 Winter Season, it is intended to recruit a further 156 in addition to the existing 44 volunteers, in order to compliment the Winter Service at times of snow and prolonged severe weather conditions, at locations that are not covered by the Winter Maintenance Policy (Appendix 1).

For example,

- i) The promotion of a Business Snow Warden Scheme which could be encouraged to clear access to industrial estates side roads and business access. We can support them by providing strategically placed grit bins for highway use
- ii) School Snow Warden Schemes which can concentrate on walking bus routes and single routes to schools. Again supported by strategically placed grit bins.
- iii) Parishes could be approached to compliment enhanced service standards in district centres by contributing to car park gritting costs

6.2

Option	Opportunities
Car Parks (Pre-treatment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TWC employees/TWS resources • Community pay back • Snow Plough/Multi use vehicle for Parishes
Car Parks (Snow Ploughing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TWC employees /TWS resources • Community pay back • Snow Plough/ Multi use vehicle for Parishes
Support to Snow Wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee snow wardens • School snow warden scheme • Business snow warden scheme
Additional localised footways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted snow warden scheme – inc. businesses, Wrekin Housing Trust • Community Payback – winter maintenance programme
Walking Bus Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School snow warden scheme
Cemeteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish Environmental Teams

6.2 These opportunities will be further explored throughout the summer with a view for the most viable options to be implemented ready for the start of winter season in October 2013.

7. **PREVIOUS MINUTES**

18 September 2006, 21 July 2009, September 2010, September 2011 and July 2012

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

Report prepared by David Bell, Group Manager and Rachel Humble, Partnership and Planning Officer

Appendix 1 – WINTER SERVICE STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE:

1. SALTING OPERATIONS

Winter Maintenance Service Policy – salting

The main activities of the Winter Maintenance Service are treating the highway to:

1. Try to prevent ice forming known as “pre-salting”
2. Melt ice and snow already formed, “post-salting”
3. Remove snow

1.1 Roads:

The service aims to prevent ice forming (precautionary treatment) on the “defined network” which consists of main through roads and those serving centres of activity such as commercial, retail, employment, administrative and leisure (which in the main are serviced as part of school sites or district centres. These are known as the “frost routes”.

Defined network:

Primary Routes:

- A & B roads
- Roads serving fire, ambulance, police establishments
- Main bus routes in the following centres: Telford Town Centre, Dawley, Madeley, Newport, Oakengates, Wellington and Ironbridge
- Access roads to transport interchanges

Secondary Routes:

- Other regular bus routes (The regular bus routes are defined as Monday to Friday routes with a minimum of one bus per hour during the main part of the day).
- Feeder roads to schools/colleges (roads linking main salting routes to main entrances)
- Main access roads on industrial estates (Halesfield, Stafford Park, Hortonwood)
- One access route to main villages/hamlets and minor sections of road for continuity.

1.2 Turnouts in 2012/13

Roads:

The total number of turnouts in 2012/13 was 139 compared with 73 in 2011/12. This compares with the 5 yearly averages for previous years of 102. The increase in turnouts is the result of weather conditions being forecast as marginal together with the snow events between January and April 2013. This led to an increase in the number of snow event treatments of 49 compared to a season average of 15.

Footways:

The total number of turnouts in 2012/13 was 24 compared with 21 in 2011/12. This compares with the 5 yearly averages for previous years of 30.

1.3 Salt usage

Impact of reduced spread rates introduced in order to increase resilience at times of salt shortages:

Due to national salt demand and delays in deliveries over in previous winters, the council followed the continuing national directive to conserve salt stocks. For the 2012/13 winter season a reduction the rates of spread for treating frost, ice and snow was introduced this resulted in the equivalent of 915 tonnes less salt being used, which in turn saved the council £33,000. However due to snow events and extended periods of low temperatures, salt usage increased compared to the milder 2011/12 winter.

General Comment

Winter 2012/13 saw all but one month have below average temperatures, with the other month,

December, having temperatures only slightly above the long term average. Most of the months were not that far below average but March was a severe month, the coldest for 50 years and the cold conditions continued into the start of April. This resulted in a lengthy winter maintenance season where on a lot of occasions the road temperatures dropped below zero and there was some significant snow as well, especially in March when drifting was experienced.

1.4 Feedback from Community stakeholders

Feeder roads to schools and colleges

During the prolonged periods of cold weather during the 2012/13 winter season, the salting of feeder roads to schools has been successful in ensuring that schools have remained open.

Comments by the Facilities Management & Cleaning Service Delivery Manager were:

Last winter was particularly cold with snow and freezing conditions being a regular occurrence. The winter maintenance programme enabled T&W schools and operational buildings to function more or less as normal, since approach roads and where applicable staff car parks were treated effectively.

Access roads to transport interchanges: Bus companies

Comments by the Area Business Manager, Midland Arriva (Telford) were:

In general we are very happy with your overall plan and it seemed to work very effectively when it was called upon. Apart from locations with inclines which at times were affected by the worst of the weather, our services continued to run.

Main access roads on industrial estates

Halesfield, Stafford Park, and Hortonwood – all routes were kept open during the frost and snow events.

1.5 Conclusion: salting operations

Feedback suggested that the gritting routes used in 2012/13 provided a satisfactory level of protection to road even with the reduced rates of spread being introduced. However at times of extreme snow events it may be advisable to increase the spread rate to 30 grams per sqm if required. It is encouraging to confirm that there were minimal reported accidents as a result of wintry conditions on the road network.

Between 1 November 2012 and 30 April 2013 we received 10 official compliments and 31 complaints relating to the winter maintenance service.

Feedback from customers would suggest that a mixture of increased information on the Councils web site, national & local media coverage including series of radio & television interviews, public understanding and the excellent service delivery from the council and contractor throughout the periods of colder weather all helped to ensure public frustration were contained to a relative minimum.

Recommendation: Defined network

That the defined network remains substantially unchanged, while accommodating changes proposed elsewhere in this report.

2. GRIT BINS

2.1 Current grit bin policy

The Council continues to provide in excess of 500 grit bins on non-treated roads that are considered high risk locations. These sites have been subject to a risk assessment criteria or they remain in situ due to historical placement reasons. The number of grit bins we currently provide far exceeds the average compared to other Councils.

All high risk sites are now accommodated, however future requests for grit bins for community/public use provision can be on the basis of a co operative approach and/or financial contributions from community

groups such as Parish Councils which the Council will assist in relation to purchasing and replenishing on their behalf.

Prior to the commencement of the 2012/13 winter season, all Parish and Town Councils were written to regarding local provision of grit bins and to seek their views on providing grit bins at their expense. This is only the case when the Council criteria for sighting a bin are not met. This has led to a successful take up with several Parishes wanting to engage. The process will continue for the forthcoming season and all Parish and Town Councils will be written to again regarding the arrangements.

Grit bins are provided on the basis of self help by motorists for use on the public highway. There is evidence from community feedback that grit bins are sometimes requested and used for the gritting of private footpaths & driveways. We also receive complaints from residents regarding the siting of them near their properties and Parishes are mindful of this.

During 2012/13 as in past years there continued to be a number of 'one off' requests for grit bins which were made generally during snow events where drivers experienced difficulties with traction on untreated estate roads.

Some Parish Councils have enquired about the locations of grit bins in their area so that they can review whether they are meeting the needs of the community. An up to date inventory list and location maps will again be circulated to all Parishes prior to the start of the 2013/14 winter season. All grit bins are numbered and have the prefix 'P' where Parish owned.

2.2 Conclusion: Grit bins

The number of grit bins installed and serviced is much higher than many other council's. Further consultations are in process with Parishes on the locations of grit bins in their specific areas so they may consider local demand and provision.

Recommendation: Grit bins

Given the current provision it is recommended that the Grit Bin Policy remains unchanged for 2013/14 and a co operative approach is more widely publicised on the website.

3. SALT STORAGE/USAGE

3.1 Effectiveness of changes to salt storage

Members may recall the difficulties experienced during the 2008/9 season and as a result of a national shortage, additional salt storage of 350 tonnes was created at the Granville House depot prior to the start of the 2009/10 season. This extended the total storage of salt to 1700 tonnes. Prior to 2010/11 permission was given to acquire a further 1000 tonnes, which was stored locally at a facility owned by Jack Moody on Redhill Way, Telford. Therefore at the start of the 2012/13 winter season salt stocks were at the maximum of 2700 tonnes

No difficulties were encountered with salt deliveries during 2012/13 season, orders were placed periodically to ensure adequate stocks and at the end of the season 1500 tonnes were still held. A summer restock will take place shortly in order to take advantage of lower rates at this time of year and take levels back to 2700 tonnes.

The salt barn at the Granville House depot now has the facility to accommodate some 1700 tonnes of salt which is equivalent to approx 56 turnouts for frost and 28 for snow. The additional stock of 1000 tonnes stored at Moody's will provide approx 33 turnouts for frost and 16 turnouts for snow.

In total this allows for 90 turnouts for frost turnouts and 45 for snow,

In normal circumstances this level of stock together with the reduced rates of spread should be more than capable of providing resilience, however the previous two severe winters have proved, despite the increased resilience that this may not be the case. The Government recommendation is to maintain not less than 6 days stock. If we were to have a really bad spell of snowfall, we could provide 22 days of double treatment twice a day which is far in excess of the Government recommendation.

3.3 Conclusion: Salt storage/Usage

The existing storage arrangements have proved to be adequate and reducing the rate of spread from 15 grams per sqm to 10 grams per sqm when pre treating for ice and from 30 grams per sqm to 20 grams per sqm when pre treating for snow, did not cause any known difficulties, although when required the use 30 grams per sqm should be considered.

The revised rate of spread is used by many other Local Authorities and the Highways Agency without any adverse effects, including locally both Shropshire Council and Staffordshire County Council. This proposed spread rate also falls within suggested national guidelines.

Recommendation: Salt storage/Usage

It is recommended that the current salt storage capacity remains unaltered for the 2013/14 winter season, together with the reduced rates of spread of salt at 10 and 20grams per sqm for the 2013/14 winter season, but to be increased to 30 grams per sqm when required during snow events.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 Positive Actions undertaken

In order to assist Elected Members, Parishes, the media and the community as a whole, the council provided access to a series of information channels which were available on the council website, in relevant customer services teams and electronically available to all Members & Parishes.

The information included:

- Borough wide maps indicating defined gritting routes
- Winter maintenance: Frequently Asked Questions
- Winter Maintenance – Facts and Figures
- Who to contact
- Daily service disruption information i.e. refuse & kerbside collections, schools, leisure sites etc.
- Notification of 'real time' gritting operations to all Ward Members, Parish and Town Councils.

There was also a series of meetings with Parish representatives which also assisted in developing the information above.

4.2 Conclusion

Due to 'round the clock' monitoring and actions the council maintained effective communication throughout the winter season and received praise for its actions and approach

Recommendation: Communication

It is recommended that in future the same approach is adopted and the proactive style of communication is developed with a particular emphasis on the council website and information to Parishes and co operative opportunities particularly around grit bins. This is to include continuing to provide up to date records and plans highlighting local grit bins.

5. NEIGHBOURHOOD SNOW WARDENS

The Neighbourhood Snow Warden scheme was introduced with an initial target of 50 volunteers which resulted in 44 persons being enrolled. The volunteers came from various locations within the borough and comprised of 32 members of the public, 7 Telford and Wrekin Council elected members, 1 Town Councillor and 4 Telford and Wrekin Council employees.

The scheme has been successful with the results being posted on social media sites by volunteers and positive feedback has been received from residents served by the volunteers.

Training was provided to all volunteers which covered health and safety requirements, methods of snow clearing and the correct usage of salt. Each volunteer was provided with a shovel, gloves, high visibility vest and a supply of salt. Following a review of the scheme at the end of the season, it was felt that a larger snow shovel would help with snow removal and they would be provided prior to the start of the next winter season.

In addition it was suggested that volunteers should be able to officially use salt from council grit bins. This is being considered as is the provision of strategically positioned grit bins for the use of Neighbourhood Snow Wardens.

From the start of the 2013/14 winter season it is envisaged that up to 200 Neighbourhood Snow Wardens will be in place, with the emphasis on volunteers coming forward from schools and other Telford and Wrekin Council staff. In addition we will be working with registered social landlords for example Wrekin Housing Trust in order to promote volunteers in areas with tenants who are badly affected at times of snow and prolonged severe weather conditions.

Winter Service, Record of turnouts

	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	20010/11	2011/12	Ave over past 5 years	2012/13	Comments
Normal gritting 15gms	53	83	105	68	60 @10grms	62	65	High number of turnout's due to intensity and timings of snow falls and high number of marginal forecasts
Double gritting 30gms	6	19	16	22	12 @20grms	15	49	
Wet spots e.g. drainage problems	11	18	33	2	1	13	25	
Total turnouts for roads	70	120	154	92	73	102	139	
Footpaths	20	32	38	41	21	30	24	
Total salt used in tonnes	3008	5160	5345	3964	2833	4832	5131	

WINTER SERVICE POLICY STATEMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

The Borough of Telford and Wrekin is the Highways Authority for all the adopted roads in the Borough except for the M54 Motorway and A5 Trunk road from the end of the M54 at Cluddley to Preston Roundabout.

The Highways Authority is responsible for work relating to snow, frost or ice on these roads.

The aim of the Winter Service is to provide so far as is reasonably practicable for the safe movement of road users along the highway network during wintry conditions. The Service operates between the 1st October and the 30th April i.e. the Winter Season.

A review of Winter Service Operations is undertaken each year before the start of the next Winter Season.

2 FORECASTING & TREATMENT OF ROADS

Two weather monitoring stations operate in the Borough, which with information from surrounding areas' stations and forecasting from the Meteo Group are used to determine the most appropriate action delivered at the best possible time.

We employ the Meteo Group weather monitoring service who advise our experienced staff on optimising the salting of the roads at the most effective and economic times. However with the variable conditions we experience in this maritime climate it is not always possible to complete salting before freezing starts but we endeavour to complete salting as soon as is practicable within the constraints of our resources.

Roads to be treated

The main activities of the Winter Service are treating the highway to:

- 1 Try to prevent ice forming known as "precautionary salting"
- 2 Melt ice and snow already formed, "post-salting"
- 3 Remove snow

All the roads are divided into the "defined network" and the "non defined" roads dependent on their priority. The service aims to prevent ice forming (precautionary treatment) on the "defined network" which consists of main through roads and those serving centres of activity such as commercial, retail, employment, administrative and leisure. These are known as the "frost routes".

Frost Routes

The "frost routes" should be salted prior to the formation of frost by the fleet of gritters provided by Telford & Wrekin Services.

Primary Routes:

- A & B roads
- Roads serving fire, ambulance, police establishments
- Main bus routes in the following centres: Telford Town Centre, Dawley, Madeley, Newport, Ironbridge, Oakengates & Wellington.
- Access roads to transport interchanges

Secondary Routes:

- Other regular bus routes (The regular bus routes are defined as Monday to Friday routes with a minimum of one bus per hour during the main part of the day).
- Feeder roads to schools/colleges (roads linking main salting routes to main entrances)
- Main access roads on industrial estates (Halesfield, Stafford Park, Hortonwood)
- One access route to main villages/hamlets and minor sections of road for continuity.

Priority will always be given to ensuring that the Primary routes are treated before the Secondary routes.

The remainder of the roads are "non defined" and are not treated for a forecast of frost. However grit bins are provided at high risk sites such as steep hills, severe bends, etc.

Snow and ice routes

Roads to be treated at times of snowfall or prolonged icy periods following snow (post-treatment) are known as the “snow and ice routes”. The “snow and ice routes” consist of the “frost routes, the remaining main and secondary distributor roads and high risk sections of the local network.

In times of snow and prolonged icy conditions the “snow and ice routes” are ploughed, cleared or salted with the frost routes being treated as priority. This work is undertaken under our instruction by Telford & Wrekin Services, farmer operated snowploughs and if necessary local contractors. These activities are aimed at providing safe movement around the Borough between major centres and at least one access route to each hamlet.

When resources allow they will then be deployed onto the “non defined” routes dealing with problems in priority order.

3 TREATMENT OF FOOTWAYS AND CYCLETRACKS & DISTRICT CENTRES

Frost Routes

Footpaths/cycletracks and district centres that will be treated when frost is forecast are the “defined footway routes” at the following locations:

- 1) Adopted footpaths in Telford Town centre.
- 2) Footpaths serving the main shopping areas of:
 - a) Wellington
 - b) Dawley
 - c) Madeley
 - d) Newport
 - e) Ironbridge
 - f) Oakengates

Snow & ice

In the event of prolonged snow or ice strategic footway/cycletracks will be treated in a priority order. The order starts with town centres, local district centres etc. It is not possible to clear all the footpaths within the Borough during these wintry conditions.

4 GRIT BINS

Grit bins in general are only provided on “non-defined” roads at high risk sites such as steep hills, severe bends, etc and only on the adopted highway. Their provision is determined by on-site risk assessments using a standardised set of criteria and then prioritised based on available resources. Grit bins are provided on the basis of self-help by the public and the service is limited to refilling the bins with salt and replacing damaged bins.

A limited number of grit bins are provided at key locations on the footway/cycleway network defined as routes promoted as Safe Routes to Schools.

Requests for new grit bin locations are considered only from Ward members, Parish & Town Councils or community organisations and contributions will be sought from these groups for provision and maintenance.

5 STAKEHOLDER REQUESTS

Other than numerous requests for residential roads throughout the borough to be gritted which **do not** comply with our policy, the following request has been received which has been assessed and **does** comply:

Location	Comments
Apley Castle - Access to Severn Hospice.	Numerous requests have been received regarding this location and it does cause problems especially during snow events and icy conditions. An assessment has been made and it is recommended that the road is added to the defined gritting network.

Appendix 3 – Service Standard Options

OPTION 1 (EXISTING PLUS CAR PARKS AND WALKING BUS)					
Red - Prolonged Snow and Ice Event	Costs per treatment	Amber - Single Snow Event	Costs per treatment	Green - Normal Frost Treatments	Costs per treatment
Car Parks including Leisure Centres/Operational Buildings (Pre-treatment) ~	£1,580	Car Parks including Leisure Centres/Operational Buildings (Pre-treatment) ~	£1,580		
Car Parks including Leisure Centres/Operational Buildings (Snow Ploughing)	£3,157	Car Parks including Leisure Centres/Operational Buildings (Snow Ploughing)	£3,157		
Walking Bus	£398	Walking Bus	£398	Walking Bus	£398
Carriageway Gritting Routes ~	£3,648	Carriageway Gritting Routes ~	£3,648	Carriageway Gritting Routes ~	£2,568
Grit Bin Refills Salt only #	£360				
Support to Snow Wardens Salt only	£14				
District Centres/Town Centre/Bridges ~	£1,971	District Centres/Town Centre/Bridges ~	£1,971	District Centres/Town Centre/Bridges ~	£1,971
	£11,128		£10,754		£4,937

Key:

~ Including cost of salt usage
TWS existing resources used

OPTION 2 (OPTION 2 PLUS SINGLE ROUTES TO SCHOOL, LOCALISED FOOTWAYS AND CEMETARIES)					
Red - Prolonged Snow and Ice Event	Costs per treatment	Amber - Single Snow Event	Costs per treatment	Green - Normal Frost Treatments	Costs per treatment
Localised footways **	£1,029	Localised footways **	£1,029	Localised footways **	£1,029
Car Parks including Leisure Centres/Operational Buildings (Pre-treatment) ~	£1,580	Car Parks including Leisure Centres/Operational Buildings (Pre-treatment) ~	£1,580	Car Parks including Leisure Centres/Operational Buildings (Pre-treatment) ~	£1,580
Car Parks including Leisure Centres/Operational Buildings (Snow Ploughing)	£3,157	Car Parks including Leisure Centres/Operational Buildings (Snow Ploughing)	£3,157		
Walking Bus	£398	Walking Bus	£398	Walking Bus	£398
Single Routes to Schools	£572		£572		£572
Cemeteries # Salt only	£72	Cemeteries # Salt only	£72	Cemeteries # Salt only	£72
Carriageway Gritting Routes ~	£3,648	Carriageway Gritting Routes ~	£3,648	Carriageway Gritting Routes ~	£2,568
Grit Bin Refills Salt only #	£360				
Support to Snow Wardens Salt only	£14	Support to Snow Wardens Salt only	£14		
District Centres/Town Centre/Bridges ~	£1,971	District Centres/Town Centre/Bridges ~	£1,971	District Centres/Town Centre/Bridges ~	£1,971
	£12,801		£12,441		£8,190

Key:

** Including areas around and leading to Schools/GP Surgeries/Libraries/Community Centres/Residential Homes/Day Centres/Youth Clubs

~ Including cost of salt usage

TWS existing resources used

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 25 JULY 2013

IRONBRIDGE GORGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE- JACKFIELD STABILISATION

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD & LEISURE SERVICES

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR RICHARD OVERTON

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

To update Members on the issue of land instability within the World Heritage Site (WHS), in particular the Jackfield Stabilisation Project (“the Project”) (see map at Appendix 1) and to seek approval for a range of property actions to enable this project to progress further.

TWC do not own all of the land necessary to carry out the Project. It will therefore be necessary to acquire either land or rights over third party land to install stabilisation features and measures required to facilitate the Project. Unless the land or rights can be acquired by agreement, to avoid delays to the Project, the Council will need to resort to its compulsory purchase powers.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet note the position reached with the Jackfield Stabilisation Project.

2.2 That the Assistant Director: Law Democracy and Public Protection (following consultation with the Assistant Director of Neighbourhood and Leisure Services and the lead Cabinet Member for Land Instability) be authorised to take any required procedural steps to enter into any necessary legal agreements (whether or not under seal), land transfers, vesting and other legal documentation and to take any required procedural steps to acquire land or rights in, on or over land by agreement or compulsorily, to facilitate land assembly and deliver the Project, including the exercise of relevant powers of compulsory acquisition as required.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	<p>The Jackfield Stabilisation Scheme will contribute to the following Council Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Short term (Approximately 24 months) disruption to local residents and business during the construction works and potential compulsory acquisition of privately owned land or rights over such land.
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	<p>The stabilisation project must be completed by 1st April 2016.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design completed July 2013 • Planning Application submitted July 2013 • Contract to be awarded December 2013 • Enabling Works commence December 2013 • Main scheme commences on site February 2014 	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	<p>The funding available for Jackfield Stabilisation is coming from 2 funding sources, DCLG Grant and the Council (Prudential borrowing).The costs of any property or land acquisitions either by agreement or Compulsory Purchase will be met from the available funding.</p> <p>JAC 05/07/13</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	The Council's powers of compulsory

		<p>acquisition in this case relate to its function as Highway Authority with responsibility for the highways which run through this area of the World Heritage Site. Compulsory powers would only be exercised after efforts to acquire by agreement have failed. It is appropriate for the Assistant Director: Law Democracy and Public Protection to be authorised in this respect. Any Compulsory Purchase Order needs to be confirmed by the Secretary of State before it comes into operation and before any land or rights can be vested in the Council. Any creation, diversion or extinguishment of any highway can be dealt with under existing officer delegated powers.</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes/No	<p>The project will have an environmental impact and an Environmental Impact Assessment is being produced in support of the planning application. There are many project risks, the key one being around the very tight delivery time scales due to funding constraints. Regular meetings are held with the design team to ensure that key programme dates are being met. The completed scheme will benefit the residents and businesses in the area in the long term in providing a stable environment, secure vehicular access and enhanced public open space.</p>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	<p>The broader issue of land instability has the potential to impact upon a number of wards including the Ironbridge Gorge, Madeley and Cuckoo Oak. However, this Project will only impact on the residents of the Ironbridge Gorge ward during the construction phase of the works. In the long term, the project will benefit the ward by improving access to the properties and businesses in Jackfield .</p>

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

Background - Instability

The Ironbridge Gorge was designated as a World Heritage Site (WHS) in 1986 and is now ranked amongst the “Premier Division” of heritage sites across the world.

One of the key issues affecting the Ironbridge Gorge is that of land instability. Key factors affecting land stability are:

- The geological structure and ongoing formation of the Gorge;
- The extent of past mining;
- The loading of the surface with tipped waste, buildings and infrastructure;
- The frequency and extent of flooding and the impact of climate change.

Basically, in some areas, both sides of the Gorge are gradually slipping down towards the River Severn. This is not a new problem. The local community has lived with the impact of instability for many years and the problems it causes in terms of damaged roads and footpaths, collapsed retaining walls, severed services, and occasionally, major landslips. Until recently, our understanding of the nature and extent of instability in the Gorge was quite limited. However, over the past 12 years a number of significant studies and investigations have been undertaken which have given us a much clearer understanding of the causes and pattern of land instability.

The potential impact of these problems is significant. At the World Heritage level, the unique and irreplaceable historic environment within the WHS is at risk. At the local level, in some parts of the WHS, people’s homes, businesses and the infrastructure of roads and services are at risk of damage. The scale of risk varies throughout the WHS. Some areas show no signs of movement, but there are a small number of “hotspots” where the potential for movement is significant; these are being monitored closely and are the subject of ongoing discussions with DCLG regarding a funding need of in excess of £80 million to address them.

Two phases of stabilisation work have already been completed to address “hotspots” in the Ironbridge Gorge, Lloyds Phase 1 and 2 and at Lloyds Head where there was deemed to be significant potential for a landslide. The Lloyds Phase 1 stabilisation scheme was completed in 2006 and the Lloyds Phase 2 and Lloyds Head schemes were completed in 2008.

Background Information – Jackfield

Numerous landslips have historically occurred within the lower part of the Jackfield slope and have resulted in the loss of a number of properties, services and roads. In 1984, immediately following the last major landslide in the area, the failed section of Salthouse Road was reconstructed with a temporary pavement pending a more permanent solution. The temporary “wooden road” pavement comprised interlocking timbers ‘floating’ on a granular bed. This solution maintains the running surface whilst being flexible enough to tolerate the ongoing ground movements in the short

term. Given the need to maintain this sole access route to Maws Craft Centre and the properties at the eastern end of Salthouse Road, the “wooden road” was adopted by the Council. The Council have to carry out regular works involving lifting and re-bedding the timbers to maintain the running surface. Similarly, to protect against ground movements, the statutory services in the area have locally been lifted above ground. Despite this measure, works are also regularly required to maintain the integrity of the services.

The ‘Interpretation of Ground Investigations at Jackfield and the Lloyds’ report by High Point Rendel, completed in January 2005, gave a recommendation based on risk assessment for stabilisation works to be carried out at Jackfield within two years. These works are now more than six years overdue.

The potential for further major landslippage remains. This could result in complete or partial blockage of the River Severn, as was the case in 1952-53, and induce substantial upstream flooding. TWC Civil Resilience Team have developed an emergency plan for such an event: Operation Tangent. Whilst the probability of such an event is deemed to be low, it is important that we implement the proposed stabilisation works at Jackfield at the earliest opportunity.

The delivery of the Jackfield Stabilisation Scheme (“the Project”) is constrained by deadlines associated with the DCLG funding and the Government’s Comprehensive Spending Review timetable. The project needs to be completed by 1st April 2016. There are other significant constraints to the project as a consequence of planning protocols and timeframes, Environment Agency requirements, ecology, ground conditions, site access and multiple land ownership issues.

In order to deliver the Project it will be necessary to acquire land and/or rights in/on at least three parcels of unregistered land together with other land where the ownership is known. Where ownership is not known, a CPO will be certainly required. Where ownership is known, hopefully, because of the benefits to owners in this area, acquisition will be achievable by agreement. However, to be prepared for the possibility of agreement not being reached, the Compulsory Purchase Order is necessary to cover these properties too. Negotiations with known affected landowners is underway.

To help avoid delays in the Project timetable, it is considered appropriate for the Council’s powers of compulsory acquisition be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Governance and Public Protection in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Instability so that they can be applied and followed through if required.

Due to the cost of the project it will be necessary to procure the contractor through the OJEU process. This process has commenced and will be the subject of a future report to members. A contractor should be appointed in December 2013.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Community Impact

The construction phase of the project will inevitably have impacts on local residents

and businesses, early consultation has taken place with the stakeholders and continues to take place as the project develops. The impacts will be kept to a minimum and the scheme design aims to reduce disruption where possible. In the long term, the residents and businesses will gain better access and the communities will be enhanced via an improved public environment.

Equalities Impact

The scheme will have no impact on equalities, however where local residents have special requirements we will endeavour to meet these during the delivery of the scheme.

Environmental Impact

Land instability causes environmental damage. Therefore the proposals to stabilise the ground and reduce land instability will have an environmental benefit. However, the construction phase of the project will inevitably have environmental impacts. Consultation has taken place throughout the design period with the Environment Agency and Natural England to ensure that the impact will be minimised as much as possible. Appropriate environmental and ecological assessments have been carried out as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment. Environmental mitigation is being incorporated into the design of the scheme to minimise the long term impacts of the project.

Legal Comment

The Council's statutory powers of compulsory acquisition in this case relate to its function as Highway Authority with responsibility for the highways which run through this area of the World Heritage Site. Compulsory powers would only be exercised after efforts to acquire by agreement had failed. It is appropriate for the Assistant Director: Law Democracy and Public Protection to be authorised to exercise compulsory powers of acquisition. The decision will need to be made in a demonstrably careful, fair and proportionate way and in accordance with the statutory powers. Any Compulsory Purchase Order needs to be confirmed by the Secretary of State before it comes into operation and before any land or rights can be vested in the Council.

As the implementation of the Project is likely to require the alteration of certain rights of way and other highways, officers may need to use their existing relevant delegated powers.

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cabinet 31st October 2001; Cabinet 2nd December 2002; Cabinet 17th November 2003; Cabinet 14th June 2004; Cabinet 5th August 2005 and Cabinet 16th April, 2007; Cabinet 26th November 2007; Council 7th March 2013.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Interpretation of Ground Investigations at Jackfield and the Lloyds, High Point Rendel, 2005

Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale Ground Behaviour Study, High Point Rendel, 2005

Ironbridge Gorge Geomorphological Mapping, Jacobs, 2008

Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Mining Desk Study, Telford and Wrekin Council 2008

World Heritage Site Management Plan

Residents Instability Pack Plan issued May 2013

Operation Tangent Version 1.0 March 2011

Report prepared by Structures and Geotechnics, Telephone: 01952 384867

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 25th July, 2013 at 5.00 p.m. at the AFC Telford Learning Centre, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 31st JULY, 2013

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 5th AUGUST, 2013)

PRESENT: Councillor K.S. Sahota (Leader and Chair), E.A. Clare, S. Davies, A.R.H. England, W.A.M. McClements, R.A. Overton, H. Rhodes, C.F. Smith and P.R. Watling

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A.J. Eade (Conservative Group Leader)

CB-18 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 27th June 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

CB-19 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor W.L. Tomlinson (Liberal Democrat/Independent Group Leader)

CB-20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

CB-21 **FINANCIAL MONITORING 2013/14**

Key Decision identified as **Financial Monitoring 2013/14** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 30 April 2013.

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance, which provided Members with the latest financial monitoring information for 2013/14.

Revenue spending was projected to be within budget at year end, after using £4.1m of the budgeted contingencies (including allocation of the contractual inflation contingency) leaving £1.36m available in remaining contingencies. In previous years the use of contingencies had reduced as the financial year progressed. There were still a number of significant pressures on the budget, including the cost of Children in Care placements (overspend of £1.3m); the cost of Adult Care and Support services (overspend of £1.6m); and the cost of ICT maintenance contracts (overspend of £0.303m). Projected variances of

over £0.100m for individual service delivery units were detailed in the report. There were benefits from active treasury management of £0.500m, a refund of £0.731m in relation to previously top-sliced revenue support grant, and dividend of £0.148m from West Mercia Energy.

The capital programme totalled £127.7m, which included slippage from 2012/13. Spend was currently standing at 4%, which was broadly in line with previous years. Robust programme management and monitoring was in place to ensure schemes were delivered. The capital programme over the next few years relied on a significant amount of capital receipts as part of its funding, and the position was being closely monitored. Early monitoring indicated that £30m of these receipts would not now be received until future years, and options to manage this issue were being developed.

Collection levels for Council Tax and NNDR income and Sales Ledger debt were behind the targets set for the year.

The Government's spending plans for 2015/16 had recently been announced, and included a 10% cut to local government funding and plans to increase overall capital spending. The actual impact on Telford & Wrekin would not be known until the detailed Local Government Finance Settlement announcements for 2015/16 were made.

Cllr A Eade queried the capital receipts shortfall and the capital and revenue implications.

Cllr W McClements commented that any plans regarding the capital receipts would be made public at the appropriate time.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that it be noted that the 2013/14 revenue spend is currently projecting to be within budget at year end, and that the uses of the budgeted contingency detailed in paragraph 6 of the report be approved;**
- (b) that the position in relation to capital spend be noted, and that it be RECOMMENDED to COUNCIL that the new allocations and slippage detailed in Appendix 3 of the report be approved;**
- (c) that performance against income targets be noted;**
- (d) that the key points in the Government's latest Spending Round, which re-affirmed the continued pressure on local government funding, be noted.**

CB-22 WINTER MAINTENANCE SERVICE REVIEW

Key Decision identified as **Winter Maintenance Review** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 29 May 2013.

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Neighbourhood & Leisure Services, which provided a review of the performance of the service during the 2012/13 winter season, and options for an enhanced winter maintenance service from 2013/14.

During the last winter season, there were a total of 49 turnouts for the pre and post treatment of snow and ice. It had been concluded that by increasing the carriageway spread rate of salt from 20g to 30g, the number of turnouts could have been reduced by 9 – and this was being proposed for 2013/14 when dealing with the risk of significant snow events. Other issues that had arisen were the gritting and snow clearance of Council owned car parks, access to public buildings, footway gritting, routes to schools and the misuse of grit bins. A detailed review of service performance was appended to the report.

The report also provided information on long-term trends on winter maintenance budgets, and to continue to provide an effective winter maintenance service, it was recommended that the budget be increased by a further £66k in 2014/15 to remove the budget gap for an average winter. The current service standard was appended to the report, and the report set out two options that would build on the existing arrangements in order to address the issues raised over the last winter season. The service options included additional treatment and snow clearance of certain footways and highways across the Borough. Full details of each option were appended to the report.

Following the success of the introduction of Neighbourhood Snow Wardens, it was intended to recruit a further 156 wardens in addition to the existing 44 volunteers. This would further complement the Council's service by covering locations not included in the Winter Maintenance Policy.

RESOLVED –

- (a) **that the following changes to the Winter Maintenance Service be adopted:**
- **the carriageway spread rate for salt when dealing with the risk of significant snow events be increased from 20g to 30g when required;**
 - **the 'winter season' be changed to cover the period from 16 October to 16 April;**
 - **existing treatment routes to remain the same for 2013/14 with the addition of one location – access to the Severn Hospice at Apley Castle;**
 - **service option 2, as detailed in the report, be approved for commencement in October 2013 to provide an enhanced service during extreme snow events; the projected costs of £62k to be met from Corporate contingency funding.**
- (b) **that the winter maintenance budget for 2014/15 be increased by £66,000.**

**CB-23 IRONBRIDGE GORGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE –
JACKFIELD STABILISATION**

Non-Key Decision

Councillor R.A. Overton, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Public Protection, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Neighbourhood & Leisure Services, which provided an update on land stabilisation works in the Ironbridge Gorge and which sought approval for a range of property actions to enable the project to progress further.

The scale of risk from land slippage varied throughout the World Heritage Site. A small number of “hotspots”, where the potential for movement was significant, were being monitored closely, and were the subject of ongoing discussions with Government regarding funding to address them. Two phases of stabilisation work had been completed at The Lloyds and Lloyds Head. A further “hot spot” was on the lower part of the Jackfield slope, which had resulted in damage to a number of properties, services and roads – in particular, Salthouse Road which had had to be reconstructed with a temporary “wooden road” pavement.

The Jackfield Stabilisation Scheme needed to be completed by 1 April 2016, and to deliver the project it would be necessary to acquire land and/or rights in/on at least three parcels of unregistered land together with other land owned by third parties. Where ownership was not known, a Compulsory Purchase Order would be required. Where ownership was known, it was hoped that acquisition could be reached by agreement with landowners, because of the benefits it could bring to owners in the area. Negotiations had already commenced, as well as the process to procure a contractor. This would be subject to a future report to Members.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the progress on the Jackfield Stabilisation Project be noted;**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & Public Protection, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health & Public Protection and the Assistant Director: Neighbourhood & Leisure Services, to take any required procedural steps to enter into any necessary legal agreements (whether or not under seal), land transfers, vesting and other legal documentation – and to take any required procedural steps to acquire land or rights in, on or over land by agreement or compulsorily, to facilitate land assembly and deliver the Project, including the exercise of relevant powers of compulsory acquisition as required.**

CB-24 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they may involve

the disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CB-25 RE-PROVISION OF RESIDENTIAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Key Decision identified as **Re-provision of Mental Health Services at Ellen Court** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 26 June 2013.

Councillor A.R.H. England, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Care & Support, which sought approval for a tendering process that would lead to an award of contract for the provision of seven residential rehabilitation placements for adults with mental health issues based at Ellen Court in Wellington.

The current contract for the service was due to expire in March 2014, and in order to ensure the continuity of services, work would be undertaken to complete tendering processes during 2013/early 2014. The re-commissioned service would also provide individually tailored programmes of practical support and rehabilitation to promote independent living after residing at Ellen Court. It would also provide an opportunity to bring people back from costly out of county placements. The report provided detailed financial and contractual information in relation to the provision of the service. The NHS funding commitment to the service would be formally agreed with the Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group in accordance with the National Health Service Act 2006.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the re-tendering for the provision of residential mental health, care and support services at Ellen Court be approved;**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Care & Support, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, to award a contract for a term of three years, with an option to extend for up to a maximum of a further two years, for the provision of mental health services following competitive tendering in accordance with the Council's Constitution.**
- (c) that a new Section 256 National Health Service Act 2006 Funding Agreement between Telford & Wrekin Council and Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group be established with regard to Ellen Court;**
- (d) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & Public Protection to execute all documentation required to give effect to any agreement reached pursuant to the resolutions above.**

CB-26 ACQUISITION OF LAND AT DONNINGTON WOOD AND SNEDSHILL

Key Decision identified as **Acquisition of Land at Donnington Wood and Snedshill** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 26 June 2013.

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, and C.F. Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns, presented the report of the Assistant Directors: Development, Business & Employment, Family & Cohesion Services, and Law, Democracy & Public Protection, which sought authority to acquire land to accommodate gypsies and travellers.

The Council owned and managed two Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough, for which there was high demand for plots. Unlawful Gypsy and Traveller encampments were a continued problem for residents and businesses, and to alleviate the problem, it was proposed to accommodate these encampments on a "Tolerated site". A site off Holyhead Road, Snedshill had been identified for this purpose as part of a larger landholding designated for employment purposes. The report set out the costs and associated matters relating to the purchase of this land. In the medium/long term, it was proposed to develop this site for commercial/employment purposes.

The "Tolerated site" at Snedshill would be a temporary site for use whilst works were ongoing at the existing Lodge Road Caravan Site in Donnington Wood to provide further permanent accommodation. This would involve the purchase of additional land adjacent to the current site. Considerable ground and infrastructure improvements would be required, and a bid for funding these costs had been submitted to the HCA's Traveller Pitch Fund.

In addition, approval was sought for an additional capital allocation of £50k to cover recent emergency works on Stafford Park 12 to prevent illegal traveller encampment, and to cover any future one-off expenditure of this nature.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, to acquire the two parcels of land at Lodge Road, Donnington Wood and off Holyhead Road, Snedshill, as shown on the plans appended to the report;**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Family & Cohesion Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns, to develop the Lodge Road land and part of the Snedshill land as a Gypsy and Traveller site;**
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & Public Protection to seal or sign any documents to give effect to the resolutions above;**

- (d) that the capital allocation and expenditure, detailed in section 3 of the report, in respect of the acquisition of land off Holyhead Road, Snedshill and in relation to meeting costs incurred as a result of illegal traveller encampment, be approved;
- (e) that the submission of a bid for external traveller funding for the scheme of works at Lodge Road, Donnington Wood be noted, and that such funding be accepted should the bid be successful.

The meeting ended at 5.31pm.

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & Public Protection
Date: 31 July 2013

Signed:

Date: